

# Argument and Analysis

## ENGL 1B

Fall 2025 Section 03 In Person 3 Unit(s) 08/20/2025 to 12/08/2025 Modified 08/11/2025

### Course Information

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ENGL 1B, Section 3 — Argument & Analysis

Fall 2025 — MW 9:00–10:15 AM — BBC123

#### Class

9:00–10:15 AM

Monday, Wednesday, 9:00 AM to 10:15 AM, BBC123

### Course Description and Requisites

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English 1B is a writing course that focuses on argumentation and analysis. Through the study of literary, rhetorical, and professional texts, students will develop the habits of mind required to write argumentative and critical essays. Particular emphasis is placed on writing and reading processes. Students will have repeated practice in prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing, and repeated practice in reading closely in a variety of forms, styles, structures, and modes.

*Satisfies 3B. Humanities (Formerly Area C2).*

**Prerequisite(s):** ENGL 1A or ENGL 1AS with a C- or better.

**Grading:** Letter Graded

**Note(s):** ENGL 1B is not open to students who successfully completed ENGL 2.

### Classroom Protocols

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#### Key Course Design Principles:

- AI as writing support: Use Grammarly, ChatGPT, Claude, etc. transparently. No full generation of assignments. Cite your tools like sources.

- Agentic prose: Focus on active voice, clarity, and precision. We'll use *The Elements of Style* as our prose bible.
- Portfolio model: Students collect and reflect on their best work throughout the term.
- Modular grading: Success is defined by consistent effort, revision, and participation—not just single submission scores.
- Canvas as the hub: All discussions, reflections, and minor assignments submitted here.
- Nonfiction emphasis: We'll primarily use current articles (2023–2024) and contemporary media (TV/film) rather than long traditional texts.

## Our Class Policy on Generative AI

AI tools must be used in this course to support brainstorming, outlining, reviewing, and language polishing. When you use AI tools like ChatGPT, clearly state where and how in a footnote or endnote (e.g., "Used ChatGPT to generate outline structure"). Do not submit AI-generated full drafts—your voice matters. Violations will be handled per the SJSU Academic Integrity Policy.

Generative AI programs like ChatGPT and Grammarly can and should be used as resources in this class. As a writing community, we've decided that while they can be integrated into our writing process (brainstorming, generating and organizing ideas, polishing drafts, etc.), we should not use them to write our papers for us. Our work should represent our own ideas and our own ways of articulating them.

## SAN JOSE STATE UNIVERSITY POLICY ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The university emphasizes responsible citizenship and an awareness of ethical choices inherent in human development. Academic honesty and fairness foster ethical standards for all those who rely on the integrity of the university, its courses, and its degrees. University degrees are compromised and the public is defrauded if faculty members or students knowingly or unwittingly allow dishonest acts to be rewarded academically. This policy sets the standards for such integrity and shall be used to inform students, faculty, and staff of the university's Academic Integrity Policy.

## STUDENT ROLE

The San José State University Academic Integrity Policy requires that each student:

- know the rules that preserve academic integrity and abide by them at all times, including learning and abiding by rules associated with specific classes, exams, and course assignments;
- know the consequences of violating the Academic Integrity Policy;
- know the appeal rights and procedures to be followed in the event of an appeal;
- foster academic integrity among peers.
- You can access the SJSU's comprehensive academic integrity policy here:

<https://www.sjsu.edu/studentconduct/docs/SJSU-Academic-Integrity-Policy-F15-7.pdf>

## Generative Artificial Intelligence (Chat GPT)

What you should know about AI Platforms

Large language models, like Chat GPT, perform intensive mining, modeling, and memorization of vast stores of language data “scraped” from the internet. They have been trained to learn language patterns and to predict the most probable next word or sequence of words based on the context they receive. In other words, it imitates or mimics what humans have put on the internet (think about that for a minute). AI writing platforms have become savvy enough to write essays, create apps, help with excel, and nearly any conceivable writing situation that relies on linguistic patterns. In this class, we’ll practice learning and thinking with them. ChatGPT, like all generative AI systems, is a tool. Tools are used by humans to accomplish specific tasks. Thinking of it that way helps unlock its potential, but also avoid its pitfalls.

## ENGL 1B

English 1B is a composition course that develops college-level writing and critical thinking. This section centers on the idea that we live in a myth-infused technological era. By exploring mythic metaphors – Babel, Sisyphus, the Golem, Icarus, and the Ship of Theseus – we will investigate how artificial intelligence, digital identity, and algorithmic systems shape the modern world. Students will have repeated practice in prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing, and repeated practice in reading closely in a variety of forms, styles, structures, and modes.

GE Area(s): C2. Humanities

Prerequisite: ENGL 1A or ENGL 1AS with a C- or better.

We live amid modern myths: tech giants become gods, algorithms become monsters, and language fragments across screens. This course uses classical metaphors—Babel, Sisyphus, Icarus, the Golem, and the Ship of Theseus—to examine how we communicate, miscommunicate, and reconstitute identity in the digital age. We'll write critically and creatively about AI, misinformation, burnout, and digital identity.

## ENGL 1B Course Content

Diversity: SJSU studies include an emphasis on diversity. You will engage in integrated reading, Writing, and oral assignments to construct your own arguments on complex issues (such as diversity and ethnicity, class and social equality) that generate meaningful public debate. Readings for the course will include writers of different ethnicities, genders, and socio-economic classes.

Writing: You will write a series of essays informed by research and articulating fully developed arguments about complex issues. Writing assignments will give you repeated practice in prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing. This class requires a minimum of 6000 words, at least 4000 of which must be in revised final draft form. Assignments include in-class writing as well as revised out-of-class essays.

Reading: In addition to being writing intensive, ENGL 1B is also a reading course. You will read a variety of literary, rhetorical, and professional works of the human intellect and imagination. Secondary materials will be read to help situate the historical and cultural contexts in which the primary texts were created. All the readings serve as useful models of writing for academic, general, and specific audiences.

Critical Thinking: In addition to focusing on how to write arguments, the course also teaches you how to analyze and evaluate texts critically. More specifically, you will practice evaluating arguments for purpose, audience, rhetorical strategies, conclusions; evaluating ideas by contextualizing your assumptions and values (historical, cultural, socio-economic, political); and evaluating your own understanding of ideas by identifying your own interpretative lens.

Oral: You will be presenting your arguments orally to class both as an individual and as part of a group.

## 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.

## Time Commitment

Success in ENGL 1B 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 1B, 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.

## 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

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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)

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### GE Area 3B: Humanities

Across the disciplines in Area 3 coursework, students cultivate and refine their affective, cognitive, and expressive faculties by studying works of the human intellect and imagination. Area 3 courses help students to respond subjectively as well as objectively to aesthetic experiences and to develop an understanding of the integrity of both emotional and intellectual responses. In their intellectual and subjective considerations, students develop a better understanding of the interrelationship between the self and the creative arts and the humanities in a variety of cultures.

**3B (Humanities) courses** encourage students to analyze and appreciate works of philosophical, historical, literary, aesthetic, and cultural importance. Students may take courses in languages other than English in fulfillment of 3B if the courses do not focus solely on skills acquisition but also contain a substantial cultural component. This may include literature, among other content. Theater and film courses may be approved if they emphasize historical, literary, or cultural considerations. Logic courses may be accepted if the focus is not solely on technique but includes the role of logic in humanities disciplines.

### GE Area 3B Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of a 3B course, students should be able to:

1. analyze and understand works of philosophical and humanistic importance, including their temporal and cultural dimensions;
2. explore and articulate their own subjective aesthetic and intellectual responses to such texts;
3. analyze and assess ideas of value, meaning, and knowledge, as produced within the humanistic disciplines; and
4. research and write effective analyses of works of the human intellect and imagination.

### Writing requirement

3B classes require a minimum of 1500 words in a language and style appropriate to the discipline.

# Course Materials

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## Required Materials

- *The Elements of Style* by Strunk and White (any edition)
- Access to Canvas and Google Drive
- Stable internet for video/media/article access

## Course Features

- **AI as Lens and Tool:** Students are encouraged to use AI tools (Grammarly, ChatGPT, Claude, etc.) with full disclosure in their process writing.
- **Reading/Viewing Journal:** Weekly responses submitted via Canvas as text posts, infographics, podcasts, or video essays.
- **Four Major Essays** with peer review, revisions..  
**Final Portfolio:** Curated essays + reflection.

**Modular Grading:** Points and feedback for each module without traditional letter grades until the final portfolio.

# Course Requirements and Assignments

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### Major Essay Assignments

#### Essay 1 – Babel and Breakdown (Rhetorical Analysis)

*Prompt:* Choose a contemporary artifact (article, speech, media) that demonstrates communicative failure or social fragmentation. Use rhetorical analysis to explore how and why the breakdown occurs. Feel free to use the articles/media provided in the course.

#### Essay 2 – Sisyphus and the Algorithm (Causal Argument)

*Prompt:* Make a claim about how algorithmic systems contribute to burnout, monotony, or perceived meaninglessness in work or education. Support your claim using research and analysis of digital systems. Feel free to use/reference the articles/media provided in the course.

#### Essay 3 – The Ship of Theseus and Identity (Comparative Analysis)

*Prompt:* Compare two texts (one visual, one written) that raise questions about identity in the digital age. What do they suggest about authenticity and continuity of the self in AI-mediated environments? Feel free to use the articles/media provided in the course.

#### Essay 4 – The Golem and Ethical Control (Stakeholder Argument)

*Prompt:* Identify an emerging technology that may outgrow its intended use. Write a position paper considering the ethical stakeholders involved and make a recommendation for regulation or design. Feel free to use the articles/media provided in the course.

## Essay 5 – The Icarus Effect (Synthesis)

*Prompt:* Analyze the collapse of Silicon Valley Bank and other tech catastrophes as modern Icarus tales. How might these stories help us anticipate ethical risks with AI? Draw on multiple course texts.

## Final Portfolio – Reflection and Revision

Submit three revised essays + a 500–750 word reflection on your writing growth, process, and voice.

# ✓ Grading Information

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### Grading Structure (Modular, Process-Based)

Module	Percentage
Write (Essays & Drafts)	30%
Revise (Peer review, Rewrites)	25%
Engage (Canvas discussions, participation)	20%
Reflect (Portfolio)	15%
Mechanics (Grammar, Voice, Style)	10%

No single assignment determines your final grade. Consistency, improvement, and participation are rewarded.

## University Policies

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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

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# Weekly Schedule Overview

Week	Date	Theme	Focus & Deliverables
1	Aug 20, 25	Orientation	Course Intro + Watch: " <a href="#">What Myths Can Teach Us About the AI Arms Race</a> " – Canvas response
2	Aug 27, Sep 1 (labor day - no class)	Babel	Read: Haidt – " <a href="#">How Harmful Is Social Media?</a> " – Canvas post
3	Sep 1 (Labor Day no Class) , Sep 3 Sep 3 (No class: "Jumpstarting Digital Literacy" event this fall. <a href="#">You can get more information here</a> ). Attendance contributes to class grade.)	Babel	Sep 3 (No class: "Jumpstarting Digital Literacy" event this fall. <a href="#">You can get more information here</a> ). Attendance contributes to class grade.
4	Sep 8, 10	Babel	Draft + Peer Review – Essay 1
5	Sep 15, 17	Sisyphus	Watch: " <a href="#">Modern Work Is Breaking Everyone</a> " + Read: " <a href="#">Don't Let AI Steal Your Job</a> "
6	Sep 22, 24	Sisyphus	Film Clip: <a href="#">Severance</a> clip – Essay planning
7	Sep 29, Oct 1	Sisyphus	Draft + Peer Review – Essay 2
8	Oct 6, 8	Ship of Theseus	Read: " <a href="#">Deepfakes Are Coming for the Financial Sector</a> " + Intro to the Thought Experiment
9	Oct 13, 15	Ship of Theseus	Film Clip: <a href="#">Blade Runner 2049</a> "Race, Class, Gender, Agency" clip clip – Discussion
10	Oct 20, 22	Ship of Theseus	Draft + Peer Review – Essay 3
11	Oct 27, 29	Golem	Read: " <a href="#">The Golem and AI</a> " – Discussion



12	Nov 3, 5	Golem	Film Clip: <a href="#">Black Mirror: White Christmas clip "Hi I'm Matthew"</a> – Stakeholder argument mapping
13	Nov 10, 12	Golem	Draft + Peer Review – Essay 4
14	Nov 17, 19	Icarus	Read: " <a href="#">Silicon Valley Hubris</a> " + " <a href="#">In the Blind Spot</a> " – Discussion
15	Nov 4	Icarus	Read: " <a href="#">When AI Passes This Test, Look Out</a> " – Essay 5 prep
16	Dec 1, 3	Final Week	Portfolio Workshop + Reflection
Finals	Dec 8	Portfolio Due	Submit via Canvas