

**San Jose State University**  
**English 1A – Composition**  
**Fall 2012**

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Office Hours:	MW 1:45 – 2:45
Class Day/Time:	TR 3:00 – 4:15
Classroom:	MacQuarrie Hall 322

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

**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).

## Course Content

**Writing:** Writing assignments shall give students repeated practice in all phases of the writing process: prewriting, organizing, writing, revising, and editing. At least eight essays, appropriately sequenced throughout the semester and totaling a minimum of 8000 words, are required. This minimum requirement excludes the final examination, journal writing, quizzes, and any brief or informal assignments. However, it can include assignments that require major revisions of drafts already submitted for a grade and commented on by peers and/or instructor. A major revision is defined as a significant rethinking and reworking of an assignment, and not a simple “correcting” of mechanical errors noted on the original. At least three (but no more than four) essays shall be written in class. How the 8000 word minimum will be met and distributed is clearly indicated on this greensheet.

Students shall receive frequent evaluation of their writing from the instructor. In evaluating student writing, instructors shall comment on specific features of individual papers. Comments shall encourage and acknowledge student success as well as note errors and suggest ways to correct them.

**Reading:** Reading for the course shall be extensive and intensive and include useful models of writing for academic, general, and specific audiences.

**Research:** English 1A may initiate students in the use of the library, but library research is not a required element of the course.

**Diversity:** Assignments (both reading and writing) shall address issues of race, class, and gender when appropriate, and the perspectives of women and diverse cultural groups shall be incorporated into course instruction and materials in an inclusive and comprehensive manner whenever possible.

**Tutoring:** Students whose writing displays serious deficiencies in their control of standard English syntax, grammar, or punctuation will be advised to seek help from the University Writing Center.

## Course Materials:

- Ballenger, Bruce. *The Curious Writer*. 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition. Longman, 2009.
- Cohen, Samuel. *50 Essays: A Portable Anthology*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. Bedford, 2007.
- Recommended: Lunsford, Andrea A. *The Everyday Writer*. 4<sup>th</sup> Edition. Bedford: 2009.
- A dictionary
- Three large blue books for in-class essays
- Two yellow exam booklets for the final exam

**The University Essay Final Exam:** A common essay final, graded holistically, shall count 20 percent toward the course grade. A single university-wide final will be developed around a college-level reading passage each semester by the English Department Composition Committee. All faculty members teaching individual sections will grade the examination holistically under controlled conditions. Students must take the final exam in order to pass the course. **Final Exam Date: Saturday, Dec. 8, 8 a.m.**

**Course Learning Objectives (G.E. Area A2):**

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).
2. Students shall write complete essays that demonstrate the ability to express (explain, analyze, develop, and criticize) ideas effectively.
3. Students shall write complete essays that demonstrate the ability to express grammar (syntax, mechanics, and citation of sources) at a college level of sophistication.
4. Students shall write complete essays that demonstrate the ability to write for different audiences.

The following Content Objectives are specific to Area A2:

- Writing assignments shall give students repeated practice in pre-writing, organizing, writing, revising, and editing
- The number of writing assignments and their careful sequencing are as important as the total number of words written. Eight essays totaling a minimum of 8000 words are required. This minimum requirement excludes the final exam, journal writing, quizzes, and other informal or brief assignments.
- Although the majority of papers will be written outside of class, at least three essays shall be substantive, addressing the quality and form of writing.
- Reading for the course will be extensive and intensive. It shall include useful models of writing for academic, general, and specific audiences.

**Grading:** A-F. This class must be passed with a C or higher to move on to CORE GE Area A2 and to satisfy the prerequisite for English 1B (C- is not acceptable for 1B). A passing grade in the course signifies that the student is a capable college-level writer and reader of English.

**SJSU Academic Integrity Policy:** Your own commitment to learning, as evidenced by your enrollment at San Jose State University, and the University's Academic Integrity Policy require you to be honest in all your academic course work. Faculty are required to report all infractions to the office of Judicial Affairs. The policy on academic integrity can be found at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/S04-12.htm>. The SJSU rules against plagiarism are set forth in the SJSU Catalog, which defines plagiarism as the act of

representing the work of another as one's own (without giving appropriate credit) regardless of how that work was obtained, and submitting it to fulfill academic requirements. Plagiarism at SJSU includes, but is not limited to: (1) the act of incorporating the ideas, words, sentences, paragraphs, or parts thereof, or the specific substance of another's work, without giving appropriate credit, and representing the product as one's own work. It is the role and obligation of each student to know the rules that preserve academic integrity and abide by them at all times. This includes learning and following the particular rules associated with specific classes, exams, and/or course assignments. Ignorance of these rules is not a defense to the charge of violating the Academic Integrity Policy.

**Turnitin.com:** Students are required to submit all papers completed outside of class to [www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com) no later than 24 hours after each paper is due. Any paper not submitted by this time will receive late credit or no credit, depending on the situation.

**Campus Policy on Compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act:** If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, or see me during office hours. Presidential Directive 97-03 requires that students with disabilities register with [Disability Resource Center](http://www.drc.sjsu.edu/) (DRC) at <http://www.drc.sjsu.edu/> to establish a record of their disability.

### **Grading Distribution:**

3 In-Class essays (600 words each)	21% total, 7% each
4 Take-Home Essays (Variable word count)	40% total, 10% each
Participation/Reading Response	20%
<b>Final Exam</b>	20%

All take-home essays must be submitted in hard copy. No email submissions will be accepted. In-class essays will be completed in blue books using a pen (no pencils). Final exam will be completed in yellow exam booklets. Participation will be graded based on contribution to class discussion, activities, and workshops, as well as written in-class assignments. Journal entries are well-thought out responses to the weekly readings assigned in your course schedule. There will be no extra credit available in this course.

**Grading Policy:** 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. Grades issued will represent a full range of student performance and will adhere to the following SJSU academic standards of assessment:

- The "A" essay will be well organized and well developed, demonstrating a clear understanding and fulfillment of the assignment. It will show the student's ability to use language effectively and construct sentences distinguished by syntactic complexity and variety. Such essays will be essentially free of grammatical, mechanical, and usage errors.

- The "B" essay will demonstrate competence in the same categories as the "A" essay. The chief difference is that the "B" essay will show some slight weaknesses in one of those categories. It may slight one of the assigned tasks, show less facility of expression, or contain some minor grammatical, mechanical, or usage flaws.
- The "C" essay will complete all tasks set by the assignment, but show weakness in fundamentals (usually development), with barely enough specific information to illustrate the experience or support generalizations. The sentence construction may be less mature, and the use of language less effective and correct than the "B" essay.
- The "D" essay will neglect one of the assigned tasks and be noticeably superficial in its treatment of the assignment. The essay may reveal some problems in development, with insufficient specific information to illustrate the experience or support generalizations. It will contain grammatical, mechanical, and usage errors that render some sentences incomprehensible.
- The "F" essay will demonstrate a striking underdevelopment of ideas and insufficient or unfocused organization. It will contain serious grammatical, mechanical, and usage errors that render some sentences incomprehensible.
- **Note:** This is an A, B, C, No Credit course, but individual essays will be graded on an A to F scale. There are no C- grades in English 1A. You must earn at least a C (73%) in order to pass. Any student with a final grade below a C will receive an NC and must repeat the course.

**Late Policy:** Students are expected to submit all assignments on the date and time designated in the syllabus. Any essay turned in after class on its due date will receive an automatic reduction of one full grade (10%). Essays turned in after the week of instruction will not be accepted. Each student will be allowed to make up **one** in-class essay per semester with a 10% grade penalty. Other work done during class periods may not be made up (such as grammar exercises).

**Electronic Devices:** All electronic devices must be turned off before entering the class. If cell phones and pagers ring in class, they will be taken away from the student for the class period. Exceptions will be made only with clearance from the Disability Resource Center.

**Dropping and Adding:** Students are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures about add/drop, grade forgiveness, etc. Refer to the current semester's [Catalog Policies](http://info.sjsu.edu/static/catalog/policies.html) section at <http://info.sjsu.edu/static/catalog/policies.html>. Add/drop deadlines can be found on the [current academic calendar](http://www.sjsu.edu/academic_programs/calendars/academic_calendar/) web page located at [http://www.sjsu.edu/academic\\_programs/calendars/academic\\_calendar/](http://www.sjsu.edu/academic_programs/calendars/academic_calendar/). The [Late Drop Policy](http://www.sjsu.edu/aars/policies/latedrops/policy/) is available at <http://www.sjsu.edu/aars/policies/latedrops/policy/>. Students should be aware of the current deadlines and penalties for dropping classes. Information about the latest changes and news is available at the [Advising Hub](http://www.sjsu.edu/advising/) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/advising/>.

**English 1A Composition**  
**Fall 2012 – Course Schedule**

Note: This is a tentative schedule. Any changes will be notified in advance.

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
1	Thurs, 8/23	Introduction, Student questionnaire.
2	Tues, 8/28 Thurs, 8/30	<b>In-class Diagnostic Exam.</b> (500 words) Cohen: Introduction: p. 1-10. "Superman and Me" – Sherman Alexie, p. 15. (LO 1, 2, 3, 4) CW: Chapter 1, p. 3 -15. (LO 1, 2, 3)
3	Tues, 9/4 Thurs, 9/6	CW: Chapter 1, p. 15-37. Cohen: "I Just Wanna Be Average" – Mike Rose, p. 331. (LO 1, 2) CW: Chapter 2, p. 39-51. Cohen: "Learning to Read" – Malcolm X, 257. Prewriting exercise. (LO 1, 2, 4)
4	Tues, 9/11 Thurs, 9/13	Cohen: "Graduation" – Maya Angelou, p. 20. Prewriting Exercise. (LO 1, 2) <b>First Take-Home Essay Due.</b> (1200 words) Cohen: "The Fourth of July" –Audre Lorde, p. 239. Prewriting exercise. (LO, 1, 2, 3, 4)
5	Tues, 9/18 Thurs, 9/20	CW: Chapter 2, 52 -73. Cohen: "The Crito." – Plato (LO 2, 4) Cohen: "Letter from Birmingham Jail" – Martin Luther King, Jr., p. 203. Group writing activity. (LO 1, 2)
6	Tues, 10/2 Thurs, 10/4	CW: Chapter 6, p.173-186. Cohen: "A Modest Proposal." – Jonathan Swift, p. 387. (LO 1, 2, 4) <b>In-Class Essay.</b> (600 words) (LO 1, 2, 3, 4)
7	Tues, 10/9 Thurs, 10/11	Cohen: "The Death of the Moth" – Virginia Woolf, p. 448. "On Being a Cripple" – Nancy Mairs, p. 244. Prewriting exercise. (LO 1, 2, 3, 4) Cohen: "The Ways We Lie" – Stephanie Ericsson, p. 159. "The Insufficiency of Honesty" – Stephen L. Carter. (LO 1, 2, 3, 4)
8	Tues, 10/16 Thurs, 10/18	<b>Second Take-Home Essay Due.</b> (1400 words) CW: Chapter 10, p. 374 – 385. Cohen: "Men, Women, Sex, and Darwin" – Natalie Angier (LO 1, 2, 4) CW: Chapter 10, p. 385 – 403. Cohen: "No Name Woman" – Maxine Hong Kingston, p. 221. (LO 1, 2, 4)
9	Tues, 10/23 Thurs, 10/25	"The Lady with the Pet Dog" – Anton Chekov. CW: Chapter 7, p. 221 – 224, 243- 248. (LO 1, 2, 4) <b>In-Class Essay.</b> (600 words) (LO 1, 2, 3, 4)
10	Tues, 10/30 Thurs, 11/1	Cohen: "Once More to the Lake" – E.B. White, p. 450. "The Ends of the World as We Know Them" – Jared Diamond, p. 98. Handout on how to write a descriptive essay. (LO 1, 2, 4) Cohen: "Where I Lived, and What I Lived For" – Henry David Thoreau, p. 403. Handout on how to write a compare/contrast essay. (LO 1, 2, 4)
11	Tues, 11/6	Third Take-Home Essay Due. (1500 words) In-class critical

	Thurs, 11/8	thinking activity. (LO 1, 2, 4) In-Class Essay. (600 words) (LO 1, 2, 3, 4)
12	Tues, 11/13  Thurs, 11/15	Cohen: “Notes of a Native Speaker” – Eric Liu. Prewriting Exercise. (LO 1, 2) “Battle Royal” – Ralph Ellison. (LO 2, 4)
13	Tues, 11/20  Thurs, 11/22	Cohen: “The Myth of the Latin Woman: I Just Met a Girl Named Maria” – p. 91. (LO 1, 2) <b>Thanksgiving Break – No class.</b>
14	Tues, 11/27  Thurs, 11/29	In-class activity: Writing a Review. CW: Chapter 4, p. 107-124. (LO 1, 2, 3, 4) Peer Review Exercise. (LO 1, 2, 3, 4)
15	Tues, 12/4  Thurs, 12/6	<b>Fourth Take-Home Essay Due.</b> (1600) In-class critical thinking and writing activity (Prep for Final). (LO 1, 2 4) Course Wrap-Up: Volunteer readings of strongest essays and discussion of personal growth. (LO 1, 2, 4)