

# Critical Thinking and Writing Section 24

## ENGL 2

Fall 2022 3 Unit(s) 08/19/2022 to 12/06/2022 Modified 08/23/2022

### Contact Information

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**Instructor:** Dr. Alex Davis

**Office:** FOB 219

**Phone:** TBD

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**Class Days/Times:** Tuesday-Thursday 1:30-2:45 Sweeney Hall 413

### Course Description and Requisites

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English 2 is a course that focuses on the relationship between language and logic in composing arguments. Students learn various methods of effective reasoning and appropriate rhetorical strategies to help them invent, demonstrate, and express arguments clearly, logically, and persuasively.

**GE Area(s):** A3. Critical Thinking and Writing

**Prerequisite(s):** Completion of GE Areas A1 and A2 each with grades of C- or better.

**Note(s):** ENGL 2 is not open to students who successfully completed ENGL 1B.

#### Section-Specific Course Description

**This course meets T-Th from 1:30-2:45pm in Sweeney Hall Rm. 413**

Historicism contents itself with establishing a causal connection between various moments in history. But no fact that is a cause is for that very reason historical. It became historical posthumously, as it were, though events that may be separated from it by thousands of years. A historian who takes this as his point of departure stops telling the sequence of events like the beads of a rosary. Instead, he grasps the constellation which his own era has formed with a definite earlier one. Thus, he establishes a conception of the present as the 'time of the now' which is shot through with chips of Messianic time. —Walter Benjamin, *Theses on the Philosophy of History* (1940)

Our course will explore the ways that gender, race, and class have been critical factors in the history of the United States, and how they continue to be sites of both contention and liberation in the 21st century. We will read Angela Davis's *Women, Race, & Class*, as well as *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*, along with short stories, poems, essays, and news articles to explore how these categories still impact life in America.

Letter Graded

# \* Classroom Protocols

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## 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 equality) that generate meaningful public debate. Readings for the course will include writers of different ethnicities, genders, and socio-economic classes.

**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 (such as warrants, evidence, qualification, rebuttal; enthymemes and syllogisms) 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.

### Classroom Protocol

Each student is expected to come to class prepared to engage in discussions of the week's readings and to participate in individual and group writing assignments (drafting, peer review, editing, etc.). It is imperative that you keep up with the reading and writing schedule. Discussions and in-class assignments will help each of you develop your ideas for essays. Students are expected to complete a minimum of three hours of coursework per unit, per week, which for this three unit course amounts to nine hours per week.

Your participation in class discussions and peer review is factored into the grade of each out-of-class essay and worth up to 10% of your grade (see the rubric for each assignment). It is crucial that you keep up with the reading and discussion schedule, that you submit your essay drafts on time, and that you participate meaningfully in the peer review process (see peer review guidelines on Canvas). If you miss these assignments, you can expect to lose participation points on your essays as well. Except for documented medical emergencies and COVID-related absences, **no late work will be accepted unless an extension has been requested and approved 24 hours prior to the assignment due date.**

**OFFICE HOURS & INSTRUCTOR COMMUNICATION:** As your instructor, my goal is to help you successfully navigate all aspects of our course, as well as academics in general. To that end, I hold weekly office hours during which you are free to come in and discuss anything relevant to your education. This is a time for you to ask clarifying questions, seek guidance, and express your interests or concerns. Over the years, I have found that it is crucial for students to communicate with instructors early and often. I do not require that students come to office hours, but have noticed that in the majority of cases, those who do tend to be more successful in the course. I am also available via email (see [Email Guidelines](#)).

**ATTENDANCE:** You are allowed two absences. I do not distinguish between "excused" and "unexcused" absences; your two allowed absences are yours to take or leave as you want or need to, and you don't need to explain the reason to me. Excessive absences (more than two classes), tardiness, or early departure without prior approval from the instructor will greatly diminish your chances of passing the course. Should you have to miss all or part of any class, it will not be the instructor's responsibility to fill you in on what you missed. It is strongly recommended that you exchange email or phone information with some of your classmates so that you can stay on top of things.

**ELECTRONICS:** Excessive use of personal electronic devices diminishes the sense of community in the classroom. It is impossible for you to participate in discussions and class exercises in a meaningful way when your focus is elsewhere. Cell phones, laptops, and music listening devices are not permitted during class. Phones should be put away with ringers off so that

you can focus on the material covered that day (I make an exception to this rule for parents with small children or other caretakers). If you are unable to sit for the duration of our class time without these devices, then this class will likely not work for you—and you will earn a failing grade. On occasions when class exercises require use of computers for research or paper editing, gaming and/or checking social media sites (TikTok, Instagram, Twitter, etc.) will not be allowed. Those who violate this policy will be asked to leave for the day.

**LANGUAGE:** Be respectful of your classmates and instructor. Derogatory, insulting, sexist, racist, or homophobic language will not be tolerated. You are encouraged to freely engage in classroom discussions and to express your opinions and perspectives, but remain mindful of *how* your language is being used. Points will be deducted for repeat-offenders, and in certain cases you may be asked to leave. The exception to this policy is where the texts and sources we will use are concerned.

## ENGL 2

This course is open to all students needing to fulfill GE Area A3 (Critical Thinking). It is not open to students who have successfully completed ENGL 1B.

Prerequisite: ENGL 1A or Stretch English (with a grade of C- or better)

## Faculty Web Page and MYSJSU Messaging

Course materials such as syllabus, handouts, notes, assignment instructions, etc. can be found on the Canvas Learning Management System course login website. You're responsible for regularly checking with the messaging system through MySJSU to learn of any updates. For help with using Canvas see Canvas Student Resources page.

## Time Commitment

Success in ENGL 2 is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of 45 hours over the length of the course (normally three hours per unit per week) for instruction, preparation/studying, or course related activities, including but not limited to internships, labs, and clinical practica. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus.

### Final Examination or Evaluation

In ENGL 2, our learning culminates in a digital Reflection and Portfolio Assignment. In this assignment, we will gather samples of our writing that demonstrate our learning; we will write a reflection essay that explains what we have learned, how we learned it, and how we will use it in future learning; and we will submit our portfolio for consideration to other people in the first-year writing program. This is our chance to identify and articulate what we've learned and what we'll take forward with us into future learning/writing experiences.

## Program Policies

First-Year Writing policies are listed at the following website: <https://www.sjsu.edu/english/frosh/program-policies.php> (<https://www.sjsu.edu/english/frosh/program-policies.php>).

## Program Information

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Welcome to this General Education course.

SJSU's General Education Program establishes a strong foundation of versatile skills, fosters curiosity about the world, promotes ethical judgment, and prepares students to engage and contribute responsibly and cooperatively in a multicultural, information-rich society. General education classes integrate areas of study and encourage progressively more complex and creative analysis, expression, and problem solving.

The General Education Program has three goals:

**Goal 1:** To develop students' core competencies for academic, personal, creative, and professional pursuits.

**Goal 2:** To enact the university's commitment to diversity, inclusion, and justice by ensuring that students have the knowledge and skills to serve and contribute to the well-being of local and global communities and the environment.

**Goal 3:** To offer students integrated, multidisciplinary, and innovative study in which they pose challenging questions, address complex issues, and develop cooperative and creative responses.

More information about the General Education Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) can be found on the [GE website](https://sjsu.edu/general-education/ge-requirements/overview/learning-outcomes.php) (<https://sjsu.edu/general-education/ge-requirements/overview/learning-outcomes.php>).

## Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs)

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### GE Area A3: Critical Thinking and Writing

Area A3 courses develop students' understanding of the relationship of language to logic. By engaging students in complex issues requiring critical thinking and effective argumentation, A3 courses develop students' abilities to research and analyze important topics and to construct their own arguments on issues that generate meaningful public debate and deliberation. Courses include explicit instruction and practice in inductive and deductive reasoning as well as identification of formal and informal fallacies of language and thought. Completion of Area A2 (Written Communication I) with a minimum grade of C- is a prerequisite for enrollment in Area A3. Completion of Area A3 with a grade of C- or better is a CSU graduation requirement.

### GE Area A3 Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of an Area A3 course, students should be able to:

1. locate, interpret, evaluate, and synthesize evidence in a comprehensive way, including through library research; and integrate research findings into oral and written arguments through appropriate citation and quotation;
2. use a range of rhetorical and logical strategies to articulate and explain their positions on complex issues in dialogue with other points of view;
3. identify and critically evaluate the assumptions in and the contexts of arguments; and
4. use inductive and deductive logic to construct valid, evidence-supported arguments and draw valid conclusions.

**Writing Practice:** Students will write a minimum of 6000 words, at least 4000 of which must be in revised final draft form.

## Course Requirements and Assignments

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### ENGL 2 Course Requirements and Assignments (Subject to change)

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. That amounts to approximately nine hours per week for this course.

**Reading Assignments:** Expect reading assignments for every class. These readings will provide the material for our discussions as well as material and models for your essays. Because our readings are tied so closely to our writing assignments, it is absolutely essential that you keep up with the reading. Please have readings finished by the beginning of class on the day they are assigned.

### Required Textbook

*Women, Race, and Class* by Angela Davis

*The Autobiography of Malcolm X* by Malcolm X and Alex Haley

All supplemental readings can be found in the Files section of our Canvas page.

**Participation** includes miscellaneous work in class, on Canvas, 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. Your participation total will not appear in Canvas and will only be averaged to your grade at the end of the semester.

**Late Work:** No late work will be accepted without prior approval from me. Extensions must be requested 24 hours before an assignment is due.

**Essays:** The three major essays for this course account for 60% of your overall grade. Each out-of-class essay is the culmination of several earlier assignments, including a topic proposal, outline, and rough draft. While these assignments are scored individually, they

can also impact the overall quality of your final revised draft. Specifically, submitting the rough draft and participating meaningfully in the peer editing process account for 10% of your grade for each essay (see essay rubrics).

**Canvas/In-Class Assignments:** In addition to each week's reading assignments, you will need to complete Metacognitive Reading Logs, Reading Self Assessments (quizzes), Online Discussions, and various other assignments.

**Portfolio:** At the end of the semester, you will submit a portfolio consisting of a roughly 1000 word reflection essay and an appendix of writing you've done over the course of the semester.

Course Assignments	Word Count	Percent of Total Grade	GELO
Essay 1: Personal Narrative Essay	1000 - 1250	15%	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
Essay 2: Current Event Analysis	1250 - 1750	20%	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
Essay 3: Persuasive Argument Essay	1750 - 2000	25%	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
Canvas Reading Logs, Quizzes, Homework, Class Work, etc.	~500/week	15%	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
Participation	n/a	10%	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
Portfolio	1000	15%	1, 2, 3, 4, 5

## ✓ Grading Information

### 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.

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.

### Grade Breakdown

%	Letter Grade	%	Letter Grade	%	Letter Grade
94 - 100%	A	80 - 83.9%	B-	67 - 69.9%	D+
90 - 93.9%	A-	77 - 79.9%	C+	64 - 66.9%	D

87 - 89.9%	B+	74 - 76.9%	C	60 - 63.9%	D-
84 - 86.9%	B	70 - 73.9%	C-	0 - 59.9%	F

## University Policies

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Per [University Policy S16-9 \(http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf\)](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf), relevant university policy concerning all courses, such as student responsibilities, academic integrity, accommodations, dropping and adding, consent for recording of class, etc. and available student services (e.g. learning assistance, counseling, and other resources) are listed on [Syllabus Information web page \(https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php\)](https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php) (<https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php>). Make sure to visit this page to review and be aware of these university policies and resources.