

First Year Writing Section 88

ENGL 1A

Fall 2024 3 Unit(s) 08/21/2024 to 12/09/2024 Modified 08/21/2024

Contact Information

Instructor:	Timothy Cech
Email:	timothy.cech@sjsu.edu
Class Days/Time:	Monday / Wednesday - 9:00am-10:15am
Classroom:	Sweeney Hall 229
Office Location:	Faculty Office Building 213 ZOOM
Office Hours:	Monday 11:00-1:00pm, and/or by appointment in-person or over Zoom
Prerequisites:	Completion of Reflection on College Writing
GE/SJSU Studies Category:	A2: Written Communication

Course Description and Requisites

English 1A is an introductory course that prepares students to join scholarly conversations across the university. Students develop reading skills, rhetorical sophistication, and writing styles that give form and coherence to complex ideas for various audiences, using a variety of genres. GE Area: A2

Prerequisite: Completion of Reflection on College Writing

Letter Graded

Classroom Protocols

ENGL 1A Course Content

Diversity: SJSU is a diverse campus. As such, our course is designed to include an emphasis on a diverse range of voices and viewpoints. We will engage in integrated reading and writing assignments to construct our own arguments on complex issues that generate meaningful public discussions.

Writing: Writing is at the heart of our class. Our exploration of writing will allow us to prepare ourselves and each other for academic and real-world writing scenarios. Assignments give students repeated practice in all phases of the writing process: prewriting, organizing, writing, revising, and editing. Our class requires a minimum of 8000 words, at least 4000 of which must be in revised final draft form. More specific descriptions and instructions will be distributed for all major assignments in class.

Reading: There will be a substantial amount of reading for our class, some of which will come from texts I select (listed below) and some of which will be from sources you locate.

Final Experience: We will compile a portfolio at the end of the semester that includes selected examples of your writing produced for our class, as well as materials from your RCW Canvas course. We will talk more about the portfolio later in the semester.

Time Commitment

Success in ENGL 1A 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 1A, 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.

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.

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>)

We will need to arrive to class on time and prepared. In the event of absence, it is generally considered courteous to send an email to an instructor. Attendance will be monitored for health and safety. During in-class discussions, collaborative work, and freewrites we will need to be mindful and respectful of each other so that we can create a safe and secure learning environment. Questions and comments are essential to the classroom experience, so I encourage us all to contribute generative comments and clarifying questions.

Students should expect to attend all class meetings, not only because you are responsible for material discussed, but because active participation is a benefit for all members of the class. In-class work is a major factor in grading criteria and such work is accepted for credit only if a student is physically and intellectually present. Students who know in advance that they will miss one or more classes should reach out so that make-up work may be arranged.

Lastly, this course emphasizes *process* over product. Completing the shorter assignments will naturally lead to success with the major assignments.

Program Information

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 Goals

A stranger journeys into a strange land to overcome a strange challenge... how to complete their General Education required English composition course?

Who are they? Why do they need to do this? What is to be gained or lost? What exactly do they need to do to achieve this? Why do they even care about this? And, for that matter, why should *we*, neither a stranger nor one in a strange land, care about what they want? Furthermore, why should an entirely disconnected audience—one who has no real stakes in the outcome—care whether this stranger achieves what they need?

Well, that's where the art of rhetoric and narrative come into play. They may be among the greatest tools to be equipped with in pursuit of one's ambitions, objectives, hopes, and, yes, dreams. Life, much like a story, flourishes in relation to how one can convince another person or entity to think, feel, or do something in which they are in direct or passive opposition.

In this course we will be charged with studying, producing, and critiquing different genres of composition with attention to how persuasion is aided by an understanding of narrative. We will consider its forms, types, structures, features, and liabilities. We will scrutinize how functions in popular culture, social interactions, politics, technological advancements, identity construction, and the nature of belief. We will also experiment with and dismantle such conventions to suit the needs and expectations of an audience. And, most importantly, we will practice how we may apply such a framework to meet our personal and professional pursuits regardless of genre.

Of particular interest are the rhetorical features of effective communication: **author**, **text (genre)**, **purpose**, **context**, and **audience**. Additionally, we will practice identifying, leveraging, and synthesizing strategies of rhetoric which provoke emotion (**pathos**), convey logic (**logos**), and assert credibility (**ethos**).

Although our course material does frame storytelling and narrative conventions as guides for different varieties of communication, this is not a semester-length creative writing workshop. Our primary objective is developing and deepening our skills as logical, emotional, and ethical communicators within a much larger context: our own lives.

Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs)

GE Area A2: Written Communication

Written Communication I courses cultivate an understanding of the writing process and the goals, dynamics, and genres of written communication, with special attention to the nature of writing at the university. A grade of C- or better designates that a student has successfully oriented reading and writing practice in English to support college level research and learning and to share learning with C- or better is a CSU graduation requirement.

GE Area A2 Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of an Area A2 course, students should be able to:

1. demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the content, context, effectiveness, and forms of written communication;
2. perform essential steps in the writing process (prewriting, organizing, composing, revising, and editing);
3. articulate an awareness of and write according to the rhetorical features of texts, such as purpose, audience, context, and rhetorical appeals;
4. integrate their ideas and those of others by synthesizing, explaining, analyzing, developing, and criticizing ideas effectively in several genres; and
5. demonstrate college-level language use, clarity, and grammatical abilities in writing.

Writing Practice: Students will write a minimum of 8000 words, at least 4000 of which must be in revised final draft form.

Course Materials

Textbooks? Where we are going, we won't need textbooks. There is nothing you are required to purchase to successfully complete this course.

Having said that, this course is reading and writing intensive nevertheless. All required reading materials will be provided free through Canvas as PDFs, covering many different genres of composition and featuring a diversity of perspectives and positions.

Materials we are required to bring to each class meeting include:

- a **device** capable of running word processing software;
- letter-sized **paper**;
- a **pen or pencil**.

Technological Equipment

The only required software is a reliable web browser and a word processor capable of saving files in **.doc or .docx formats**. In-class and outside-of-class work will be submitted to our Canvas page. The platform (as well as our collective workflow) is rather unkind to file extensions other than **.doc or .docx formats**. Therefore, it bears stating again: **assignments are to be submitted only as .doc or .docx files**.

We will have opportunities to use tools that may benefit the scope and vision of our compositional quests, particularly during one of our late-stage challenges. These tools are entirely optional, so please consider them as complimentary cosmetics for our inventory. It is important to note that the following software is free to all enrolled students in good academic standing:

Adobe Creative Cloud

<https://www.sjsu.edu/ecampus/software-tools/teaching-tools/video-creative/adobe/students.php>

Microsoft 360

<https://portal.office.com/>

[TUTORIAL NOTE: Use your university email address and SJSUOne password to access software for free.]

Course Requirements and Assignments

Success in this course is based on the expectation that we will spend **a minimum of 45 hours over the length of the course for each unit of credit (AKA three hours per unit per week)**. Accounting for these hours includes attending class, studying course materials, participating in course-related activities, and completing both major and minor assignments.

There will be three major projects to be completed this semester: **a personal narrative, a satirical essay, and a multimodal artifact project**. Each project will refine an essential component of critical and creative thinking. We will discuss these major assignments throughout the semester.

Smaller assignments will cover informal and formal writing produced in multiple modes: written, oral, aural, spatial, and visual. Weekly reading and writing assignments are designed to guide us through the stages of essay construction while deepening the scope of our ideas.

According to institutional expectation, this class requires a minimum of 8,000 words written by semester's end, at least 4,000 of which must be in revised final draft form. Coursework has been designed so that we may successfully satisfy this. To that aim, our graded activities and assignments include:

Personal Narrative Essay Project: 20% of final grade (GELO 2, 4, 5)

Narrate an important event from your or a loved one's life where you/they were needed to complete a difficult task despite. You will construct a work of persuasive storytelling from said experience using narrative pattern. This could be a social, environmental, professional, academic, and/or aspirational challenge you experienced. 1500 words in revised form.

Satirical Essay Project: 20% of final grade (GELO 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)

Write a piece of satirical commentary on a current political, cultural, or social issue/trend. We will think critically about how argumentation is deployed through ironic use of rhetorical appeals. This project will require a minimum 3 externally cited sources. 1500 words in revised form.

Multimodal Essay Project: 20% of final grade (GELO 2, 3, 4, 5)

Research a marginalized or underrepresented subculture, community, or cause in which you have a staked interest and create a multi-genre project that humanizes said group through counternarrative. This project will require a minimum 3 externally cited sources. 1500 prospectus in revised form and a multimodal artifact.

Short Writing Assignments and Essay Projects (outside-of-class): 20% of final grade

Regular reading assignments and self-reflective responses. 250-500 words per assignment.

In-class Participation: 15% of final grade

Actively engaging with course material in-person at the group level. Participation will be based on our involvement in daily discussions, group exercises, peer feedback, quick writes, and verbal contributions.

SJSU Writing Program Portfolio: 5% of final grade

Curate a final portfolio of selected essays and assignments completed over this semester and over the summer RCW program. This portfolio will also require us to write a reflection essay and an annotated bibliography which demonstrate to an audience your writing devilmint in terms of rhetorical principles and the essential steps of college-level writing.

Grading Information

Our grading schema is based on the proportional values of your engagement with the writing process and your incorporation of class material into its stages of construction.

Personal Narrative Project: 20%

Satire Project: 20%

Multimodal Project: 20%

SWAs: 20%

Participation: 15%

Portfolio: 5%

Grading criteria for the three major projects (Personal, Satire, and Multimodal) will be weighed proportionally to the following elements:

1. **Proposal:** 25% of project's total value
2. **Initial Draft:** 25% of project's total value
3. **Revised Draft/Artifact:** 25% of project's total value
4. **Process Letter:** 25% of project's total value

Declining to submit work for any one of these four stages will significantly affect your cumulative grade on a major assignment. For example, if one were to not complete a proposal for Project 1, but submitted an initial draft, a revised draft, and a process letter at their corresponding deadlines, then the highest grade one could receive for the entire project would be 75%, or a C.

Specific requirements for each assignment will vary, but in all cases assessment will be based on evidence of applied energy, imaginative thought, and intentional awareness of **purpose, context, and audience** in a composed work.

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The following are the criteria by which major assignments are evaluated in first-year writing courses:

The "A" writing assignment is organized and well-developed, demonstrating a clear understanding and fulfillment of the assignment's requirements, written in a unique and compelling voice. This work takes creative risks and applies original thought. It will show the student's ability to use language effectively and persuasively.

The "B" writing assignment demonstrates competence in the same categories as an "A" essay, but it may not be fully developed in one or more of the previously stated areas. It will respond to the topic suitably and may contain some grammatical, mechanical, or usage errors.

The "C" writing assignment will complete the minimum requirements of the assignment, but it may not be fully developed, and it may demonstrate a superficial treatment of its topic. It may show weakness in mastery of grammar, mechanics, usage, or voice.

The "D" writing assignment will neglect to meet the assignment's requirements and it may be superficial in its treatment of the topic. It may substantially deviate from the assignment's purpose or fail to stay on topic. It may contain many grammatical, mechanical, and/or usage errors that interfere with reader comprehension.

Unless an arrangement has been discussed with the instructor in advance, **late work will not receive full credit**. Such assignments will incur an automatic 10% total point reduction for every two days they are late. Assignments will not be accepted for credit two weeks following the deadline.

Extra credit opportunities are minimal and will occasionally be available in the form of optional experiments within our major and minor assignments. These will be indicated wherever applicable within assignment prompts or detailed during an in-class session.

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<i>A plus</i>	<i>98 to 100%</i>
<i>A</i>	<i>93 to 97%</i>
<i>A minus</i>	<i>90 to 92%</i>
<i>B plus</i>	<i>87 to 89 %</i>
<i>B</i>	<i>83 to 86%</i>
<i>B minus</i>	<i>80 to 82%</i>
<i>C plus</i>	<i>77 to 79%</i>
<i>C</i>	<i>73 to 76%</i>
<i>C minus</i>	<i>70 to 72%</i>
<i>D plus</i>	<i>67 to 69%</i>
<i>D</i>	<i>63 to 66%</i>

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<i>D minus</i>	<i>60 to 62%</i>

This course must be passed with a C- or better as a CSU graduation requirement, so it is prudent to plan our quest progress accordingly and mindfully.

University Policies

Per [University Policy S16-9 \(PDF\)](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 the [Syllabus Information](https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php) (<https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php>) web page. Make sure to visit this page to review and be aware of these university policies and resources.

Course Schedule

1	8/21	The Rhetoric of Anecdote + Fable; Introductions
2	8/26	Syllabus; Project 1 introduction
	8/28	Mind-mapping; Story Jigsaw Puzzle, part I and II
3	9/2	NO CLASS on 9/2 - Labor Day
	9/4	DUE 9/4: PROPOSAL Genre awareness + Audience awareness + Voice = Zombie Apocalypse
4	9/9	Entry/exit points for paragraphs; Thesis statements as “nutshell paragraph”; Beginnings and endings
	9/11	“The Gardener” experiment Peer workshop

5	9/16	DUE 9/18: INITIAL DRAFT
	9/18	Subjectivity v. Objectivity; found object/item/place Arguing positionality to a non-stakeholder Interstellar Mix, part I
6	9/23	Remediation of source text; audience awareness
	9/25	Interstellar Mix, Part II Satirical Essay introduction; Exigence + context = argument
7	9/30	DUE 10/2: REVISED DRAFT & PROCESS LETTER
	10/2	Satire as activism; The Onion Dis/misinformation; news source literacy; socio-political critique
8	10/7	Visual rhetoric + Ironic rhetoric; logical fallacy
	10/9	Group Satire, part I and II
9	10/14	DUE 10/14: PROPOSAL
	10/16	Group Satire, part III and IV
10	10/21	Identifying tone through embellishment; Adbusters
	10/23	Semiotic Ad analysis and campaign creation, part I
11	10/28	DUE 10/30: INITIAL DRAFT
	10/30	Semiotic Ad analysis and campaign creation, part II and III
12	11/4	Multimodal project Introduction
	11/6	Complicating claims with counterclaims; Ethics of AI art, music, prose, and companionship

13	11/11	DUE 11/11: REVISED DRAFT & PROCESS LETTER
	11/13	Peer Workshop NextGen WAR OF THE WORLDS - Rebooting primary texts
14	11/18	DUE 11/11: INITIAL DRAFT PROSPECTUS
	11/20	Visual persuasion to prompt reaction and action; MLM cospasta
15	11/25	TBD
	11/27	NO CLASS on 11/27 – Non-instructional day
16	12/2	DUE 12/2: REVISED PROSPECTUS + MULTIMODAL ARTIFACT
	12/4	E-portfolio introduction
17	12/9	DUE 12/2: MULTIMODAL PROCESS LETTER Last day of regular class
FINAL	12/13	NOTE: We meet from 7:15am - 9:30am on this day DUE: SJSU Writing Program Portfolio