

First Year Writing

ENGL 1A

Fall 2025 Section 74 In Person 3 Unit(s) 08/20/2025 to 12/08/2025 Modified 08/22/2025

Contact Information

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Office Hours: In-person: MW 8:30-9:00 AM; Online Tuesday 10-11 AM and by appointment

Class Meeting Day/Time Room: MW 9:00 - 10:15; BBC221

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

ENGL 1A Course Content

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>)

©Plagiarism & Academic Integrity

Submitting AI-generated work is categorically a violation of SJSU's academic integrity policy, which includes a definition of 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."

Using AI in This Course

You are welcome to use AI tools like **ChatGPT**, **Copilot**, or others as part of your thinking process in this class. If you choose to use it, please follow the guidance below.

When AI Can Help You

- Brainstorm or explore different sides of an issue
 - Get sample outlines or ways to organize your ideas
 - Revise and proofread your writing
 - Clarify confusing terms or summarize policies
 - Challenge your own assumptions
-

What AI Should *Not* Do For You

- Replace your engagement with the **textbook**
- Write full responses that you copy and paste
- Give legal advice (AI often gets the law wrong!)
- Decide your opinion — **you** still need to think

How to Report AI Use in Your Work

If you use AI for any part of your work, include a brief **AI use note** at the end of your post or quiz:

Please include:

1. What tool you used (e.g., ChatGPT, Copilot)
2. How it helped you (brainstorming, organizing, etc.)
3. What you added or changed using your own thinking or the textbook

Example:

I used ChatGPT to generate examples of how firms assign workstations. I added ideas from the textbook about firm structure and noted a missing point about hybrid work.

If you didn't use AI, just write: *"I completed this assignment without using AI."*

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 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

3 Green Books from SJSU Bookstore (\$0.98 each)

Grading Information

Grading Contract for ENGL 1A

A Process-Based, Complete/Incomplete System

Why This Contract?

In this class, your grade is based on your effort, process, and engagement, not perfection. You are not expected to be a perfect writer — you're expected to show up, try things, revise, and reflect.

This contract helps us:

- Focus on learning, not points
- Build a more equitable classroom for all students
- Support risk-taking, creativity, and growth

How Grading Works

All assignments will be graded as:

- **Complete**
- **Incomplete**
- **Missing (not submitted)**

What “Complete” Means

To earn a **Complete**, a submission must:

1. **Engage meaningfully in the writing process**
(prewriting, drafting, revising — not just turning something in)
2. **Participate in peer review**
(give and receive constructive feedback)
3. **Apply instructor feedback or show revision effort**
4. **Include specific, relevant, and personal content**
(especially in projects involving narrative, reflection, or AI use)

What Will Be Marked Incomplete

Assignments will be marked **Incomplete** if they:

- Are missing key parts or significantly underdeveloped
- Don't show effort to revise after feedback
- Miss the assignment's purpose or expectations

- Contain **sloppy AI use**, including:
 - Generic, vague, or impersonal writing ("word salad")
 - No specific examples or clear development
 - No connection to **your own experience or voice**
 - Obvious reliance on AI without revision or reflection
 - No mention of how AI was used (when required)

Students will be invited to revise and resubmit incomplete work.

Required Projects

You must complete all of these to pass the course:

1. **AI + Ethics** – Critically reflect on your relationship to AI, its effects on your thinking, learning, or values.
2. **Custom GPT Project** – Design your own GPT chatbot and explain how it reflects your writing process and identity.
3. **Ethnography Project** – Immerse in the community, gather first-hand data, and synthesize interviews + observations into a cohesive ethnographic narrative.
4. **Final Portfolio & Self-Reflection Essay** – Helps your audience (writing program faculty) appreciate your progress in meeting the **ENGL 1A** learning objectives

All major projects must go through:

- Peer review
 - At least one round of revision
 - Instructor *and* peer feedback integration
-

Weekly Work & Reflection

You'll complete regular:

- Reflections (aim for 75% or more complete)
- Prewriting and drafting tasks
- AI experimentation activities
- Reading and discussion posts
- Process documentation

These will also be graded **Complete/Incomplete**. Same standards apply.

Participation & Peer Work

To succeed in this class, you must:

- Attend most class meetings (up to 4 absences allowed)

- Participate in group activities and peer review
- Respond to feedback with revision
- Attend 1+ conference with me
- Communicate if you need to revise your contract

This Contract is Flexible

If something makes these expectations hard to meet (health, housing, work, caregiving, etc.), let's talk. We can revise your contract together.

Midterm & Final Self-Assessments

You'll write two short reflections during the semester where you'll:

- Evaluate your own labor and learning
- Reflect on your writing and AI use
- Propose a final grade based on the contract

Summary

This class rewards **effort**, **process**, and **reflection**. If you:

- Do the work,
- Revise thoughtfully,
- Participate with care,
- Use AI critically and ethically...

You will succeed.

Complete ALL Major Projects:	Missing/Incomplete/Complete
Weekly Reflections	
Engagement (Participation/Attendance)	
AI + Ethics: What Matters to Me	
Custom GPT	

Ethnography	
Final Portfolio & Self-Reflection Essay	
Project A – if you want an A, only	
Discussions/Smaller Assignments	
Welcome Survey	
Time Blocking Your Semester	
Labor Based Grading	
Introductions: A Bit About You	
Why We're Writing by Hand	
What's Your Story	
Setting Goals and Preparing for CustomGPT	
AI in the Wild: Informal Research	
Teaching Grammar	
Phase 1 Custom GPT	
Phase 2 Custom GPT	
Phase 3 Custom GPT	
Phase 4 Custom GPT	

First Submission: AI + Ethics: What Matters to Me	
Reading with AI: Ethnographic Study Overview	
Bias in Ethnography	
Group Readings and Presentations	
Ethnographic Research Proposal	
Fieldnotes: Participant Observation	
Fieldnotes: Interview	
AI Simulation and Critical Comparison	
Fieldnotes: Language Analysis	
First Submission: Observational Ethnography	
Fieldnotes: Source Analysis	
Survey of Placement Satisfaction	
Consent Survey	
In-Class Essay: Your Semester Story	
Annotations/Readings	
In-Class: Curious Persons Guide to AI	
I Teach Creative Writing. This is What it's Doing to...	

AI is Homogenizing Our Thoughts	
ChatGPT Doesn't Have to Ruin College	
"According to Alice" by Sheila Heti	
Sheila Heti on the Fluidity of AI and the Self	
When AI Failed, This Photographer Set-Out to Retrain	
The Body Rituals of the Nacirema	

University Policies

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

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE: This will be updated throughout the semester. It is designed to give us an idea of pacing. Smaller assignments and readings will be added as the semester progresses.

When	Topic	Notes
Week 1: 8/20-8/26	Welcome & Introductions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome Survey • Time Blocking Your Semester • Labor Based Grading • Introductions: A Bit About You
Week 2: 8/27-9/2	Campus Scavenger Hunt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why We're Writing by Hand • What's Your Story? • Setting Goals & Preparing CustomGPT

When	Topic	Notes
Week 3: 09/03-09/09	AI in the Wild	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AI in the Wild: Informal Research Annotations: I Teach Creative Writing. This is What AI is Doing to Students Teaching Grammar
Week 4: 9/10-9/16	Custom GPT's	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annotations: AI is Homogenizing Our Thoughts Annotations: ChatGPT Doesn't Have to Ruin College Phase 1: Custom GPT
Week 5: 9/17-9/23	Writing with AI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annotations: "According to Alice" Annotations: Sheila Heti on the Futility of AI and the Self Phase 2: Custom GPT
Week 6: 9/24-9/30	AI Ethics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First Submission: AI + Ethics: What Matters to Me Phase 3: Custom GPT
Week 7: 10/1-10/7	Applying Feedback & Revising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AI+Ethics: What Matters to Me Phase 4: Custom GPT
Week 8: 10/8-10/14	Ethnographic Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Custom GPT [for feedback] Annotations: The Body Rituals of the Nacirema
Week 9: 10/15-10/21	Culture and Bias	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading with AI: Ethnographic Study Overview Reading with AI: Ethnographic Study Overview Custom GPT & Reflection [revision]
Week 10: 10/22-10/28	Ethnographic Research Proposal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ethnographic Research Proposal
Week 11: 10/29-11/4	Ethnographic Fieldnotes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fieldnotes: Participant Observation Fieldnotes: Interview
Week 12: 11/5-11/11	Language Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AI Simulation and Critical Comparison Fieldnotes: Language Analysis
Week 13: 11/12-11/18	Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Source Analysis
Week 14: 11/19-11/25	Pulling it All Together	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First Submission Observational Ethnography
Week 15: 11/26-12/2	Applying Feedback & Revising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ethnography
Week 16: 12/3-12/9	Winding Down	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final Portfolio & Self-Reflection [first submission]
Finals: 12/10 @ 10:45-12:45	Finals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final Portfolio & Self-Reflection Essay [revision]