# San José State University Department of English and Comparative Literature English 1A, Composition 1 (GE A2), Sections 33, 7, 21 Fall 2012

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| Office Hours: | MW 3-4, TTh 11-12 & by appointment |
| Class Days/Time: | Sec 33 MW noon-1:15 SH 411  Sec 7 TTh 7:30-8:45 Sweeney Hall 444  Sec 21 TTh 9-10:15 Sweeney Hall 229 |
| Prerequisites: | Placement by the English Proficiency Test (EPT), or passage of an approved substitute course for the EPT. |
| GE Category: | Written Communication A2 |
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## Faculty Web Page and MYSJSU Messaging

Copies of the course materials such as the syllabus, major assignment handouts, etc. may be found on my faculty web page at <http://www.sjsu.edu/people/julie.sparks/> or accessible through the Quick Links>Faculty Web Page links on the SJSU home page. **You are responsible for regularly checking with the messaging system through MySJSU**.

## Course Description

English 1A is the first course in SJSU’s two-semester lower-division composition sequence; it provides an introduction to baccalaureate-level composition, with attention to the “personal voice” and personal experience, on the one hand, and the more formal attitudes and demands of writing at the university (expository and argumentative essays), on the other. Students will develop college-level reading abilities, rhetorical sophistication, and writing styles that give form and coherence to complex ideas and feelings.

**Prerequisites:** Placement by the English Proficiency Test (EPT), or passage of an approved substitute course for the EPT**.**

## Course Goals and Student Learning Objectives

Students shall achieve the ability to write complete essays that demonstrate college-level proficiency in all of the following:

* Clear and effective communication of meaning.
* An identifiable focus, tailored to a particular audience and purpose (argumentative essays will state their thesis clearly and show an awareness, implied or stated, of some opposing point of view).
* The ability to perform effectively the essential steps of the writing process (prewriting, organizing, composing, revising, and editing).
* The ability to explain, analyze, develop, and criticize ideas effectively.
* Effective use within their own essays of supporting material drawn from reading or other sources.
* Effective organization within the paragraph and the essay.
* Accuracy, variety, and clarity of sentences.
* Appropriate diction.
* Control of conventional mechanics (e.g., punctuation, spelling, reference, agreement).

### Student Learning Objectives:

SLO 1: Students shall write complete essays that demonstrate the ability to perform effectively the essential steps in the writing process (prewriting, organizing, composing, revising, and editing).

SLO 2: Students shall write complete essays that demonstrate the ability to express (explain, analyze, develop, and criticize) ideas effectively.

SLO 3: Students shall write complete essays that demonstrate the ability to use correct grammar (syntax, mechanics, and citation of sources) at a college level of sophistication.

SLO 4: Students shall write complete essays that demonstrate the ability to write for different audiences.

## Information available online

You are responsible for reading the following information online at  
<http://www.sjsu.edu/english/comp/policyforsyllabi.html>

* Course guidelines
* Academic policies (academic integrity, plagiarism, ADA and DRC policies)
* Adding and dropping classes

## Required Texts/Readings

### Textbook

**The CURIOUS WRITER, Concise Edition, 3rd edition 2011**

by Bruce BALLENGER ISBN: 9780205780402

**Seagull Handbook**  January 2011  ISBN 978-0-393-91151-0

**Note**: The Curious Writer is also available as an electronic book, but if you choose this option, you will need to bring a laptop or netbook to class every time so you will have the words in front of you. Please don’t choose this option if you know you will not be able to resist the urge to do OTHER things on the Web. This is VERY important if you want to learn anything in this class!

### Other Readings

### We will be doing a book club project for which you will choose from a list of trade paperbacks that you can find in any bookstore or possibly libraries. I want to settle the booklist after consulting the class, so please stand by for details.

Classroom Protocol

**Attendance and Participation: It is very important that students come to this class regularly and come prepared to participate.** This means that reading assignments should be finished before the class period when they will be discussed, and that students should arrive at writing workshops with the necessary rough drafts. There will be frequent, unannounced in-class writing of some sort, and these cannot be made up by students who miss class. Poor attendance and weak participation will significantly reduce your learning experience and your grade.

Participating in the mandatory peer review workshops is particularly crucial. If you skip these, you will miss out on valuable advice, as well as points. **Furthermore, if you miss the in-class peer review, it is your responsibility to get one on your own or your project’s grade will be docked 20%.**

**Professionalism and maturity:** Perhaps this should go without saying, but I will expect students to treat each other and their professor with courtesy and respect. This includes the little things, like turning your cell phones off in class, refraining from toying with electronic devices and chatting with buddies in class, getting to class on time, and dressing appropriately (e.g. not as if you are headed for a nightclub or a tanning session). Professionalism also involves the more serious matter of avoiding rude or hostile remarks. Students who show weaknesses in this regard might be asked to leave the classroom.

## Assignments and Grading Policy

**Grading:** A-F. **This class must be passed with a C or better to move on to CORE GE Area C3 and to satisfy the prerequisite for English 1B.** A passing grade in the course signifies that the student is a capable college-level writer and reader of English. A detailed assignment sheet will be handed out for each major assignment specifying the criteria on which it will be judged, but in general your writing will be graded on content and writing competence (grammar and such), as well as its effectiveness for its specific audience and purpose.

**Late Work:** I recognize that there are perfectly legitimate reasons for good people to miss deadlines on occasion. However, reflecting the seriousness with which such lapses are treated in the workplace, **I will penalize all late essays by 10% each day they are late (including weekends), and I will not accept a paper after one week from the due date.** If you do miss a deadline, you will harm your case further if you also fail to contact me about it. This, in addition to poor attendance, is the primary reason for student failure. **Late homework (small assignments) simply won’t be accepted, nor will I accept homework sent by email. Note: There is a 10-minute grace period, and that’s it. If you arrive later than that, your homework will not be accepted.**

**Extra Credit:** To soften the no-late-homework policy and to encourage you to seek enriching extra learning experiences, I will accept thoughtful written responses to movies related to our course readings. A list of these and further explanation of the assignment can be found on the course Web site. Furthermore, I will periodically urge you to attend campus lectures or performances and write about those for extra points. **There is a 30-point maximum per semester, per student, for extra credit**.

**Making up In-Class Essays:** If you miss an in-class essay and don’t make it up, **you will fail the class**, so it is VERY important that you don’t miss them. However, each student gets ONE chance to make up a missed essay. It is the student’s responsibility to be at the make-up, which will probably be the last day of the semester.

**Assignments and Weighting**

Diagnostic essay (500-800 words) 0 % 0 points (SLO 2,3,4)

In-class essays (3) (2500 words) 30 % 300 points (SLO 2,3,4)

Personal Essay (1200 words) 15 % 150 points (SLO 1-4)

Interview Essay (1200 words) 15 % 150 points (SLO 1-4)

Book Club Response (400 words) 5 % 50 points (SLO 1-4)

Final reflection (1000 words) 10 % 100 points (SLO 1-4)

Revision, Portfolio (1200 words) 10 % 100 points (SLO 1-4)

Small assignments 15 % 150 points (SLO varies)

**Final Assignment:**

Instead of a final exam, you will write a critical reflection at the end of the class. Think of it as a scientific study of your progress as a writer over the next four months. Remember, writing is a *process*. Collecting your work and then reflecting on that work is part of the process. The final assignment is designed to get you thinking about your specific challenges, your strategies for improvement, your successes and failures, and your goals for the future. Every writer, no matter how accomplished, has room for improvement. This assignment is your culminating experience. This course does not have a final exam.

## Student Technology Resources

Computer labs for student use are available in the Academic Success Center located on the 1st floor of Clark Hall and on the 2nd floor of the Student Union. Additional computer labs may be available in your department/college. Computers are also available in the Martin Luther King Library.

A wide variety of audio-visual equipment is available for student checkout from Media Services located in IRC 112. These items include digital and VHS camcorders, VHS and Beta video players, 16 mm, slide, overhead, DVD, CD, and audiotape players, sound systems, wireless microphones, projection screens and monitors.

## Peer Connections

The Learning Assistance Resource Center (LARC) and the Peer Mentor Program have merged to become Peer Connections. Peer Connections is the new campus-wide resource for mentoring and tutoring. We are located in SSC 600 (10th Street Garage), at the first floor entrance of Clark Hall, and in the Living Learning Center (LLC) in Campus Village Housing Building B. See the Peer Connections website for more information (peerconnections.sjsu.edu) and be sure to come see us!

## SJSU Writing Center

The SJSU Writing Center is located in Room 126 in Clark Hall. It is staffed by professional instructors and upper-division or graduate-level writing specialists from each of the seven SJSU colleges. Our writing specialists have met a rigorous GPA requirement, and they are well trained to assist all students at all levels within all disciplines to become better writers. The [Writing Center website](http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter/about/staff/) is located at http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter/about/staff/.