

San José State University
Department of English & Comparative Literature
ENGL 1A: First-Year Writing, Section 51, Fall 2021

Course and Contact Information

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Office Hours:	MW 1230pm-130pm/also available at these times on ZOOM link
Class Days/Time:	MW 4.00pm-5.15pm
Classroom:	BBC 222
Prerequisites:	Reflection on College Writing
GE/SJSU Studies Category:	GE Area A2 Written Communication I

What Will We Do in English 1A?

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.

But what *is* a rhetorical situation? Every day, with or without realizing it, you participate in a series of rhetorical exchanges. Perhaps a friend is trying to persuade you to go for a pizza whilst your mom has been pressing for the health benefits of eating vegetables. When you turn on the TV perhaps Bill Maher has been trying to entice you into laughing at Fox News or perhaps Apple have convinced you the iPhone one million is so great that it's time up upgrade?

In all of these scenarios rhetorical strategies are being used to encourage *you* to see things a certain way. In this class we are going to use and develop our **critical** reading and writing skills to better understand these strategies and how they work. We will **analyze** a range of texts (from essays to audio-visual texts) which will focus, to start with, on **education**; an area in which you have considerable experience and expertise already. We will consider: how education shapes us, how history and issues of identity impact our experience of education, why we're at college, who should pay for it, what should we be doing outside the classroom to educate ourselves and what does the growth of the 'University of Everywhere' mean for the future of institutions like SJSU? This theme will likely segue into other directions, depending on what we discover and what we wish to explore further – technology, race and representation, and the criminal justice system may well figure in our readings as we progress through the semester.

As we read we will assess how the rhetorical tactics the authors use work and how effective they are. As we try to understand how these authors use **language** to persuade an **audience** to agree with them we will also look at where these texts sit within a wider context – who are the authors responding to, who are they challenging, who do they agree with? This process of

mapping where the text stands in relation to other opinions involves an open and inquiring approach to research, which will, in turn, prepare **you**, to enter into the conversation. Armed with a greater knowledge of the **context** of the debate and informed via a rigorous research process you will be able to use your own selection of rhetorical tools and tactics to present, to **advocate**, for *your* opinion. So whilst we will be looking at how others exercise influence over us through their words what I'm most interested in is what YOU think, the process that has helped you arrive at this position and how you will, through your writing, convince us to see things from your perspective.

What are our Course Learning Objectives (CLOs) in English 1A?

These goals are:

- Read to learn.
- Read to write.
- Write with an increased awareness of the process.
- Read and write with an increased awareness of the language you use.
- Reflect on and assess your own writing, process and product.

The goals above are known as the Course Learning Objectives (CLOs). These CLOs have been designed to allow you to meet the General Education Learning Objectives (GELOs). The GELOs are detailed below.

What are the GELOs you will have mastered at the end of this class:

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

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

What Books Will I Need?

- Ballenger, Bruce. *The Curious Writer*, Brief a la Carte Edition, 5/E
ISBN-10: 0134724097
ISBN-13: 9780134724096
Rental copies should be cheaper.
- Bullock, Richard. *The Little Seagull Handbook with exercises*, 4/E
ISBN-13 978-0393-53701-7

Available at San Jose Spartan Bookstore.

Other Readings

Additional readings can be found on Canvas.

The Guardian Newspaper

This year, I have picked a high quality news source which is **free**. You may donate or subscribe to the paper if you are able and wish to do so, of course, but it is not essential. You will need to access the paper via the internet, so internet access will be vital throughout the class. You may want to download the app if that helps you stay across the news more effectively as this is going to be a key aspect of our theme this semester.

The link for The Guardian may be found here:

<https://www.theguardian.com/us>

What Else Will I Need for Class?

- You will largely work with pen and paper in this class; please make sure you have a journal/exercise book that you bring to every class meeting. You will use this journal for taking notes in class, for writing exercises, essay sketches and for sentence work. Please make sure you can pull pages out if I want to collect them.
- Obviously, pens/pencils and highlighters will also be needed.
- Please make sure you have a folder in which to keep your work, in particular annotated readings (we will be producing a number of these). If at any point you would like to discuss your progress with me, bring this folder to our meeting.
- You will usually not need to bring in your textbook, but I will give you warning if you do.
- You will need regular Internet and email access outside of class.
- You will need to have the ability to print copies of essays for me and for workshop and to print readings when required.
- A pack of index cards will likely be helpful.

How Will We Stay in Touch During the Course?

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 checking the messaging system through MySJSU to learn of any updates.

What Kind of Assignments Will We Do in English 1A?

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. I will not assign more work than this, but please bear in mind that we all work differently; some students may need more support from the writing center, or take more time to read assignments. However, if you are struggling with the assigned workload please come and see me to discuss strategies to address this.

One of our central themes in this class will be **global citizenship, what it is, what it looks like in our communities and what kinds of citizens we want to be**. The following assignments will give you an overview of what we will be doing. However, these may be subject to amendment in their detail depending on how we move through the course. The diagnostic essay and informal assignments will take place in class; all other assignments will be completed outside of class. At the end of the assignment descriptions, you will find a table which will give you an idea of how many points/the percentage value of each assignment.

Diagnostic Essay

In this in-class essay, you will write a letter home honing on a particular news story or news item; you will attempt to engage a familiar audience with your news story so that you can engage them in the discussion you are starting.

Personal Essay

You will explore and describe a personal connection to this news story. Your task will be to speak to a less familiar audience of peers and instructor to bring them into this story that has engaged you.

Profile Essay

In this essay, you will interview and write about a particular person who can shed some light on the issue/news story you are following. Are they engaged citizens who are trying to change the world in this some way or do they have an experience that could give us a new way to engage with this news story. You will be expected to find a subject, arrange and record an interview, create a transcript and produce a magazine-style feature about this person.

Mapping The Problem

In this essay, you will be asked not to argue but to research and collect data and evidence that you will then use to help you determine the position you'd like to take in your final persuasive presentation. You will research and explore various arguments and approaches to your news story to identify what the problem is, why this issue needs to be addressed. In the following assignment, the presentation, you will advocate for the solution.

Persuasive Presentation

In this presentation, you will advocate for some kind of urgent reform to some problem related to your news story; the presentation should make effective use of rhetorical tools and research/evidence with which you support your claims (making use of peer reviewed articles). Submitted work must include process materials – notes, workshop, etc.).

Informal Writing Assignments

There will be regular, short writing assignments either in or outside class related to our readings, writing processes, etc; these will be opportunities to practice the rhetorical moves you are mastering and to refine your sentences.

Canvas Discussions

You will be asked to post/contribute to Canvas discussions each week. These are to be submitted to the board by midnight Sunday night before class. These will be varied; you might be asked to share some writing, to comment on the work of others, or take part in an online conversation about a reading. Please enter posts in the text box (not attachments). **Late posts are not awarded points.**

In-Class Participation

This component is for ACTIVE participation (see below for what this looks like in the context of our classroom!).

Final portfolio

At the end of the semester you will compile a portfolio of your writing that documents how you met the learning goals of the course including a final reflection which you will write in class and in which you will explore what you have learned.

Assessment Data

Please note that our class has been randomly selected to contribute assessment data to the university for their team to evaluate the effectiveness of our work at the university. What this means is that I will randomly select the work of six students to pass on to them (one project or paper completed toward the end of the course). This work is anonymized before it is passed to the assessment team and will help the university continue to improve its offerings for students to make sure we best serve SJSU's writing needs and develop more effective rubrics This has no bearing on your grade, our class activity or design, and is purely for the university's research purposes. If you have any questions or concerns about this though please do reach out to me and we can discuss further.

Assignment Word Count and Learning Goals

Assignment	Word Count (max)	GELO	POINTS/PERCENTAGE OF GRADE
Diagnostic Essay and Reflection	1000	2, 3, 5	50/5%

Profile Essay	1000	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	200/20%
Mapping the Problem	1000	2, 3, 5	200/20%
Persuasive presentation	1000	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	200/20%
Informal Writing Assignments	2000 overall	1, 2	100/10%
Final Portfolio and Reflection (Department Assessment)	1000	1	50/5%
Canvas Discussions (100 points) and Active In-Class participation (100 points)	1000	1, 2	200/20%

Grading In This Class

Feedback on your work is intended to help you apply lessons from class as you complete assignments, and to transfer lessons learned from one assignment to the next. Throughout this class you will get rigorous feedback from me and your peers and you will be expected to do the same as a participant of this learning community.

My hope is that together we find a way to focus our attention on your development as a writer and the centrality of the **writing process**. Developing an effective writing process (focused on reading and writing) is the most important thing for you to do in order to become an effective writer in the long-term. An effective writer is the writer who writes with a sense of purpose and an understanding of the tools they want to use to achieve that purpose. This writer may reach for more than what they are yet capable of, but when they fail to attain their vision, they learn something for the next attempt. This writer's learning and development is a continuous and ongoing process; it does not end with a grade. In a bid to acknowledge that effort, process and ambition, work is always graded on both process and product, never on product alone. I ask you to look after and turn in your process work so that you can get the recognition you deserve for that portion of your work.

In addition, you will also receive a rubric for each assignment which will tell you what I am interested in seeing in your work (we will attempt to create some of these rubrics together so they reflect both yours and my shared values). My hope is that we will in this classroom honor the values that I feel, really matter in your development as a writer: your engagement, your commitment, your perseverance as a writer, and your respect for and participation in our learning community.

Please reach out to me if anything appears confusing or if you have questions about the rubrics or grading during the assignment process and pre-writing period. The more you know before points are assigned, the more you can work toward your goals and the better we can honor your hard work and effort.

Attendance: According to [University Policy F-69-24](#), attendance is not a criterion for grading *and* states that “Students should attend all meetings of their classes, not only because they are responsible for material discussed therein, but because active participation is frequently essential to insure maximum benefit for all members of the class. Attendance per se shall not be used as a criterion for grading.”

Active Participation in Class Discussions:

Please do understand that absence from class impact your ability to participate in this class and will make it harder for you to achieve your goals for your grade. Given also that essential preparatory work for your assignments is done in class and because assignments all build on one another, not participating in our community will likely affect your performance in this class.

How We Will Get the Most Out of Our Collaboration

- **Office hours:** I am a resource for you and here to help with queries or to clarify any concerns you might have about the class or your assignments. Make use of me! You may make an appointment or drop in during office hours (in person or online). Either way, I welcome the chance to support your writing as best I can.
- **Attendance:** is required. Assignments in this class are cumulative, with each one preparing you for the next one so missing class also means you will fall behind on crucial preparatory work for your written assignments. Given how much ground we cover in the course of a semester, it is vital to keep up. The risks of non-attendance are: **your overall grade will be adversely affected. In particular, please be aware that absences on workshop days have a profoundly detrimental impact on your grade for that assignment.**
If there are reasons that attendance has become a struggle and you need extra support, reach out. As faculty, we want to see you succeed in this community and I want to find ways to help all of you do that.
- **Missed work:** If you do miss class (excused or unexcused), do ask your colleagues for assistance in catching up on the missed work and be available to them for the same. With a large number of students, it is not easy for me to respond to promptly (or at times, at all), so it makes sense that instead of floundering, feeling overwhelmed or waiting for me to reply, you find the means as a learning community to support one another. How might you do this? Exchanging numbers and emails with peers will help!
- **Excused absences (for illness, family emergencies, etc.):** *If possible*, it would be helpful if you could communicate such absences in advance of class. I may at times also ask for documentation for illness. Work that needs to be made up as a result of an EXCUSED ABSENCE **only** must be done so by arrangement with me.
- **Punctuality:** Given how distracting late arrivals are for the whole class, I ask that you arrive on time. If you know you are going to be late (as with an absence) telling me ahead of time allows me to accommodate this with the least amount of disruption to our community.
- **Deadlines:** I do expect you to meet all deadlines and that your assignments meet the requirements outlined in the assignment. This is an expectation borne of trying to prepare you for the working world where missed deadlines are simply not tolerated. If deadlines are proving difficult to meet, please come and talk to me so we can strategize ways to help you meet them and avoid any impact on your grade.
- **Format:** please submit your papers to me at the start of class. They should be: double spaced, Times New Roman, point 12, and make sure that page numbers are marked to ensure ease of reading (this is to make it easier for me and your peers to read your work and assist you with our feedback). Please also staple your work before you turn it in.
- **Printing:** Please also be prepared to print your papers when asked. You may have to do this for me for final drafts which I will ask you to turn in during class (though I will always also ask for a digital submission to Canvas), or for workshop where hard copies that your peers can mark-up are very helpful for you to have. Please do not email your papers to me as I have a large number of students and it becomes very hard to keep track of your work.
- **Email:** is the best way to communicate with me. If you email after 5pm please note that I may not be able to respond till after 9am the following morning. Similarly, with queries that come in on Friday night - be prepared that I may not respond till the following Monday. Please plan accordingly for this scheduling issue. Longer queries specific to your writing or an assignment are best addressed during office hours.
- **Online discussions are a part of your assigned homework:** these will be posted to Canvas every week (these may be based on readings you have completed from the text book or articles I ask you to read). The discussions will usually be posted by Monday. You will then be asked to respond to the discussion board before our next class (Wednesday and then interact with two peers before the following class by Sunday midnight). Please write in the text box; no attachments. Please also note, midnight, Sunday is a hard deadline: **I do not accept late discussion posts. Please also note you may be asked to complete additional discussion boards for class or in-class.**
- **Your work** as part of our collective inquiry into writing, reading, and democracy is public in this class. We will share work in Canvas regularly. (Please note: because of this I must reserve the right to publish your work to the class as part of our workshop activities).
- **Peer Review:** I ask that you give thoughtful and engaged feedback to peers during peer review and via your engagement on discussion boards. I also ask that you work sincerely, fairly and collaboratively on group projects (your peers will give feedback on your level of engagement, effort and commitment at the end of projects and whenever we

come to the end of a group assignment). We are a community and communities thrive when we all give as much as we take.

- **Workshops:** are an essential part of this class. Your participation in workshops is critical to your success, and mandatory. These workshops are conducted in class. To get the most out of workshops, you *must* bring to workshops a completed draft, and you *must* turn in to me the workshop copies as well as the final, revised draft of the essay. (Only with documented reason and prior approval can I allow you to complete workshops with your group via email.) **As stated earlier and repeated here for emphasis, unexcused absences on workshop days will impact your grading contract.** I also expect you to actively engage with the work of your class mates during workshops and treat their labor with respect and consideration; we have the choice to really help one another this year, and I believe that if we do, we will all get a great deal from our collaboration.
- **Participation:** Class participation takes a number of forms from listening to your peers, contributing to discussion, completing in class assignments to workshoping. I expect you to participate in ALL these ways. Learning to express your ideas in a public forum is an important life skill and this class is a safe place to learn how to master this. It does not come easily to everyone but I hope to see improvements in this skill over the year – as hard as it might feel to speak up, I expect you to try. Remember: participation in in-class activities (and on Canvas Boards) are a key component of your grading contract with me. The more prepared you are before class, the easier this will feel: do the reading and any required written work so you don't have to 'hide' in class.
- **Class interaction:** As I have mentioned, I expect active participation. In whatever way you participate, I expect thoughtful and respectful interactions in this class. This means being alert, open and actively listening during discussion but it also means being respectful of your colleagues and their opinions. We may disagree with one another but that should not impact the compassion and respect with which we try to understand one another's point of view.
- **Classroom Etiquette:** Please honor and respect the labor in our classroom (including mine) by coming to class prepared. You will get much more out of this class if you have completed all assigned work beforehand. I think it is fair to ask that you do not sleep, text, do homework for other classes, play around with cell phones or socialize in a distracting manner during this class. Part of being a member of a learning community means respecting the learning that is ongoing in our community and all of these behaviors undermine that process. I will do my best to shape activities in a way that is useful and helpful to your success, but I cannot carry the load of making our class an effective learning space alone. I ask you to help in this by attending class with your whole heart and in making our classroom a place where all of us (including me) can learn and grow.
- **Plagiarism:** Make sure you understand what plagiarism is – if you have any doubts about how you are handling your material, please come and see me before you turn in your work. Academic dishonesty has serious repercussions and will certainly have a profound impact on the terms of the grading contract. There is no reason this should happen, but if you have any doubts, please talk to me.

I really look forward to our work together!

[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 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**
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](#) 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.

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>.

Course Schedule

English 1A Fall 2021

Please note this schedule is subject to change – you will be informed of changes either via Canvas or email. Please mark deadlines and workshop dates in your class so you do not miss vital delivery dates.

The schedule is color-coded. **Yellow** are workshop dates. **Blue** are final deadlines and the **magenta** will signal to you the various inquiry questions/modules that will guide us through this course.

Please also remember missing a workshop date will affect the terms of your grading contract.

DB= discussion board; there will be 10 DB threads (dates are in the calendar).
There will be a number of short writing activities; dates are not yet assigned for these.

Course Schedule

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
1	8/23	Welcome to English 1A. Introductions. Reading: texts; what is a text? The difference between summary and analysis. Identifying audiences and purpose – minding the G.A.P. Syllabus and collective norm setting. Module 1: what is global citizenship?
1	8/25	DB 1 DUE. Before class read: Ballenger, Reading as Inquiry. Readings on global citizenship: Ron Israel, Drew Noble Alexander (bring your questions to class). What is a reading about? The art of summarizing. Letter writing assignment and research. Naomi Wolf Introduction: social annotating and summarizing
2	8/30	Brainstorming and pre-writing for diagnostic essay. Before you pick your story, think!
2	9/1	DB 2 DUE. Diagnostic Essay in-class
3	9/6	Exploring genres and audiences. Exercise in writing about the same character for different audiences. Introduction to the Personal Essay assignment. Brainstorming for the assignment Before class read: Ballenger, Writing as Inquiry

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
		Reading: <i>The Ungrateful Refugee</i> Annotating assigned reading in class. Pre-writing strategies. Body Map Memory exercise. Discuss Personal Essay assignment – conventions of the genre. Researching and reflecting on your own experience. Integrating analysis into your story.
3	9/8	Before class read: Ballenger, Personal Essay Reading: Class discussion: Abstract and Concrete Language Introducing narrative elements into a personal essay, creating characters Grammar and Punctuation
4	9/13	DB 3 DUE Before class, Reading: Steve Peha on punctuation and <i>Shitty First Drafts</i> (first drafts and making a mess). Class discussion on global citizenship, how do we engage as citizens. What is the relationship between citizenship and information? In-class debate. How so we start to think about the kind of citizens we want to be?
4	9/15	Workshop Personal Essay
5	9/20	DB 4 DUE. Final Draft Personal Essay; turn in on Canvas, bring printed copy to class. Module 2: What does citizenship look like around us? Introduce Profile essays. Interviewing techniques. Transcribing. Finding models of the profile essay
5	9/22	Analysis of profile essays and breaking down the characteristics of the profile essay.
6	9/27	DB 5 DUE. Mapping assignment introduced; how do we investigate arguments? Practicing rhetorical reading and writing. What do we think an argument is? Stasis theory. Murder mystery activity. What does argument achieve? Using a reading to discuss the rhetorical triangle; appeals. Naming what we've been reading. Logic, Pathos, Ethos.
6	9/29	Library research. Sources and evaluating evidence.
7	10/4	Profile essay session: Anecdotes, quotations and framing the profile essay Integrating dialogue and quotation.
7	10/6	Opening and closing gestures of the profile essay
8	10/11	DB 6 DUE. Workshop Profile Essay
8	10/13	Final Draft Profile Essay Module 3: What kind of citizens do we want to be? Finding an arguable claim and looking at the mapping assignment with a view to producing an argument that solves a problem.
9	10/18	DB 7 DUE Before class: bring in your sources, discuss the different views on the subject with your groups. Practicing the art of summary, why it matters.
9	10/20	Bring your summaries to class for a mini-workshop

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
10	10/25	Mapping/Bibliography Assignment due How do we use the material from this assignment to build toward the next one? Discuss effective presentations/audience/purpose – try this out in class.
10	10/27	Before class: finding effective presentations (Ted Talks) Selecting your evidence and structuring your presentation.
11	11/1	Powerful openings: hooks, context, thesis and designing a roadmap Thesis and Opening/Closing gestures.
11	11/3	Using your research to create an outline for your presentation. Using powerpoint and multimodality to create your presentation.
12	11/8	Writing to present, to speak and public speaking. The importance of a roadmap and transitions for the listener.
12	11/10	Metaphorical language in a presentation. Making effective slides.
13	11/15	Workshops for Presentations
13	11/17	Presentations
14	11/22	DB 10 DUE Presentations
14	11/24	Presentations
15	11/29	Presentations
15	12/1	Presentations
16	12/6	LAST DAY OF INSTRUCTION - FINALS - TBC