

Seminar in Advanced Composition Section 01

ENGL 105

Spring 2023 4 Unit(s) 01/25/2023 to 05/15/2023 Modified 02/01/2023

Class time: TTH, 10:30-11:45AM

Class location: Boccardo Business Center (BBC), 130

Writing is my way of expressing—and thereby eliminating—all the various ways we can be wrong-headed.

~ Zadie Smith

I write because I don't know what I think until I read what I say.

~ Flannery O'Connor

The ability of writers to imagine what is not the self, to familiarize the strange and mystify the familiar, is the test of their power.

~ Toni Morrison

English 105 is an advanced writing course that focuses on public writing (broadly defined). We will approach public writing from a rhetorical perspective. Through the study of literary, rhetorical, and professional texts, you will be introduced to different theories of rhetoric for writers. You will also learn how to apply this literacy to write persuasively in different rhetorical situations. You will learn to write in various genres toward various goals using logical, ethical, emotional, and timely strategies that take up and address academic, socio-cultural, and civic issues.

Contact Information

It can sometimes take me a day or two to answer emails, and I rarely check, much less answer at night or over the weekend. It's not a "you" thing; it's a "me" thing. I'm always trying to juggle work, family, and personal responsibilities, and one of the tools I have at my disposal is boundaries. If you need a speedy reply, you can try to call my office (I'm often there M-F, 8:00am-5:00pm), stop by office hours, or let me know in your subject line that you need a timely response.

Professor: Dr. Ryan Skinnell

Email: ryan.skinnell@sjsu.edu

Office: FOB 111

Phone: 408-924-4207

Website: <http://www.RyanSkinnell.com> (<http://www.RyanSkinnell.com>)

Office Hours

Thursday, 12:30 PM to 3:30 PM, FOB 111 or on Zoom

I plan to be in my office during our office hours, so please feel free to drop by. In general, it is preferable if you let me know you're coming so I don't step out for a walk or to make copies when I know you're coming. It also helps me make time/space for all my students. But if you just want to pop in, do it! If you'd prefer a Zoom meeting, just let me know so I can set it up.

I'm also available BY APPOINTMENT. Unless I have another specific commitment, I'm usually pretty flexible about meeting.

Send me a message, and we can set up a time. You can do this even if all you want to do is shoot the breeze!

Course Description and Requisites

Advanced expository writing. Prerequisites: Upper-division standing required. Prior completion of ENGL100W is suggested but not required.

Letter Graded

* Classroom Protocols

This course can be demanding. The material is challenging and course requirements are substantial.

That said, COVID times continue to be what COVID times are, so we're going to need manage our expectations appropriately. We're going to try to be like wolves—we'll work together as a pack, leave no one behind, occasionally fight a Kodiak bear (*Ursus arctos middendorffi*).

During most class periods, we will discuss readings, do group activities, and hear presentations. I strongly encourage students to visit me in my office hours to discuss course materials and/or assignments throughout the semester—especially in the event that course expectations are overwhelming or confusing.

It's an English course, I know, but let's do some quick math. ENGL 105 is a 4-unit course. That means we are signing up to do a minimum of 12 hours of study per week just for this class. 2½ hours will be class time. The remaining 9½ hours a week, you will work on your own or with your peers to prepare for class and complete assignments. I have designed the work using this math to guide us. I will refer to it often to help you manage this workload over the semester.

Please note:

Sometimes projects and discussions include material that can be contentious and even potentially upsetting. We may encounter materials that differ from and perhaps challenge our ideas, beliefs, and understanding of reality. Students are encouraged to discuss issues about such materials with me. In class, discussion is welcome and encouraged, but comments found to be intentionally offensive, disrespectful, or combative will not be tolerated.

Please also note:

If you have special needs or accommodations requests, see me as soon as possible. Failure to do so may result in forfeiting accommodations to which you're entitled. And even if you're not "entitled" to accommodations, talk to me anyway so we can make this an environment in which you can learn.

Other Available SJSU Resources

The University provides all students several resources to help us successfully learn in this course. The services provided include counseling and psychological care, mentoring and tutoring, access to food and housing, to technology, and writing support.

- [Accessible Education Center](#)
- [Counseling and Psychological Services \(CAPS\)](#)
- [Peer Connections](#)
- [SJSU Cares](#)
- [Spartan Food Pantry](#)
- [Student Technology Resources](#)
- [Writing Center](#)
- [Other Campus Resources](#)

Program Information

The following statement has been adopted by the Department of English for inclusion in all syllabi: In English Department Courses, instructors will comment on and grade the quality of student writing as well as the quality of ideas being conveyed. All student writing

should be distinguished by correct grammar and punctuation, appropriate diction and syntax, and well-organized paragraphs. The Department of English reaffirms its commitment to the differential grading scale as defined in the SJSU Catalog ("The Grading System").

Grades issued must represent a full range of student performance:

- A = excellent;
- B = above average;
- C = average;
- D = below average;
- F = failure.

Within any of the letter grade ranges (e.g. B+/B/B-), the assignment of a +(plus) or -(minus) grade will reflect stronger (+) or weaker (-) completion of the goals of the assignment.

Program Learning Outcomes (PLO)

Upon successful completion of an undergraduate degree program in the Department of English and Comparative Literature, students will be able to:

1. Read closely in a variety of forms, styles, structures, and modes, and articulate the value of close reading in the study of literature, creative writing, or rhetoric.
2. Show familiarity with major literary works, genres, periods, and critical approaches to British, American, and World Literature.
3. Write clearly, effectively, and creatively, and adjust writing style appropriately to the content, the context, and nature of the subject.
4. Develop and carry out research projects, and locate, evaluate, organize, and incorporate information effectively.
5. Articulate the relations among culture, history, and texts, including structures of power.

Department Information:

Department Name: English and Comparative Literature

Department Office: FO 102

Department Website: www.sjsu.edu/english (<https://www.sjsu.edu/english>)

Department email: english@sjsu.edu (<mailto:english@sjsu.edu>)

Department phone number: 408-924-4425

Course Materials

Course Format

Technology Intensive, Hybrid, and Online Courses

It will be useful to have internet access in class for research purposes, but it will not be required without advance warning. Some software applications we might use include: Zoom, Canvas, SJSU Google Suite, a PDF reader, Discord, etc. If you need to borrow laptops, iPads, and more, please contact [Student Computing Services](#). If you need software training, contact [Student Technology Training Center](#).

Faculty Web Page and MYSJSU Messaging

Course materials such as syllabus, handouts, notes, assignment instructions, etc. can be found on [Canvas](#). You're responsible for regularly checking messages through MySJSU to learn of any updates. For help with using Canvas see [Canvas Student Resources page](#).

Library Liaison

Our library liaison is Peggy Cabrera. She is available to help you find resources to do your work in this course. She has set up for students [a library resource page for the Department of English and Comparative literature](#). The tutorials on this page will help you to understand academic research processes and tools, and they will help you to develop an eye for the most valuable

resources for your work.

You will find Peggy Cabrera's contact page by clicking on [this link](#).

The Art of Public Writing

Author: Jack, Zachary Michael

Publisher: Parlor Press

ISBN: 978-1-64317-217-0

Other Readings

Additional readings will be posted on Canvas and/or located by members of the class.

☰ Course Requirements and Assignments

These are the instruments we will use to structure our time together.

<i>Assignment</i>	<i>Points</i>	<i>Course learning outcomes</i>
Participation	150	
Reading responses (x12)	10 pts/each (120 total)	
Write to Vote	150	
Digital Counterstory?	180	
Multimodal project	200	
Presentation	100	
Final reflection	100	
Total	1000	

Community Engagement: Class Participation

For a class like this one, much of the learning happens in class because the most useful learning happens in community-- supporting and learning from one another. Therefore, it is imperative you be in class and participate as best you can. Think of it as a responsibility to our community. In general, class participation entails: (1) demonstrating that you've completed the readings/assignments, (2) contributing to class discussions, (3) completing in-class activities and assignments, and (4) supporting all your community members.

Reflective Practice (on-going): Reading Responses

Your reading responses are primarily reflective writing. The prompt is simple: what value did you get from the readings and/or what did it echo for you? Addressing this question could take an infinite number of forms, but the goal is to think with writers, scholars, and/or class community members in order for you to put yourself and your experiences in relation to the course materials, including those you might feel little to no interest in.

Please post your responses on Canvas by 12:01am on Thursday morning. These responses are worth 10 points. You will earn 10 points for a good faith effort. By "good-faith effort," I mean the submission responds appropriately to the assignment and does not violate the academic integrity policy. A post that I judge to not be a "good-faith effort" may receive fewer than 10 points. A

post that makes a particularly useful or insightful contribution to our collective inquiry can potentially earn more than 10 points.

Situating Yourself: Write to Vote

The major assignments in this class ask us to think about genres, BUT ONLY in so much as they help us understand, respond to, and/or engage with situations that we encounter in the world. For this assignment, I'm providing the situation: we live in an ostensible democracy, but the United States has been imperfect (to say the least) since its founding as a democratic republic in 1776. For the last 250 years or so, up to and including until today, U.S. Americans have been arguing over voting rights—who gets them, how we should exercise them, and so on—in an incredible array of genres, outlets, and media. In this situation, we're writing in defense of traditions and institutions. Your job is to participate in the argument (at least in a hypothetical way) for protecting and/or advancing voting rights in a **WRITTEN GENRE** (which could be print-based or digital). You will identify part of the argument you'd be interested in participating in, identify a model genre (or genres) that people have previously used to address this recurrent situation, and develop a potential contribution of your own. Note: you don't have to publish it or share it with the world in any way, but it should be oriented to a public audience, which is defined by your selections. We'll talk about this more in class.

Contesting Knowledge: Digital Counterstory?

In Write 2 Vote, you situated yourself in defense or support of voting rights. In Digital Counterstory, you'll be situating yourself against or in opposition to a form of systemic injustice. Drawing on the readings and examples we encounter in class, you'll develop a digital counterstory—that is, a counterstory written with the goal of online or digital publication. If you're not comfortable engaging with hot-button contemporary issues, that's okay. You may choose to develop your digital counterstory in relation to a past historical moment. Again, you don't have to distribute your project beyond the confines of the class, but it should still be oriented to a public audience, which is defined by your selections. We'll talk about this more in class.

Creating Knowledge: Multimodal Situations

Stay tuned...

Sharing Knowledge: Presentation

You'll essentially report on your multimodal project. You'll have up to 10 minutes to help us get to know your situation and your strategy for response. You are welcome to incorporate pieces of your other assignment as you see fit.

Metacognitive Practice: Final Reflection

For scholars and students, the purpose of reflection is to revisit our own work and capture learning that may carry forward from one learning event/task to the next. Reflection is a crucial part of a student's and scholar's career, and it is especially important when what you're doing doesn't *obviously* align with your next classes, research projects, or career goals. Your final assignment in this course is a reflection.

In this course, I've told you that you will have learned some things (refer to the Learning Outcomes on the syllabus). Drawing on the assignments you completed in this course, you will write a reflection (no more than 750 words) in which you make an argument that you have achieved the outcomes in this class such that you deserve a passing grade. This isn't a chance to tell me how great I am or how great the class was, but to talk about your learning.

I will read this essay to understand how you interpret your own development in this course. Bear in mind, the goal is to interpret your *development*, not necessarily a steady course of progress. Which is to say, your best argument may be about progress as a writer, but maybe not. Maybe you can make a better case that you developed meta-awareness about your own learning habits, or about your intellectual preferences (even if they weren't incorporated in this class), or even about your limits.

As you tackle this challenge, it will be useful to draw on specific examples from your own work in the class, including:

- Any discussion posts critical to your development as a writer or your understanding of writing
- The major assignments
- Class discussions, activities, community engagements

How and where might the learning outcomes be interpreted, contested, extended, qualified, refined, to account for your adaptation as a writer? A successful reflection will help us both arrive at some new understanding of and appreciation for the learning you achieved in the course.

EXTRA CREDIT

There *may* be an opportunity for extra credit if I can get it arranged in time involving a rhetorician or two from local universities. Stay tuned, and feel free to ask about details.

✓ Grading Information

Official policy...

All work must be submitted on time. Unexcused late work will be graded down a full letter grade for every day it is late. If there is a reason you cannot make a deadline, contact me BEFORE THE DEADLINE. You must turn in all assignments to pass the class.

However...

Seriously, if something comes up, talk to me. I'm more concerned about your learning than your punctuality, so if there's an issue, let's see what we can figure out together. I want you to get the chance to learn and earn the grade you want. I want you to be a member of the class community, even if sometimes you have to step back for a minute. I want you to walk away from this class with a sense that you got something from it that you can carry with you. So let's make that our guiding light and bend the official policy around it.

Breakdown

Grade	Points	Percentage
A	930 to 1000	93 to 100%
A minus	900 to 929	90 to 92%
B plus	870 to 899	87 to 89 %
B	830 to 829	83 to 85%
B minus	800 to 829	80 to 82%
C plus	760 to 799	77 to 79%
C	730 to 759	73 to 75%
C minus	700 to 729	70 to 72%
D plus	660 to 699	67 to 69%
D	630 to 659	63 to 65%
D minus	600 to 629	60 to 62%

University Policies

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.

Course Schedule

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
1	1/26	<p>Due: none</p> <p>During Class: Introductions, syllabus, our intellectual task</p>
2	1/31	<p>Before Class: Read Carolyn Miller, "Genre as Social Action" (access on the "Readings (https://sjsu.instructure.com/courses/1556599/pages/readings)" page)</p> <p>Due: Respond to Canvas Discussion Board #1 (https://sjsu.instructure.com/courses/1556599/discussion_topics/4874493) before 12:01AM on the day of class</p> <p>During Class: Situations and strategies, Write to Vote</p>
2	2/2	<p>Before class: no reading. Find TWO texts in the world that attempt to address voting rights and post them on the "Texts about Voting Rights" discussion board.</p> <p>During Class: Genre, again, plus commonplaces; writing to vote</p>
3	2/7	<p>Before class: Read Jack, Preface & Ch. 1 (pp. ix-15)</p> <p>Due: Respond to Canvas Discussion Board #2 before 12:01AM on the day of class</p> <p>During Class: Again with the commonplaces & genre</p>

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
3	2/9	<p>Before class: Read Jack, Chs. 13-14 (pp. 224-246)</p> <p>Due: nothing yet! :)</p> <p>During Class: Opinions & whatnot</p>
4	2/14	<p>CLASS WILL NOT BE MEETING THIS WEEK. SKINNELL IS AT A CONFERENCE IN CHICAGO.</p> <p>Before class: Reading TBD</p> <p>Due: Respond to Canvas Discussion Board #3 before 12:01AM on the day of class</p> <p>During Class: Stay tuned for online activities...</p>
4	2/16	<p>CLASS WILL NOT BE MEETING THIS WEEK. SKINNELL IS AT A CONFERENCE IN CHICAGO.</p> <p>Due: Initial draft of your Write 2 Vote piece, submitted on Canvas.</p> <p>During Class: Peer review on Canvas</p>
5	2/21	<p>Before class: Reading TBD</p> <p>Due: Respond to Canvas Discussion Board #4 before 12:01AM on the day of class</p>
5	2/23	<p>Before class: Reading TBD</p>
6	2/28	<p>Before class: Reading TBD</p> <p>Due: Respond to Canvas Discussion Board #5 before 12:01AM on the day of class</p>
6	3/2	<p>Before class: Reading TBD</p> <p>Due: Polished draft of your Write 2 Vote piece, submitted on Canvas.</p>

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
7	3/7	Before class: Reading TBD Due: Respond to Canvas Discussion Board #6 before 12:01AM on the day of class
7	3/9	Before class: Reading TBD
8	3/14	Before class: Reading TBD Due: Respond to Canvas Discussion Board #7 before 12:01AM on the day of class
8	3/16	Due: Initial draft of your Counterstory piece, submitted on Canvas.
9	3/21	Before class: Reading TBD Due: Respond to Canvas Discussion Board #8 before 12:01AM on the day of class
9	3/23	Before class: Reading TBD
10	3/28	Before class: Reading TBD Due: Respond to Canvas Discussion Board #9 before 12:01AM on the day of class
10	3/30	Due: Polished draft of your Write 2 Vote piece, submitted on Canvas.
11	4/4	Before class: Reading TBD Due: Respond to Canvas Discussion Board #10 before 12:01AM on the day of class
11	4/6	Before class: Reading TBD
12	4/11	Before class: Reading TBD Due: Respond to Canvas Discussion Board #11 before 12:01AM on the day of class
12	4/13	Before class: Reading TBD Due: Initial draft of your Multimodal Situations piece, submitted on Canvas.
13	4/18	Before class: Reading TBD Due: Respond to Canvas Discussion Board #12 before 12:01AM on the day of class

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
13	4/20	Before class: Reading TBD
14	4/25	Before class: Reading TBD
14	4/27	Due: Polished draft of your Write 2 Vote piece, submitted on Canvas.
15	5/2	During Class: Presentations
15	5/4	During Class: Presentations
16	5/11	During Class: Presentations
16	5/13	During Class: Presentations
Final Exam	TUES, 5/23	BBC 130, 9:45AM-noon Due: Final Reflection