

## **San José State University**

Humanities and Arts, Department of English and Comparative Literature

English 2

*Critical Writing and Thinking*

Spring 2020

Instructor: Bryan Hoffer, M.A.

### **Class Schedule:**

- Section 25 TuTh 1:30-2:45 pm, Boccardo Business Center 124

**Email:** bryan.hoffer@sjsu.edu

**Office Hours:** FO 226 TuTh 11am-12pm or by appointment

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

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

### **Description**

General Description

*From SJSU:*

In English 2 you will explore the relationship between language and logic in composing arguments. Building on English 1A, you will extend your study of stylistic and grammatical conventions in formal writing

### Section Specific Description

The theme of this course is centered around a critical look into our cultural views on humor, as well as how we rationalize humor based on our experiences and identity. This English 2 theme will allow you to make claims, create arguments, and use logic to understand and define the role that humor plays in our culture and lives. We will incorporate non-fiction texts and research to help us to generate logic in something that is often seen as illogical.

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

Upon successful completion of this course, students 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 your 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).

### **The Time You Will Spend on This Work**

In a 3-unit course like this one, faculty expect that students will spend **a minimum** of forty-five hours for each unit of credit (normally three hours per unit per week). This time includes 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](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-3.pdf) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-3.pdf>.

### **Where You Can Find Information About University Policies**

The Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs (GUP) maintains university-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, etc. You may find all syllabus-related University Policies and resources information listed on GUP's [Syllabus Information web page](http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/>

### **Academic Integrity**

Plagiarism is never acceptable. Never copy your own work, or someone else's. Citations and proper notation are very important in the academic world. All protocol on plagiarism and academic integrity can be referred to in your student handbook. Plagiarism can result in your expulsion from the class and/or the school.

### **Materials**

You will be using electronic devices to access SJSU and Canvas material. This will typically be difficult to do using smaller devices, like cellphones. You are able to rent devices through SJSU if they are reserved ahead of time. Please ask and follow protocol to do so.

Two blank notebooks (**8.5x11"**, **spiral**, **college ruled**) solely dedicated to classwork and homework free writing.

## Readings/Textbooks

### Required Texts:

- *Born A Crime* by: Trevor Noah (ISBN: 9780399588174)
- *Humor Code* by: McGraw and Warner (ISBN: 9781451665420)

### Recommended texts:

I will provide an online copy/selections via Canvas.

- *The Curious Writer, Brief 4th Edition* by Bruce Ballenger (ISBN-13: 978-0205876655)

Various works that will be provided to you via digital scanned copies, or online links:

**You are expected to print these out.**

### Recommended Writing Text:

The Elements of Style (Free Digital Download - Amazon)

## Courtesies

- Cell Phones and other electronic devices: *Neither seen, nor heard. Laptops for in-class formal composition writing and other authorized points only (like peer review). Use of unauthorized electronics will result in 0 classwork credit for the day.*
- Email Protocol: *Proper emailing structure below.*

From: inquiringmind@email.com

To: isittimetogradealready@email.com

Subject: [title], [class and section]

Dear/Hello/Good Morning/Afternoon/Evening \_\_\_\_\_,

Body: [Polite banter about the weather or observational humor, followed by an insightful, well thought out question.]

Thank you/Best/Sincerely,

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Name

(Contact: email)

- Office Appointments: Come see me during office hours (see top), or kindly request another appointment time using the email structure (above). **I want to help you. Please ask questions. Come to me before you are struggling and confused.**

- Readings/Homework Assignments: Everything will be completed before the date on the schedule. This is very important as we will be discussing it during class time.
- Late Policy: I am always glad to help you plan and organize your time. All out of class assignments will be due by the start of the class. All in class assignments will be due by the end of class. Formal Out-of-Class late papers will be docked points per. day. No Informal writing assignments will be accepted late.
- Attendance: Come on time and be prepared to learn. I expect you to participate in class discussions and ask questions if something is not clear. Doing the work is not enough. In terms of learning, the material and active class participation makes the class more enjoyable. Because of this, attendance is very important, since missed class time is a missed opportunity to learn and have issues resolved. Please bring all of your books/literature to the class discussions.
- Absences: If you will miss class for a university sanctioned reason, e.g. a religious holiday, please let me know **ahead** of time using the proper protocol. If you are sick, you will need to make sure that your assignments will be submitted as normal. For the Midterm and Final, only written formal approvals through the college will be considered.

## **Course Content and Assignments**

### *From SJSU*

Diversity: SJSU studies include an emphasis on diversity. In this class, you will engage in integrated reading, writing, and oral assignments to construct your own arguments on complex issues that generate meaningful public debate. Readings for the course will include writers from different ethnicities, gender, and class. Classroom discussion will always be inclusive and respectful of other viewpoints.

Writing: You will write a series of essays informed by research and articulating fully developed arguments about complex social issues. Assignments emphasize the skills and activities in writing and thinking that produce the persuasive argument and the critical essay, each of which demands analysis, interpretation, and evaluation. These writing assignments will give you repeated practice in prewriting, organizing, writing, revising, and editing. This class requires a minimum of 6,000 words, at least 4,000 of which must be in revised final draft form. For each assignment you will be given a specific prompt detailing all the requirements, including due dates, scope, and criteria for evaluating your essay. All writing will be assessed for its level of critical thinking, integrated research, synthesized ideas, and logical structure as well as for its clarity, conciseness, coherence, organization, and proper APA/MLA citation. Writing workshops will precede all major essays, and a peer reviewed version of your essay with substantial comments will be submitted with your final revision.

Logic: You will learn methods of argument analysis, both rhetorical and logical, that will enable you to identify logical structures and distinguish valid evidence from logical fallacies; distinguish denotation from connotation, abstract from concrete, and literal from inferential meaning;

recognize and evaluate assumptions underlying an argument; distinguish the role of audience, context, and purpose in shaping argumentation strategies; and evaluate rhetorical appeals to understand the role of emotion and ethos in relation to logic as part of effective argumentation.

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.

Multimodal assignments: You will be required to participate in discussions that make use of multiple mediums from writing to oral presentation.

Final: The final will be an e-portfolio that includes the critical essay you wrote before entering SJSU, the critical essay you will write for this class, a reflection essay on your progress as a writer and critical thinker this semester and an appendix of evidence.

### **Writing Assignments**

Formal:

Formal Writing Assignments, which are essays and major projects, must be submitted online via Canvas. If I suspect plagiarism, I will manually input it into Turnitin.com. Feel free to check for plagiarism on your own using the Turnitin.com tool before submitting your work.

Standard MLA/APA Formatting for all papers:

<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/13/>

Late papers will be docked 10% per day

Informal:

Informal assignments will consist of classwork and homework assignments that will be completed individually or in groups depending on the assignment. Some will be submitted in class via spiral notebooks and others will be submitted via Canvas.

*Please note* that no late work will be accepted on the informal writing assignments. That being said, I am always glad to talk to you regarding your circumstances before assignments are due, so that we can discuss my recommended plan of action.

## Grading for the academic year

Total ~1000 pts possible:

Assignment	Points	Word Count	GELOs for
Personal Essay	200	1000 (plus prewriting)	2-5
Research Proposal	100	500 (plus prewriting)	1-3
Research and Critical Essay	300	2000 (plus prewriting)	1-5
Formal Presentation	100	500	2-3
Informal Classwork and Homework Assignments	~200	2000	2-5
Final, E-Portfolio	100	500-750	1-3

*Move the decimal place once to calculate your percent, whole numbers, no rounding.*

Traditional Scale by %: 93--100=A, 90--92=A--, 87--89=B+, 83--86=B, 80--82=B--, 77--79=C+, 70--76=C, 67--69 = D+, 63--66 = D, 60--62 + D--, below 60 = F

Please note that grading and other policies are approached holistically and reflective of the department's philosophy and goals. You can refer to details noted here:

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

*From SJSU:*

Grading: The following are the criteria by which essays are typically evaluated in first-year writing courses:

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.

### **Where You Can Go to Get Support as a Writer at SJSU**

Part of becoming a successful writer is learning how and when to seek the support you need.

- **SJSU Peer Connections**

Peer Connections offers 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. There are three mentoring locations: SSC, Room 600 (10th Street Garage on the corner of 10<sup>th</sup> 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](http://peerconnections.sjsu.edu) at <http://peerconnections.sjsu.edu> for more information.

- **SJSU Writing Center**

Located in Clark Hall, Suite 126, the Writing Center offers appointments with tutors who are well trained to assist you as you work to become a better writer. The Writing Center offers both one-on-one tutoring and workshops on a variety of writing topics. To make an appointment or to refer to the Center’s online resources, visit the [Writing Center website](http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter) 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.

### **Where to Access the Technology You Will Need to Do the Work of This Course**

You will need an electronic device out of class that allows you to access the internet and Canvas, and to read the online texts. The University provides students access to technological resources at several locations on campus:

- **Academic Success Center (Clark Hall).** Computer labs for student use are available in the [Academic Success Center](http://www.sjsu.edu/at/asc/) 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.
- **Media Services (Martin Luther King Library).** 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.

**Contact a Reference Librarian**

English & Comparative Literature

Cabrera, Peggy

Phone: 408-808-2034

Email: [peggy.cabrera@sjsu.edu](mailto:peggy.cabrera@sjsu.edu)

See [University Policy F13-1](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F13-1.pdf) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F13-1.pdf> for more details on your right to understand your grades. In your section syllabus, your instructor outlines specifically our grading practices for the year: information on feedback practices, relative weights of assignments, and the grade calculations.

**Important Dates:**

[https://www.sjsu.edu/provost/academic\\_affairs/resources/Academic\\_Calendars/Academic%20Calendar%20AY%202019-20.pdf](https://www.sjsu.edu/provost/academic_affairs/resources/Academic_Calendars/Academic%20Calendar%20AY%202019-20.pdf)

**Tentative Schedule**

*Please note that this schedule is subject to shift with the ebb and flow of the class. Please check our Canvas course for the most up to date information. Other articles will be added to the schedule via Canvas based on current events and discussion.*

<b>Week # (Our first meeting of that week)</b>	<b>Readings, Themes, and Dates</b>
<b>Week 1 (1/23)</b>	Introduction and Syllabus
<b>Module 1:</b>	<b>Establishing your Cultural Connections to Humor</b>
<b>Week 2 (1/28)</b>	Personal Essay Prompt <i>Born a Crime</i> - The Chameleon, The Mulberry Tree
<b>Week 3 (2/4)</b>	<i>Born a Crime</i> - Run, Born A Crime

<b>Week 4 (2/11)</b>	<i>Born a Crime</i> - Trevor Pray Peer Review - Personal Essay Rough Draft
<b>Week 5 (2/18)</b>	<i>Born a Crime</i> - Outsider, Colorblind Personal Essay Final Draft Due
<b>Module 2:</b>	<b>Looking into Cross-Cultural Connections to Humor</b>
<b>Week 6 (2/25)</b>	<i>The Humor Code</i> - Introduction, Colorado, Los Angeles
<b>Week 7 (3/3)</b>	<i>The Humor Code</i> - New York
<b>Module 3:</b>	<b>Researching and Understanding Humor</b>
<b>Week 8 (3/10)</b>	<i>The Humor Code</i> - Tanzania Research Project and Prompt
<b>Week 9 (3/17)</b>	<i>The Humor Code</i> - Japan Research Proposal Due
<b>Week 10 (3/24)</b>	<i>The Humor Code</i> - Scandinavia
<b>Spring Break</b>	Spring Break (3/30-4/3)
<b>Week 11 (4/7)</b>	<i>The Humor Code</i> - Palestine
<b>Week 12 (4/14)</b>	<i>The Humor Code</i> - The Amazon Peer Review Research Project Essay Rough Draft
<b>Week 13 (4/21)</b>	<i>The Humor Code</i> - Montreal
<b>Week 14 (4/28)</b>	Presentations Research Project Essay Final Drafts Due
<b>Week 15 (5/5)</b>	Presentations E-Portfolio, Reflection on Writing Due
<b>Week 16 (5/12)</b>	Finals

**Week 17 (5/19)**

**Finals**