

Critical Thinking and Writing

ENGL 2

Spring 2026 Section 39 In Person 3 Unit(s) 01/22/2026 to 05/11/2026 Modified 01/25/2026

Contact Information

Instructor:	Dr. Zehlia Babaci-Wilhite
Email:	Zehlia.babaci-wilhite@sjsu.edu
Virtual Office Hours:	Tuesday & Thursday: 2:00pm to 3:00pm (by appointment)
Class Days/Time:	Wednesday: 6:00-8:45pm
Classroom:	Sweeney Hall 411
Prerequisites:	GE Areas A1 (Oral Communication) and A2 (Written Communication I) with grades of C- or better
GE/SJSU Studies Category:	GE A3 / Critical Thinking and Writing

Course Information

In this class we will only use AI for certain specific assignments and as directed by the instructor. If you use anything generated by an AI in the creation of your paper (including building on the in-class tasks in which we will engage AI), you will need to cite that in your paper. All formal assignments submitted in this class via Canvas will be run through the Turnitin plagiarism and AI detection tool. If you misrepresent anything as your own work without clearly placing borrowed language in quotation marks or referencing from whom or what an idea or fact has come, that is considered plagiarism, and you will A) Fail the assignment and B) the instructor will be forced to make a report to the Office of Student Conduct. Please note that Turnitin sometimes produces false positives when it believes it has detected AI. One way of protecting yourself from a misrepresentation of your work as AI is to document the steps you took in finding the research and drafting arguments – steps which we will work on during the class.

Course Description and Requisites

Focuses on the relationship between language and logic in composing arguments. Students learn various methods of effective reasoning and appropriate rhetorical strategies to help them invent, demonstrate, and express arguments clearly, logically, and persuasively.

Satisfies 1B. Critical Thinking and Writing (Formerly Area A3).

Prerequisite(s): Completion of GE Area 1A with a grade of C- or better.

Grading: Letter Graded

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

* Classroom Protocols

ENGL 2

This course is open to all students needing to fulfill GE Area 1B: Critical Thinking and Writing (Formerly Area A3). It is not open to students who have successfully completed ENGL 1B.

Prerequisite: ENGL 1A or Stretch English (with a grade of C- or better)

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. Assignments emphasize those skills and activities in writing and thinking that produce the persuasive argument and the critical essay, each of which demands analysis, interpretation, and evaluation. Writing assignments give you repeated practice in prewriting, organizing, writing, revising, and editing. This class requires a minimum of 6000 words, at least 4000 of which

must be in revised final draft form.

Logic: You will learn methods of argument analysis, both rhetorical and logical, that will allow you to identify logical structures (such as warrants, evidence, qualification, rebuttal; enthymemes and syllogisms) and distinguish common logical fallacies.

Reading: In addition to being writing intensive, ENGL 2 is also a reading course. You will read a variety of critical and argumentative texts to help develop your skills for understanding the logical structure of argumentative writing.

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 2 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 2, 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>).

Classroom Protocol

Please do your part to help us all foster a welcoming and supportive classroom environment. We will do our best work when everyone feels comfortable enough to participate. Blatant displays of disrespect undermine the sense of community we need to learn and to share what we learn from each other. When we disagree, let's do so respectfully and sincerely. We will be studying the art of effective communication throughout this semester course and learning how to debate with others in a spirit of honest and respectful inquiry. In the unlikely event that a student might exceed the bounds of civility, s/he will be asked to leave for the remainder of the zoom class session. Behavior that fits this description include offense comments directed at your peers or me, sleeping during class, talking with your peers about things unrelated to the class, or focusing your attention on electronic equipment rather than the class activity or discussion.

The class policies have been developed over the last three decades of teaching composition. They are intended to ensure the smooth operation of the class and to encourage a professional working environment congenial to all.

- **Deadlines** must be honored; otherwise, *the grade might be reduced accordingly*.
- **Email** is useful to schedule appointments or to advise me of an absence. *I cannot accept papers via email*. Nor is email a suitable vehicle for student-teacher conferencing.
- **Your work** is public in this class, part of our collective inquiry into writing, reading, and democracy. We will share work in Canvas regularly. I reserve the right to publish your work to the class as part of our workshop activities.
- **Recording class sessions** is possible, but you must advise me in writing so that I may seek permission from the class for such a recording. I will need to know what will be recorded, when, how and why, as well as how the recordings will be stored and used. No recordings of the class may be uploaded or shared electronically without written consent from me.
- **Make ups** for in class work cannot be made; if you are not in class (for whatever reason), *you miss that work opportunity and points*. Out of class assignments may be made up only with documentation of a compelling reason for missing the planned work in the first place.
- **Workshops** are an essential part of the writer's working experience. Your participation in workshops is critical to your success and mandatory.
- **Arriving Late or Leaving Early**: Please don't do it. It is disruptive to your classmates. However, I also understand that life happens, so if you have an emergency and arrive late, please make sure you explain to me why you were late. If you must leave early for some reason, make sure to tell me in advance.
- **For attendance**: [University Policy F-69-24](#).

University Policies

"University Policies: the link below contains university-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, etc." <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/index.html>

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 Goals

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GE Area A3: Critical Thinking and Writing

Area A3 courses develop students' understanding of the relationship of language to logic. By engaging students in complex issues requiring critical thinking and effective argumentation, A3 courses develop students' abilities to research and analyze important topics and to construct their own arguments on issues that generate meaningful public debate and deliberation. Courses include explicit instruction and practice in inductive and deductive reasoning as well as identification of formal and informal fallacies of language and thought. Completion of Area A2 (Written Communication I) with a minimum grade of C- is a prerequisite for enrollment in Area A3. Completion of Area A3 with a grade of C- or better is a CSU graduation requirement.

Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs)

GE Area A3 Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of an Area A3 course, students should be able to:

1. locate, interpret, evaluate, and synthesize evidence in a comprehensive way, including through library research; and integrate research findings into oral and written arguments through appropriate citation and quotation.
2. use a range of rhetorical and logical strategies to articulate and explain their positions on complex issues in dialogue with other points of view.
3. identify and critically evaluate the assumptions in and the contexts of arguments; and
4. use inductive and deductive logic to construct valid, evidence-supported arguments and draw valid conclusions.

Writing Practice: Students will write a minimum of 6000 words, at least 4000 of which must be in revised final draft form.

Course Materials

Required Texts

Textbook to buy with the learning platform, check at the library or buy it online

Babaci-Wilhite, Zehlia (2021). Learning Critical Thinking Skills Beyond 21st Century for Multidisciplinary Courses. Purchase your course materials here: <https://store.cognella.com/>

Order the book as soon as possible to receive the quizzes access code

- <https://owl.excelsior.edu/>

Other Readings

- Other readings and videos provided throughout the semester through Canvas

Grading Information

Grading Policy

Specify your grading policy here. Include the following:

- All grades will be posted on Canvas including assignments we do in class. Each assignment's percentage points (from above) will be a separate section on Canvas. Any writing related to that assignment will be in a separate module. I grade most major assignments out of 100 and the grades are on a +/- system
- There is no extra credit for this course except for the ones using the camera
- Percentages for each assignment are in the section under "Assignment word count and weight"

- Late work will be reduced accordingly
- Must receive a C- or higher to pass the course

The department's standard grading scheme consists of the following: "Requirements for 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.

The following are the criteria by which essays are typically evaluated in first-year writing courses:

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

Students must receive a C- or higher to pass the course

Letter grade	Percentage	GPA
A+	97–100%	4.33 or 4.00
A	93–96%	4.00
A–	90–92%	3.67
B+	87–89%	3.33
B	83–86%	3.00

B-	80–82%	2.67
C+	77–79%	2.33
C	73–76%	2.00
C-	70–72%	1.67
D+	67–69%	1.33
D	63–66%	1.00
D-	60–62%	0.67
F	0–59%	0.00

Criteria

Course Requirements and Assignments

SJSU classes are designed such that to be successful, you are expected to spend a minimum of forty-five hours for each unit of credit (normally three hours per unit per week), including preparing for class, participating in course activities and completing assignments.

Assignment Word Count and Learning Goals

Assignment	% Worth	Word Count	GELO
Research Project	50	250	1-3
Essay #1: Rhetorical analysis	150	750	1-3
Outline/Draft Essay #1	50	250	1-3
Essay #2: Research argument	150	750	1-5

Outline/Draft Essay #2	50	250	1-5
Multimodal Presentation (Group)	50	10 minutes	1-3
Multimodal Presentation (Individual)	50	5 minutes	1-5
Reading/Quizzes (25 points per quiz)	150	1500	1-5
Workshops: Library/Peer Review	100	1500	1-5
Final Portfolio	100	750	TBD
Participation/Discussion	100	N/A	1-5
Total	1000		

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

Course Schedule

Below is the tentative schedule for the class the academic year. Please keep in mind that as the course unfolds, there will be inevitable changes to it. Whenever any changes are made, I will notify the class on Canvas.

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
		Module 1: Introduction
1	W 1/28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Welcome to English 2 · Introductions and Icebreakers · Discussion on our class topic: Education and STEM/STEAM/NLP/NLU, our textbook and the active learning platform for the quizzes. · The class will break up into small groups of 4/5 and discuss a selected topic to develop a research project on STEM vs STEAM, NLP/ NLU, A.I. Alpha Schools, Crypto currencies, Film Festival and the Arts through Adobe. · Start brainstorming your project and start your outline (1st Phase) · Quiz on your syllabus and download Adobe Express · Read Research/Outlining (https://owl.excelsior.edu/)
	Homework	For next time: Write a short biography to be posted on Canvas, read the syllabus and the Writing Process (https://owl.excelsior.edu/) and order your book
2	M 2/4	<p style="text-align: center;">Module 2: Reading and Writing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Each student will take 2-3 minutes to discuss what s/he found most significant about the project conducted so far (2nd Phase) · Class activity: What are the elements of your project? · <i>Reading:</i> How do you read? Practice active reading: Read chapter 1 · <i>Writing:</i> How do you write an outline? Practice active writing
	Homework	For next time: Read Prewriting Strategies (https://owl.excelsior.edu/). Complete the quiz of chapter 1

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
3	M 2/11	<p>ADOBE WORKSHOP: Take notes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Discussion and activity: Present your Topic of Interest (3rd Phase) · Class activity: Continue to analyze the elements of your research project · <i>Reading</i>: How do you read? Practice active reading: Read a new chapter · <i>Writing</i>: Practice active writing: start your presentation
	Homework	Post your notes on Canvas and read Citation and Documentation (https://owl.excelsior.edu/).
4	M 2/18	PRESIDENT's DAY Feb. 16 th : NO CLASS
	Homework	<i>For next time</i> : Post your notes on Canvas
5	M 2/25	<p>Module 3: Presentation #1 (Multimodal Group Presentations)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Assigning Peer Review groups (4th Phase) · Respond to your peers' project
	Homework	<i>For next time</i> : Post your presentation on Canvas and read Argument and Critical Thinking (https://owl.excelsior.edu/)
6	M 3/4	<i>Library Workshop</i> : Take notes
	Homework	<i>For next time</i> : Post your notes on Canvas- Read and <i>complete the quiz of a new chapter</i>

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
7	M 3/11	<p style="text-align: center;">Module 4: Essay#1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Read and reflect on the writing prompt for your rhetorical analysis essay · Start your outline: Summarizing, paraphrasing, and quoting. · Be inspired by one of the posts you read demonstrating the learning outcomes of: <u>Gelo 1 and 3</u> · Revise APA format/Practice on how to use APA <p>Submit your project March 6th (5th phase).</p>
	Homework	<i>For next time: Read and complete a quiz on a new selected chapter</i>
8	M 3/18	<p style="text-align: center;">Mid-Term Evaluation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · <i>Reading:</i> How do you read? Practice active reading: Read a new chapter · <i>Writing:</i> Practice active writing: complete your draft essay #1
		<p><i>For next time: Post your draft Essay #1 on Canvas and read rhetorical Styles (https://owl.excelsior.edu/) &</i></p> <p><i>Read and complete a quiz on a new selected chapter</i></p>
9	M 3/25	<p>Module 5: Individual Presentation and Essay#2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Select a chapter for your Multimodal Individual Presentations · Read and reflect on the writing prompt for your research argument essay · <i>Writing:</i> Practice active writing/ Write an outline <p>Canvas Class activity: Summarizing, paraphrasing, and quoting.</p>
	Homework	<i>For next time: Complete the final draft of your Essay and Post it on Canvas</i>

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
10	M 4/1	<p>SPRING RECESS: NO CLASS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Assigning Peer Review groups · Respond to your peers' draft · <i>Reading:</i> How do you read? Practice active reading: Read a new chapter · <i>Writing:</i> Practice active writing
	Homework	<i>For next time: Post your outline and complete a quiz on a new selected chapter</i>
11	M 4/8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Start your first draft Essay#2 · Demonstrating the learning outcomes of: <i>Gelo 3, 4 and 5</i> · Practice on how to use MLA and APA (Revision)
	Homework	<i>For next time: Prepare your presentation and respond to two of your peers.</i>
12	M 4/15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Assigning Peer Review groups · Class activity: Summarizing, paraphrasing, and quoting <p><i>SHOWCASE APRIL 17th</i></p>
	Homework	<i>For next time: Read and complete a quiz on a new selected chapter</i>
13	M 4/22	Multimodal Individual Presentations 2
	Homework	<i>For next time: Post your presentation and complete the first draft of your Essay #2</i>

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
14	M 4/29	<p>MODULE 6: e-Portfolio</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · In-Class: Demonstrating the learning outcomes of: <i>Gelo 1-5</i> · E-Portfolio prewriting activity: Integrating evidence into your e-Portfolio · Assemble and prepare the inventories and the outline for the Self Reflection Essay and e-Portfolio
	Homework	<i>For next time:</i> Complete and submit your final draft Essay#2 on Canvas
15	M 5/6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Write a practice essay in preparation for the Final Self-Reflection Essay that is the centerpiece of your e-Portfolio · You will be uploading the Final e-Portfolio
	Homework	<i>For next time:</i> Complete your e-Portfolio
16		Final e-Portfolio to submit on Canvas.