First Year Writing

ENGL 1A

Fall 2025   Section 84   Fully Online   3 Unit(s)   08/20/2025 to 12/08/2025   Modified 08/13/2025

🕐 Course Information

ENGL 1A Course Content

For our course section specifically, we will analyze and write about the forces that surround us on a daily basis: advertising, the popular culture we consume, and the university itself. The idea here is to utilize writing to take a greater stake in our daily lives—to utilize the essay form to become more active participants in our culture(s).

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)

⌨ 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

You need to complete the online modules in the allotted times, participate in all online class activities, and be courteous to your peers and to your teacher.

Generative AI Policy: All use of generative AI/ large LLMs at any stage of your course work is wholly prohibited. This course is designed to improve your skills of analysis and critical thinking, and the use of generative AI is an impediment to these goals. Again, no AI usage is allowed for any coursework in this class.

All essay assignments will be automatically submitted to Turnitin, which scans for AI usage, with the final determination of AI usage made by your teacher. Any determination of AI usage will result in an automatic zero.

▤ 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).

📊 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 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

We have no textbook for this class, but there is reading due for nearly every class. The reading can be found either linked in the syllabus or in as PDFs in Canvas.

📋 Course Requirements and Assignments

Essay # 1: analysis of an advertisement

Essay # 2: analysis of a music video

Essay # 3: analysis of a university issue (includes outside research)

Visual Essay: crafting a thesis through visual images

Assignment Word Count and Learning Goals

Assignment	Word Count	GELO
Essay # 1	1,000-1,250	1-5
Visual Essay	N/A	2-4
Essay # 2	1,250-1,500	1-5
Essay # 3	1,750-2,000	1-5

Writing Portfolio: At the end of the semester you will compile a portfolio of your writing that documents how you met the learning goals of the course.

✔ Grading Information

Course Grade Breakdown: Essay # 1 20 %; Essay # 2 20 %; Essay 3 20%; Visual Essay 10 %; Module Completion 30 %

The revision process is central to this class, so you will be responsible for writing a minimum of two complete drafts (more may be required, but never less) for each essay. While only the final draft will be graded, not turning in earlier drafts on time will result in a deduction of up to one letter grade.

Late papers (including drafts) will be docked up to one full letter grade each day they are late. Students must receive a C- or higher to pass the course

About Grades

Requirements for particular assignments will vary, but in all cases essay grades will reflect the paper's effectiveness, which is broken down into three major areas: content (this includes maturity and sophistication of thought), organization, and expression.

An "A" range essay is organized and well-developed, demonstrating a clear understanding and fulfillment of the assignment, written in a unique and compelling voice. It will show the student's ability to use language effectively with a solid command of grammar, mechanics, and usage.

A "B" range essay demonstrates competence in the same categories as an "A" essay, but it may show slight weakness in one of these areas. It will respond to the topic suitably and may contain some grammatical, mechanical or usage errors.

A "C" range essay will complete the requirements of the assignment, but it will show weaknesses in fundamentals, such as development. It may show weakness in mastery of grammar, mechanics, usage, or voice.

A "D" range essay will neglect to meet all the requirements of the assignment or may be superficial in its treatment of the topic. It may lack development or fail to stay on topic. It may contain grammatical, mechanical, and/or usage errors that interfere with reader comprehension.

An "F" essay does not fulfill the requirements of the assignment.

A (92-100); A- (90-91); B+ (88-89); B (82-87); B- (80-81); C+ (78-79); C (70-77); C- (70-71); D+ (68-69); D

(62-67); D- (60-61); F (<60)

🏛 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.

📅 Course Schedule

This schedule is subject to change with fair notice: you are responsible for any changes made in class or through email.

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
	Aug 20-22	Course Introduction Homework: Read "What is Advertising?", O'Barr (Online)
1	Aug 25-26	Advertising Day 1: Analyzing the Messages All Around Us Homework: Read "'For the Rest of Us': A Reader Oriented Interpretation of Apple's '1984' Commercial," Scott
1	Aug 27-29	Advertising Day 2: Transfer and "Classic" Ads HW: Read "Misreading the Rhetorical Situation: An Analysis of the Kendall Jenner Pepsi Commercial," Dozé (PDF); Choose ADVERTISEMENT for Essay 1 (this choice can be changed later)
2	Sep 1-2	HOLIDAY
2	Sep 3-5	Advertising Day 3: Weird Ads and Prewriting ESSAY 1 ADVERTISEMENT DUE
3	Sep 8-9	Advertising Day 4: Check-In and Analyzing YOUR Ad HW: "Guidelines for Composing Your Essay" (PDF), Excelsior OWL: Essay Writing (Online; scan entire section); Write Thesis
3	Sep 10-12	Advertising Day 5: Going Beneath the Surface and Your Thesis
4	Sep 15-16	All About Your Essay ESSAY 1 DUE SEPTEMBER 16
4	Sep 17-19	Checking Your Essay, Political Advertising, and the Hype Model
5	Sep 22-23	Music Video Day 1: Videos and Politics HW: Read "An Expert's Take on the Symbolism in Childish Gambino's Viral 'This Is America' Video," Gajanan (Online)

| 5 | Sep 24-26 | Music Video Day 2: Representation is Political

HW: Read Intro to *From Bandanas to Berets: A Critical Analysis of Beyoncé's "Formation" Video*, James (PDF) |
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| 6 | Sep 29-30 | Music Video Day 3: Gender/ Sexuality is Political

HW: Plan for Essay 2 |
| 6 | Oct 1-3 | Music Video Day 4: The Personal is Political (Storytelling)

Homework: Choose Your Video / Work on Your Essay |
| 7 | Oct 6-7 | All About Your Essay Day 1 |
| 7 | Oct 8-10 | All About Your Essay Day 2

HW: ESSAY # 2 PEER EDITING DRAFT |
| 8 | Oct 13-14 | ESSAY # 2 PEER EDITING DRAFT DUE; Peer Editing

  HW: ESSAY # 2 FINAL DRAFT |
8	Oct 15-17	Check and Rewrite Your Essay; Introduction to the Photo Essay
9	Oct 20-21	Photo Essay Day 1: Making the Invisible Visible
9	Oct 22-24	Photo Essay Day 2: Constructing an Argument Through Images
10	Oct 27-28	Complete and Submit Your Photo Essay!
10	Oct 29-31	Present Your Visual Essay; Introduction to Our Next Subject
11	Nov 3-4	Arguing the University Day 1: What is College For/

HW: Read "Colleges Spend Like There's No Tomorrow" and "Just Released 'How America Pays for College 2024' Report." |

11	Nov 5-7	Arguing the University Day 2: The University and Money HW: Read "High-Quality, Flexible Learning from Tech Savvy Teachers" and "With Online Learning, 'Let's Take a Breath and See What Worked and Didn't Work'"
12	Nov 10-11	Arguing The University Day 3: Online Education and Technology HW: Read Excellence at Yale Doubted as Nearly Everyone Gets A's and Empowering Students Through Evaluation: Over 50 Years Without Grades at Hampshire College (Chapter)
12	Nov 12-14	Arguing the University Day 4: Grades and Modeling the Essay Pre-Writing Process HW: Choose Essay Topic and Experiment With Research in the Library Databases
13	Nov 17-18	Arguing the University Day 5: Colleges and Protests/ Research & Your Annotated Bibliography
13	Nov 19-21	Arguing The University Day 6: Final Check-In and Your Thesis
14	Nov 24-25	All About Your Essay
14	Nov 26-28	HOLIDAY
15	Dec 1-2	Present Your Essay and Finish Your Peer-Editing Draft HW: ESSAY # 3 PEER EDITING DRAFT
15	Dec 3-5	ESSAY # 3 PEER EDITING DRAFT DUE; Peer Editing
	Dec 8	Final Class Module; Understanding the E-Portfolio ESSAY # 3 FINAL DRAFT DUE

Final Exam	Dec 12	ePortfolio due to Canvas by 9:45 PM, Friday, December 12