

First Year Writing Section 20

ENGL 1A

Spring 2025 In Person 3 Unit(s) 01/23/2025 to 05/12/2025 Modified 01/21/2025

Contact Information

Instructor: Professor Javier Cortez

Email: javier.cortez@sjsu.edu

Class Days/Time: TR/1:30 - 2:45 PM

Classroom: Dudley Moorhead Hall 347

Office Location: Faculty Office Building 219

Office Hours: TR/ 3:00 - 4:30 PM (Fridays by appointment via Zoom)

Course Description and Requisites

ENGL 1A is an introductory writing course that will help students understand the writing process and the goals, dynamics, and genres of written communication. Through interpretation and analysis of texts, students will learn to think clearly and write effectively as they give form and coherence to complex ideas. Students will explore writing for various audiences and rhetorical situations.

Classroom Protocols

ENGL 1A Course Content

Diversity: This class strives to be an inclusive learning environment where diversity is respected and valued. We welcome students of all races, ethnicities, genders, sexual orientations, abilities, religions, and backgrounds.

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: Reading is a crucial component of ENGL 1A. Students will engage with a range of texts, developing strategies for critical reading, annotation, and rhetorical analysis. Be prepared to take on dense text materials that will consume a time commitment outside of our instructional days.

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>)

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 Learning Outcomes (CLOs)

General Education Learning Outcomes (GELOs):

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 Cor 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

Textbook: None. All readings and materials will be posted in Canvas.

Device & Internet: Regular access to Canvas and campus email.

Word Processor: Ability to submit files as .docx or .pdf (see Submission Standards).

Notebook/Journal: Bring to every class for in-class writing.

Zoom: Install the current Zoom app for online office hours.

Recommended (not required): cloud storage (e.g., Google Drive).

Access & Accessibility: If you have limited tech access or need materials in an alternate format, email me. I'll ensure materials are accessible and provide alternatives as needed.

Assignments and Grading Breakdown

Total Points: 1000

Grading Scale (whole letters only):

A = 900-1000 | B = 800-899 | C = 700-799 | D = 600-699 | F = 0-599

This course does not use plus/minus grading.

Assignment	Total Pts	Grade Pct	Word Count
MA1: My Composition Story	130 pts	13%	1,000-1,500
MA2: Rhetoric and Its Choices	130 pts	13%	1,500-2,000
MA3: The Credibility Factor	130 pts	13%	1,000-1,200
MA4: AI and Argumentation	130 pts	13%	1,000-1,200
Final Portfolio	80 pts	8%	1,200-1,500

Total Assignments - 600 points total (60% of final grade)

Final submissions only are graded here.

Labor/process components are assessed separately.

MA=Major Assignment

MA1: My Composition Story – 130 pts

Assesses: SLO1, SLO2 (process via Labor)

Focus: A literacy narrative foregrounding prior literacy experiences, audience/genre awareness, authorial identity, and rhetorical framing. Students justify key rhetorical choices.

Rhetoric and Its Choices – 130 pts

Assesses: SLO2

Focus: A rhetorical analysis identifying audience, rhetors, exigence, constraints, and appeals (ethos, pathos, logos, kairos, telos); evaluate effectiveness using specific textual/media evidence.

The Credibility Factor – 130 pts

Assesses: SLO3

Focus: An evaluative annotated bibliography including three credible and three non-credible sources; tag as primary/secondary/tertiary; justify credibility; apply APA citation consistently.

AI and Argumentation— 130 pts

Assesses: SLO4

Focus: Run a structured AI debate under course rules; submit full chat log, AI Methods Appendix (tools, prompts, iterations), and a diagnosis of model limits (accuracy, bias, refusals, etc.). AI may only be used for approved purposes; it cannot replace composing unless explicitly permitted and documented.

Final Portfolio (Reflection & ePortfolio) – 80 points (not a major)

Assesses: SLO1 (optionally SLO2 if you ask for rhetorical justification)

Focus: A reflective letter and curated digital portfolio that demonstrate your growth as a writer.

This is a required course component that must be completed to pass the class.

Requirements:

- A reflective letter (500-700 words) using course vocabulary (e.g., audience, exigence, credibility, revision) to analyze how your writing developed and why.
- Curated writing artifacts from the semester—e.g., drafts, final submissions, revision plans—that showcase process, feedback integration, and rhetorical choices.
- Submit as a Canvas ePortfolio (instructions provided mid-semester).
- Artifacts must be clearly labeled and organized. You may include your AI chat logs or peer reviews if relevant.
- Subject to the standard late policy in Submission Standards.

Labor Markers	Total Pts	Grade Pct
Participation	200 pts	20%
Individual Student Meetings	100 pts	10%
Submission Standards	100 pts	10%

Labor Assessment - 400 points total

I value substantive effort above all else; in this class, **labor means sustained, earnest effort**. This is a workshop course that requires active participation and critical thinking—no busy work; **everything we do is essential**. Labor credit exists because the habits that build writers—showing up, meeting assignment deadlines, submitting work professionally, and engaging in the room—deserve real weight. Major Assignments grade the final product; Labor grades the work that makes that product possible.

You earn Labor points by:

- Showing up prepared and ready to engage
- Meeting assignment deadlines
- Submitting work correctly in Canvas
- Completing the required Week 8-10 individual meeting
- Participating in class through writing tasks, group work, and discussion

You lose Labor points by:

- Submitting assignments late without documentation
- Uploading work in the wrong format or portal
- Being present but failing to engage with class activities
- Repeatedly arriving unprepared for writing workshops, peer reviews, or group work

Please keep in mind: there is no grey area with labor assessments in my class. You either make the effort, or you do not. Your effort is fundamental to passing this course. Here's how we break down labor in this class:

Participation - 200 pts

Full credit is earned through consistent, meaningful engagement with course activities, both in and out of class. **Participation includes:**

- Being present and prepared for class sessions
- Contributing to in-class writing, group work, and discussion
- Completing in-class and online engagement tasks
- Responding thoughtfully during peer review or workshops
- Respecting others and sustaining a productive class environment

Point reductions may occur for:

- Habitual unpreparedness
- Missed in-class tasks without documented excuse
- Disengagement from peer/group work
- Disruptive behavior or consistent failure to contribute

Note: While attendance is expected and affects your ability to participate, no points are deducted solely for absences.

Individual Student Meeting - 100 pts

- Required between Weeks 7-11
- Discuss your progress, writing, and course standing
- Must be scheduled and attended on time
- Missed meetings without rescheduling = 0 pts

Submission Standards - 100 pts

- Submit all work on time in correct format via Canvas (.docx or .pdf)
- -10% per calendar day late; 0 after 7 days
- Excused late work requires documentation and timely communication
- Incomplete/incorrect submissions count late until corrected

Note on Non-Graded Assignments

Some assignments in this course—particularly in-class writing, peer reviews, group work, and certain homework tasks—are ungraded but required. These activities support your learning and are essential to the writing process.

Even though they do not carry points individually, failure to participate in non-graded work will directly impact your Labor Assessment grade, especially under Participation. Consistent engagement in these activities is expected and necessary to succeed in this course.



University Policies

Per University Policy 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>) web page. Make sure to visit this page to review and be aware of these university policies and resources.

Instructor's Note on Plagiarism and AI Use

Plagiarism can be intentional (turning in someone else's work or undisclosed AI text) or unintentional (missing/incorrect citation). In this course, both are violations.

Why you shouldn't do it:

- I read your work all term and know your voice; sudden mismatches are obvious. Pattern checks and comparison tools also flag problems.
- The consequences are serious: a zero on the assignment and a possible referral to the university conduct office.
- It erodes trust and creates extra work that takes time away from helping you learn.

What counts as plagiarism here:

- Copying or paraphrasing without citation.
- Submitting work you didn't write (friend, paper mill, or AI output) without explicit permission and disclosure.
- Reusing your own past work without asking (self-plagiarism).
- Using AI to generate, draft, outline, or compose any part of your assignments outside of approved assignments and parameters. Any AI-generated composition submitted as your own will be treated as plagiarism, earning a failing grade on the assignment and potentially in the course depending on severity.

What to do instead:

- Email me early; a partial, honest draft beats a perfect fake.
- Ask for a brief extension if you're stuck.
- Use AI only where allowed, and disclose how you used it (tools, prompts, edits).
- If you're unsure about citation or AI use, ask first—ignorance isn't a defense, but it is fixable.

If you ever find yourself considering plagiarism, stop and ask: Can I contact my instructor or use campus support instead? Yes. Always.

Course Schedule

English 1A / First Year College Writing, Spring 2025

The schedule is subject to change. However, you will be notified in advance of any sudden shifts or transitions.

Week	Date	Tuesday	Date	Thursday
1	8/19	Faculty Prep Day	8/21	Course Intro: Syllabus Day
2	8/26	MA1 Intro: Taking Inventory	8/28	Lecture: MA1 Instructions Reading(s): Hanford + Perry
3	9/2	Class Breakout	9/4	Workshop
4	9/9	Group Breakouts: Process Scaffolding	9/11	Peer to Peer Feedback MA1 Due (9/12: Fri., 11:59 PM Canvas Submission)
5	9/16	MA2 Intro: Rhetoric as The Container	9/18	Reading: “ <i>The Medium is the Massage.</i> ” (McLuhan)
6	9/23	Lecture Series: Rhetoric & Exigence	9/25	Lecture Cont.
7	9/30	ISM Begin Lecture: MA2 Instructions	10/2	Group Breakouts: Rhetoric in Media
8	10/7		10/9	MA2 Due (10/10: Fri., 11:59 PM Canvas Submission)
9	10/14	MA3 Intro: Facts According to Who?	10/16	
10	10/21		10/23	
11	10/28	Lecture: MA3 Instructions	10/30	ISM End
12	11/4		11/6	MA3 Due (11/7: Fri., 11:59 PM Canvas Submission)
13	11/11	No Class (Veterans Day)	11/13	MA4 Intro: You Don’t Have to Yell to Argue
14	11/18	Lecture: MA4 Instructions Reading: “ <i>On Bullshit</i> ” (Frankfurt)	11/20	
15	11/25		11/27	No Class (Thanksgiving) MA4 Due (11/30, Sun., 11:59 PM Canvas Submission)
16	12/2		12/4	Final Class Day Portfolio Due (12/8, Mon., 11:59 PM Canvas Submission)

**MA=Major Assignment*

**ISM=Individual Student Meetings*

**No Final for the week of Dec. 8*

**Final Grades Due Dec. 19*

**Grades Posted Dec. 20*

