San José State University
College of Humanities and the Arts/ Department of English & Comparative Literature
ENGL 2, Critical Thinking and Writing, Section 11, Spring, 2022

Course and Contact Information

Instructor(s): Johnny Damm
Office Location: Online
Telephone: 408-924-5046
Email: john.damm@sjsu.edu
Office Hours: M/W 12:15-1:00 (Zoom)
Class Days/Time: M/W 3:00-4:15
Classroom: Clark 225B
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 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 films 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.
Course Format
This is an online course, utilizing Zoom and/or Canvas for all aspects of class. The course requires a computer and sufficient internet connectivity for regular Zoom meetings. Canvas will be used to submit all assignments, as well as for regular class activities.

Faculty Web Page and MYSJSU Messaging
All course materials such as syllabus, handouts, videos, assignment instructions, etc. can be found on Canvas Learning Management System course login website at http://sjsu.instructure.com. You are responsible for regularly checking with the messaging system through MySJSU on Spartan App Portal http://one.sjsu.edu (or other communication system as indicated by the instructor) to learn of any updates. For help using Canvas, see the Canvas Student Resources page (http://www.sjsu.edu/ecampus/teaching-tools/canvas/student_resources).

GE Learning Outcomes (GELO)
1. Upon successful completion of the course, you will be able to 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).

Course Learning Outcomes (CLO)
1. Upon successful completion of the course, you will be able to analyze films and other artifacts of popular culture, putting them in their larger historical and political context;

2. craft effective arguments on the messaging of films and other artifacts of popular culture;

3. use analysis and argument to engage more fully with academic and national communities;

4. become an active rather than passive consumer of media.

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.

**Required Texts/Readings**

**Textbook**

You aren’t required to buy any textbooks.

**Other Readings**

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

- W.E.B. DuBois, excerpt from *The Souls of Black Folk*
- Trinh T. Minh-ha, “Outside In Inside Out”
- Dr. Stacy L. Smith, et al., “Latinos in Film: Erasure On Screen & Behind the Camera Across 1,200 Popular Movies”
- Michelle Alexander, excerpt from *The New Jim Crow*
- Aviva Chomsky, excerpt from *Undocumented: How Immigration Became Illegal*

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

- *Get Out* (2017), Jordan Peele
- *Candyman* (2021), Nia DaCosta
- *Sleep Dealer* (2008), Alex Rivera
- *Zootopia* (2016), Byron Howard, Rich Moore
- *Parasite* (2019), Bong Joon-Ho
- *Us* (2019), Jordan Peele

**Course Requirements and Assignments**

Success in this course 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.

**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 Film  
Essay # 2 (Critical): Analysis of a Film  
Essay # 3 (Persuasive Argument): Arguing an Issue (Immigration, Criminal Justice Reform, related issues)  
Visual Essay (Multimodal): Dream Board for Our Communal Future

**Assignment Word Count and Learning Goals**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Word Count</th>
<th>GELO</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Essay # 1</td>
<td>1,250-1,500</td>
<td>2,3,4,5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Essay # 2</td>
<td>1,250-1,500</td>
<td>2,3,4,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay # 3</td>
<td>1,500-1,750</td>
<td>1,2,3,4,5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Visual Essay (Communal Dream Board)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>2,3,45</td>
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</table>

**Final Examination or Evaluation**

On our class’s assigned final date and time, your ePortfolio will be due to Canvas.

**Grading Information**

Essay # 1 25%; Essay # 2 25%; Essay 3 25%; Visual Essay 10%; Participation (Module Completion) 15%

Participation will be figured by your completion of each day’s modules by the assigned time. Your participation grade will be totaled at the end of the semester, so it will not appear in your Canvas gradebook.

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 be on time to our class meetings, complete the module activities in the allotted times, participate in discussion, and be courteous to your peers and to your teacher.

Zoom Classroom Etiquette

• Please Turn Your Camera On for every class meeting. Contact me directly if you need accommodations in this regard.

• Mute Your Microphone: To help keep background noise to a minimum, make sure you mute your microphone when you are not speaking.

• Be Mindful of Background Noise and Distractions: Find a quiet place to “attend” class, to the greatest extent possible.

• Avoid video setups where people may be walking behind you, people talking/making noise, etc.

• Avoid activities that could create additional noise, such as shuffling papers, listening to music in the background, etc.

• Position Your Camera Properly: Be sure your webcam is in a stable position and focused at eye level.

• Limit Your Distractions/Avoid Multitasking: You can make it easier to focus on the meeting by turning off notifications, closing or minimizing running apps, and putting your smartphone away (unless you are using it to access Zoom).

• Use Appropriate Virtual Backgrounds: If using a virtual background, it should be appropriate and professional and should NOT suggest or include content that is objectively offensive or demeaning.
Students are not allowed to record without instructor permission

Students are prohibited from recording class activities (including class lectures, office hours, advising sessions, etc.), distributing class recordings, or posting class recordings. Materials created by the instructor for the course (syllabi, lectures and lecture notes, presentations, etc.) are copyrighted by the instructor. This university policy (S12-7) is in place to protect the privacy of students in the course, as well as to maintain academic integrity through reducing the instances of cheating. Students who record, distribute, or post these materials will be referred to the Student Conduct and Ethical Development office. Unauthorized recording may violate university and state law. It is the responsibility of students that require special accommodations or assistive technology due to a disability to notify the instructor.

Per University Policy S16-9 (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). Make sure to visit this page to review and be aware of these university policies and resources.

Relevant policies for FROSH English can also be found at https://www.sjsu.edu/english/frosh/program-policies.php
This schedule is subject to change with fair notice, with students being informed of any changes through Canvas announcements.

**Course Schedule**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines</th>
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</table>
| 1    | Jan 26 | ZOOM
Introduction |
| 2    | Jan 31 | ZOOM
The Politics of Popular Representation
READ: Look through “African American Photographs Assembled for 1900 Paris Exposition” (online)
CLASS ACTIVITY: Watch clips from Birth of a Nation and The African Americans: Many Rivers to Cross |
| 2    | Feb 2  | ONLINE-NO MEETING
CLASS ACTIVITY: Watch Get Out Part 1
HOMEWORK: Read W.E.B. Du Bois, “From The Souls of Black Folk” |
| 3    | Feb 7  | ZOOM
CLASS ACTIVITY: Watch and Discuss Get Out Part 2
HOMEWORK: Read bell hooks, “Teaching Resistance: The Racial Politics of Mass Media” |
| 3    | Feb 9  | ZOOM
CLASS ACTIVITY: Get Out Discussion Cont. |
| 4    | Feb 14 | CLASS ACTIVITY: Watch Candyman Part 1
| 4    | Feb 16 | CLASS ACTIVITY: Watch and Discuss Candyman Part 2
HOMEWORK: Read “Essay Guidelines” (Canvas), Write Working Thesis |
| 5    | Feb 21 | CLASS ACTIVITY: Candyman Discussion Cont. |
| 5    | Feb 23 | CLASS ACTIVITY: Candyman Discussion Cont.
ESSAY # 1 WORKING THESIS AND OUTLINE DUE
HOMEWORK: Complete Peer Editing Draft |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Feb 28</td>
<td>ESSAY # 1 PEER EDITING DRAFT DUE</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>HOMEWORK: Complete Final Draft</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Mar 2</td>
<td>CLASS ACTIVITY: Watch <em>Sleep Dealer</em> Part 1</td>
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<td>ESSAY # 1 FINAL DRAFT DUE</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Mar 7</td>
<td>CLASS ACTIVITY: Watch and Discuss <em>Sleep Dealer</em> Part 2</td>
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<td>HOMEWORK: Read Aviva Chomsky, <em>Introduction to Undocumented: How Immigration Became Illegal</em> (PDF in Canvas)</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Mar 9</td>
<td>CLASS ACTIVITY: <em>Sleep Dealer</em> discussion cont.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Mar 14</td>
<td>CLASS ACTIVITY: <em>Sleep Dealer</em> discussion cont.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Mar 16</td>
<td>CLASS ACTIVITY: Discuss <em>The New Jim Crow</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Mar 21</td>
<td>CLASS ACTIVITY: Watch <em>Zootopia</em> Part 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Mar 23</td>
<td>CLASS ACTIVITY: Watch and Discuss <em>Zootopia</em> Part 2</td>
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<td>Mar 28/30 HOLIDAY</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Apr 4</td>
<td>CLASS ACTIVITY: <em>Zootopia</em> and <em>The New Jim Crow</em> discussion cont.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>HOMEWORK: Complete Peer Editing Draft</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Apr 6</td>
<td>ESSAY # 2 PEER EDITING DRAFT DUE</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>HOMEWORK: Complete Final Draft</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Apr 11</td>
<td>CLASS ACTIVITY: Introduce Visual Essay: Dream Board for Our Communal Future Assignment</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>ESSAY # 2 FINAL DRAFT DUE</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Apr 13</td>
<td>CLASS ACTIVITY: Communal Dream Board cont.</td>
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<td>HOMEWORK: Complete Communal Dream Board</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Apr 18</td>
<td>CLASS ACTIVITY: COMMUNAL DREAM BOARD DUE</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Apr 20</td>
<td>CLASS ACTIVITY: Watch <em>Parasite</em> Part 1</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>Apr 25</td>
<td>CLASS ACTIVITY: Watch and discuss <em>Parasite</em> Part 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Apr 27</td>
<td>CLASS ACTIVITY: <em>Parasite</em> discussion cont.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>May 2</td>
<td>CLASS ACTIVITY: Watch <em>Us</em> Part 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>May 4</td>
<td>CLASS ACTIVITY: Watch and discuss <em>Us</em> Part 2</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>May 9</td>
<td>CLASS ACTIVITY: Discuss <em>Us</em> and Essay # 3&lt;br&gt;Intro ePortfolio&lt;br&gt;HOMWORK: Complete Peer Editing Draft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>May 11</td>
<td>ESSAY # 3 PEER EDITING DRAFT DUE&lt;br&gt;HOMWORK: Complete Final Draft</td>
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<td>May 16</td>
<td>LAST CLASS&lt;br&gt;CLASS ACTIVITY: Discuss Hollywood Diversity Report&lt;br&gt;ESSAY # 3 FINAL DRAFT DUE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final</td>
<td>May 19</td>
<td>ePortfolio due to Canvas by 5:00 pm Thursday, May 19</td>
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