

**San José State University**  
**Department of English & Comparative Lit**  
**English 1A: First-Year Writing, Section 31**  
**Storytelling in the Media**  
**Spring 2019**

**Instructor:** Christine Vines

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**Office Hours:** Mondays 1:30-2:30pm

**Class Days/Time:** Monday/Wednesday, 10:30-11:45am

**Classroom:** Boccardo Business Center 121

**Prerequisites:** Reflection on College Writing

**GE/SJSU Studies Category:** GE Area A2 Written Communication I

*"It was books that taught me that the things that tormented me most were the very things that connected me with all the people who were alive, or who had ever been alive."*

*-James Baldwin*

### **Faculty Web Page and MYSJSU Messaging**

Course materials such as syllabus, handouts, notes, and assignment instructions can be found on the Canvas course website. You are responsible for checking your email to learn of any updates.

### **Course Description**

ENGL 1A is an introductory writing course that will help you understand the writing process and the goals, dynamics, and genres of written communication. Through interpretation and analysis of texts, you will learn to think clearly and write effectively as you give form and coherence to complex ideas. You will explore writing for various audiences and rhetorical situations.

In this section, we're going to be thinking about storytelling of all kinds in the media—how does narrative shape what we think and feel as consumers, and how can we harness that power in our own writing? How can our personal story be shaped for effect when writing cover letters, interviewing for jobs, or otherwise trying to enact change?

## **ENGL 1A Learning Outcomes (GELO)**

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

1. read actively and rhetorically;
2. 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. integrate your 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.

## **ENGL 1A Course Requirements and Assignments**

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

Diversity: SJSU studies include an emphasis on diversity. You will engage in integrated reading and writing assignments to construct your own arguments on complex issues that generate meaningful public debate. Readings for the course will include writers of different cultures, ethnicities, genders and socio-economic classes. Moreover, in order for the classroom to function as a safe environment in which open communication amongst all students occurs daily, all class discussions and debates will be conducted with respect for each of these groups kept in mind.

### **Reading:**

In English 1A, you will learn how to analyze and respond to various genres of writing, so close and consistent reading is imperative. As such, annotation is required of every reading and is a crucial component of your participation grade. You will notice that the participation grade is weighted heavily—as a seminar course, group discussion is crucial to the success of the class.

Factors in the participation grade include:

- Regular participation in class discussion
- Coming to class prepared (having read **and annotated**) the readings. If you do not have your readings printed out and annotated, you will not receive participation credit for the day.

- Annotation can mean underlining, starring, bracketing, writing definitions and making connections in the margins, even putting question marks next to things you don't understand. It is the process of engaging fully with a text and recording your response to it. Annotation is essential. Becoming better writers means becoming better readers.
- Substantive revisions of papers when required—not just “touching up” or copyediting

### **Required Texts:**

Will be available on Canvas or disseminated via email.

### **Writing:**

Writing assignments will give you repeated practice in all phases of the writing process: prewriting, organizing, writing, revising, and editing. This class requires you to write a minimum of 8000 words, at least 4000 of which must be in revised, final-draft form.

**Diagnostic Essay (GELOs 3,5):** You will be required to compose an in-class, diagnostic essay of at least 500 words. You will be given a specific prompt that addresses readings and topics we have covered in class and you will have the entire class period to write (punctuality is especially important so that you will neither lose valuable writing time nor distract your peers as they work). You will be required to compose this essay on a laptop and upload it to the Canvas website by the end of the class period. If you do not have access to a laptop, speak to me beforehand so that we can make alternative arrangements. Please notify me and provide formal documentation from the Accessible Education Center (AEC) if you need accommodations for the in-class essays. If you know in advance that you will be absent on the day of an in-class essay, notify me ahead of time to make necessary arrangements.

**Out-of-Class Essays (GELOs 1-5):** In your out-of-class essays, you will analyze and respond to the topics and readings we cover in class. You will submit rough drafts of each, which will undergo significant revision. All draft submissions and participation in peer editing workshops are mandatory and count for part of your final grade for the assignment. If you miss a workshop, your essay will be graded down one full letter grade. All essays must be typed in 12-point font, double-spaced, with 1-inch margins, meet MLA formatting guidelines, and be submitted online via Canvas. You will also be required to submit a hardcopy of your essays in class on the assigned due-date.

**Informal Writing Assignments:** On most days, you will also be asked to complete short, informal assignments at the beginning of class. These may take the form of warm-ups, brainstorms, outlines, free-writes, reading responses, and fact-based

reading quizzes. You may be asked to share these informal writing assignments with the class as part of our discussion for the day. The effort you put into these assignments will directly impact your participation grade for the course.

Online Canvas Responses: Occasionally, you may be required to post to Canvas as part of an online class.

Portfolio: At the end of the semester, you will compile a portfolio of your writing and a short self-reflection essay that documents how you met the learning goals of the course. More information will be available later.

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Word Count</b>	<b>GELO</b>
In-class essay	500	1-5
Out-of-class essays	3,000	1-5
Writing Notebook	4,000	2,3,4,5
Self-Reflection Essay	500	2,3,5

### **Grading Policy:**

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. All assignments, quizzes, and exams are graded on a traditional A-F scale. You must receive a course grade of a C- or better to pass English 1A. If you are UGRM in English, you must earn a D- or higher in ENGL 1A to clear remediation.

Essays are typically evaluated using the following criteria:

An "A" range essay is organized and well-constructed. It demonstrates a clear understanding of the topic and has a focused thesis. Paragraphs are fully developed and discussion of the ideas is apt and specific. The student utilizes appropriate details, lively vocabulary, syntactic complexity and smooth transitions. This paper is virtually free of mechanical errors and is a pleasure to read.

A "B" range essay is less precise and not as convincing as the "A" paper. While it exhibits controlling ideas and supports them with specific examples, it may lack sentence variety and a consistent, smooth flow. This paper may contain minor grammatical/mechanical flaws, but it does show overall competence.

A "C" range essay responds to the essay topic but in a superficial or generalized way. The paragraphs exhibit a lack of firm control of the ideas and contain insufficient supportive detail. Word choice and syntax is somewhat immature and mechanical errors may be frequent enough to distract the reader.

A “D” range essay makes an attempt to respond to the topic but is poorly organized, vague and lacks appropriate examples. The paper demonstrates weak control of ideas and contains serious mechanical and grammatical errors.

An “F” essay does not fulfill any of the requirements of the assignment. It fails to address the topic, it lacks coherence, and it does not reflect mechanical or grammatical competence.

Late Work: For each day that an assignment is late, your grade will be reduced by a half a letter grade. If you are absent the day something is due, it is **still due that day**.

Your grade for the course will be determined as follows:

Essay 2: (Graded A-F) 20%

Essay 3: (Graded A-F) 20%

Oral Presentation: (Graded A-F) 10%

Final Project: (Graded A-F) 10%

Participation: (Graded A-F) 20%

Writing Notebook: (Points converted to letter grade) 20%

A+ = 100-97%	A = 96-93%	A- = 92-90%
B+ = 89-87%	B = 86-83%	B- = 82-80%
C+ = 79-77%	C = 76-73%	C- = 72-70%
D+ = 69-67%	D = 66-63%	D- = 62-60%
F = 59-0%		

### **Attendance:**

You must attend class to receive credit for the informal writing activities at the beginning of class. These cannot be made up.

### **Communication:**

- If you have any questions or concerns during the course, I’m readily available over email or during office hours.
- **That said, if you have a logistical questions about class or need clarification about an assignment, please email two of your classmates before sending me an email.** I want to get you in the habit of relying on your community of classmates and also prepare you for a job, where, most of the time, you will ask your coworkers for help before your boss. If your classmates don’t know, then contact me with your question and the two peers you contacted. If you get this far, it’ll mean my

instructions weren't clear enough, and you'll be doing a favor for your confused classmates. But make sure you've asked around first.

- I will generally answer emails within 24 hours. But please note that any emails received after Friday afternoon may not be responded to until Monday morning—so plan ahead if there is a deadline.

### **University Policies:**

The link below contains university-wide policy information (such as academic integrity, accommodations, etc.) relevant to all courses:

<http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/index.html>

### **Student Technology Resources:**

Computer labs for student use are available in the Academic Success Center at <http://www.sjsu.edu/at/asc/> located on the 1st floor of Clark Hall and in the Associated Students Lab on the 2nd 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 DV and HD digital camcorders; digital still cameras; video, slide and overhead projectors; DVD, CD, and audiotape players; sound systems, wireless microphones, projection screens and monitors.

### **SJSU Peer Connections:**

Peer Connections, a campus-wide resource for mentoring and tutoring, strives to inspire students to develop their potential as independent learners while they learn to successfully navigate through their university experience. You are encouraged to take advantage of their 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 Writing Skills Test (WST), improving your learning and memory, alleviating procrastination, surviving your first semester at SJSU, and other related topics. A computer lab and study space are also available for student use in Room 600 of Student Services Center (SSC). Peer Connections is located in three locations: SSC, Room 600 (10th Street Garage on the corner of 10th and San Fernando Street), at the 1st floor entrance of Clark Hall, and in the Living Learning Center (LLC) in Campus Village Housing Building B. Visit Peer Connections website at <http://peerconnections.sjsu.edu> for more information. 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 at <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. SJSU Counseling Services The SJSU Counseling Services is located on the corner of 7th Street and San Fernando Street, in Room 201, Administration Building. Professional psychologists, social workers, and counselors are available to provide consultations on issues of student mental health, campus climate or psychological and academic issues on an individual, couple, or group basis. To schedule an appointment or learn more information, visit Counseling Services website at <http://www.sjsu.edu/counseling>.

**Course Calendar:**

WEEK	DATE	READING	DUE
INTRODUCTION			
Week 1	Mon, Jan 28	Welcome!  Gottschall, "The Science of Storytelling"	
	Weds, Jan 30	Gottschall, "Infecting an Audience"  How Good Writing Gets Written, Hjortshoj, Ch 4 (Process/Revising)	
Week 2	Mon, Feb 4	Graff & Birkenstein, "Entering the Convo"  Bennett, "Ta-Nehisi Coates and a Generation Waking Up"	
	Weds, Feb 6	Twenge, "Have Smartphones Destroyed a Generation?"	Diagnostic Essay, in-class
Week 3	Mon, Feb 11	<i>Essay Exercises</i>	

STORY & THE PERSONAL ESSAY			
	Weds, Feb 13	Diaz, "The Terror"  Jamison, "Empathy Exams"  Graff & Birkenstein, "Ain't So/ Is Not"	
Week 4	Mon, Feb 18	Gay, <i>Hunger</i> excerpts  Carmichael, "Trying"  Graff & Berkenstein, "I Take Your Point"	
	Weds, Feb 20	Wallace, "This is Water"  Saunders, "On Kindness"  Graff & Birkenstein, "What's Motivating This Writer?"	
Week 5	Mon, Feb 25	<i>Essay Exercises</i>	
	Weds, Feb 27	Peer Review	Essay 2 Draft
STORY IN INNOVATIVE FORMS			
Week 6	Mon, March 4	Wolff, "Bullet in the Brain"  Saunders, "Escape from Spiderhead"	Essay 2 Final
	Weds, March 6	Roupenian, "Cat Person"  Loofbourow, "The Female Price of Male Pleasure"  Khazan, "A Viral Short Story for the #MeToo Movement"	
Week 7	Mon, March 11	This American Life, "How I Got into College"	
STORY TO ENACT CHANGE			
	Weds, March 13	<i>The Mask You Live In</i>	
Week 8	Mon, March 18	<i>The Mask You Live In</i>	

		Graff & Birkenstein, "So What? Who Cares?"	
	Weds, March 20	Thompson, "Your Brain on Poverty"  Eil, "Sometimes Depression Means Feeling Nothing at all"	
Week 9	Mon, March 25	Peer Review	Essay 3 Draft
	Weds, March 27	<i>Essay Exercises</i>	Essay 3 Final
Week 10	Mon, April 1	SPRING BREAK	
<b>STORY &amp; COMEDY</b>			
	Weds, April 3	SPRING BREAK	
Week 11	Mon, April 8	Gadbsy, <i>Nanette</i>	
	Weds, April 10	Minhaj, <i>Homecoming King</i>	
Week 12	Mon, April 15	Felix, "New Brown America"  Barrett-Ibarria, "A Study in Female Anger and Recovery"	
<b>TELLING YOUR STORY</b>			
	Weds, April 17	Cover Letters	
Week 13	Mon, April 22	<i>Essay Exercises</i>	
	Weds, April 24	Peer Review Presentations & Cover Letters	
Week 14	Mon, April 29	Presentations	Cover Letters Due / Presentations
	Weds, May 1	Presentations	Presentations
Week 15	Mon, May 6	Presentations	Presentations
	Weds, May 8	Presentations	Presentations
	Mon, May 13	LAST DAY OF CLASS	
	Weds, May 15	NO CLASS	Portfolio Due

