Critical Thinking and Writing

ENGL 2

Spring 2026   Section 28   In Person   3 Unit(s)   01/22/2026 to 05/11/2026   Modified 01/12/2026

This syllabus is subject to change. Students will be notified in person and via Canvas of any changes in a timely manner.

👤 Contact Information

Lecturer: Chelsea Criez

Email: chelsea.criez@sjsu.edu
Office: FO 215

Office Hours

Monday, Wednesday, 12:00 PM to 1:00 PM, FO 215 and Zoom by appointment

🕐 Course Information

Meeting Time and Location

Monday, Wednesday, 10:30 AM to 11:45 AM, Sweeney Hall 444

🖥 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)

All Are Welcome

This classroom is a space where every student can learn, grow, and contribute authentically. I am committed to creating an inclusive environment where all perspectives are valued and respected. You belong here, and your success matters to me.

You are welcome here regardless of:

- Race, ethnicity, or cultural background
- Gender identity or expression
- Sexual orientation
- Religion or spiritual beliefs
- Citizenship or immigration status
- Socioeconomic background
- Physical or mental abilities
- Learning differences
- Military or veteran status
- First-generation college status
- Primary language or accent

If you ever feel unwelcome or need support, please don't hesitate to reach out to me. I'm here to help you succeed, and part of that means ensuring you feel safe and valued in our learning community.

AI Policy

In this course, we will treat AI as a writing tool and assistant, not a means to generate work. When you rely on AI to generate assignments, you are missing out on valuable learning and skill practice. Keep in mind that you are paying for an education that will enable you to be a valuable member of society and prepare you for the workforce; you cannot do so if you cannot complete tasks on your own.

This class focuses on effort and improvement. If you put in the work to do better, you will succeed in this class. You will not succeed if you rely on AI.

If you do choose to use AI as a tool, you must disclose it honestly and thoroughly through a Disclosure Statement. *Here is an example:*

"For this assignment, I used ChatGPT to help create questions that I used to guide my research. Once I finished my first draft, I asked ChatGPT for suggestions on structure and argumentation. Based on the feedback I received, I added more textual evidence, reorganized my body paragraphs, and provided more context to my introduction. After I made substantial revisions to my writing, I used the Writer's Lab on Packback to ensure my grammar, style, and tone were appropriate for an academic research paper."

Any misuse of AI (i.e., using it to generate work for you or failing to disclose use) is a form of plagiarism and will be reported to Student Conduct.

You can find more resources on SJSU's [AI Writer Toolbox. (https://sites.google.com/sjsu.edu/aiwritertoolbox/home?authuser=0)](https://sites.google.com/sjsu.edu/aiwritertoolbox/home?authuser=0)

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 the class 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).

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)

GE Area 1B: Critical Thinking and Writing

Area 1B courses develop students' understanding of the relationship of language to logic. By engaging students in complex issues requiring critical thinking and effective argumentation, 1B 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 1A (Written Communication I) with a minimum grade of C- is a prerequisite for enrollment in Area 1B. Completion of Area 1B with a grade of C- or better is a CSU graduation requirement.

GE Area 1B Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of an Area 1B 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 requirement

This class requires a minimum of 6000 words, at least 4000 of which must be in revised final draft form.

📘 Course Materials

Packback

Packback is a digital platform we will use to complete biweekly discussion posts, in-class activities, and writing assignments.

☰ Course Requirements and Assignments

Unit	Assignments	Points

Rhetorical Analysis	During this unit, you will practice rhetorical analysis in two minor writing assignments in which you choose one rhetorical strategy to focus on. For your major assignment, you will select one of the minor assignments and revise it to include analyses of all rhetorical strategies.	Minor: 15 x2 Major: 20
Visual Arguments	During this unit, you will practice using the knowledge you gained in Unit 1 to create a visual argument. In a group project, you will design an argument, write an analysis of your argument, and present it to the class.	Major: 25
Comparative Analysis	In a culmination of Units 1 and 2, you will look at how authors can tell and retell the same story using different rhetorical strategies. You'll compare two versions of the same story, create a third, and write an analysis of the intention behind your own rhetorical strategies.	Minor: 20 Major: 30
Final Portfolio	As your final assignment, you will write a reflective essay tracking your growth as a critical thinker since completing the Reflection on College Writing.	Major: 40

✔ Grading Information

Grading Breakdown

Category	Description	Weight
Packback Questions	This category comprises the biweekly discussion posts you'll complete outside of class. After week 1, you will have two weeks to complete these assignments. Questions are due every other Wednesday by 11:59 pm. For each post, you must ask one question and respond to two classmates' questions. Each is worth a total of 4 points—2 for your question and 1 for each response to your classmates. There are 8 questions; the lowest score will be dropped, and a make-up question will be offered at the end of the semester. These assignments cannot be submitted late.	20%
Participation	This category includes both in- and out-of-class participation. Out-of-class assignments can be submitted late. In-class activities can only be completed in class and cannot be submitted late. The lowest three activities in this category will be dropped—the Free Write and In-Class Presence grades will not.	30%

Projects	This category includes all minor and major writing assignments. Excluding the Final Portfolio, these assignments can be submitted late, and the lowest grade from this category will be dropped.	50%

Grading Scale

A+	96%<	C+	76-79%
A	90-95%	C	70-75%
B+	86-89%	D+	66-69%
B	80-85%	D	60-65%
		F	<59%

Late Work

Writing assignments—excluding the Final Portfolio—may be submitted late. You have two days after the due date to submit your work for full credit and two additional days to submit your work for half credit. Late work will not be accepted beginning four days after the original due date. If you need more time to complete an assignment, you must contact me at least 24 hours before the original due date.

This policy is to accommodate last-minute emergencies, not to encourage procrastination. Do not wait until the last minute to begin the assignment.

Extra Credit

For 5 points on your Final Portfolio grade, you may complete one of the two following options:

Visit the Writing Center (https://sjsu.edu/writingcenter/) To receive credit for this option, you must work with a tutor on a piece of writing (it does not need to be from this class), submit a summary of what you worked on with your tutor, and have your tutor email me to confirm you visited the writing center. You must have both a summary and an email confirmation to receive credit.

Attend a School Event: (https://events.sjsu.edu/)To receive credit for this option, you must attend any event affiliated with SJSU, submit a summary of what you did, and include a photo to prove you attended the event. You must have both a summary and visual proof to receive credit.

This extra credit must be submitted no later than Monday, May 11th, 11:59 pm.

Packback Make-Up Question

If you missed a question or received a low score, you may make up that assignment. Just like other questions, you must post one question and respond to two classmates' questions. The score you receive for this question will replace a missing or low score.

This make-up question must be submitted no later than Monday, May 11th, 11:59 pm.

🏛 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

Week	Monday	Wednesday
1	1/26 *Introductions*	1/28 *AI* **Read:** Everyone is Cheating (Canvas) **Due:** PB1 11:59 pm
2	2/2 *Rhetorical Analysis*	2/4 *Research* **Due:** Syllabus Quiz 11:59 pm
3	2/9 *Ethos*	2/11 *Pathos* **Due:** PB2; Analysis (Ethos or Pathos) 2/13, 11:59 pm
4	2/16 *Logos*	2/18 *Kairos* **Due:** Analysis (Logos or Kairos) 2/20, 11:59 pm

5	2/23 *Peer Review*	2/25 *Revision* **Due:** PB3; Final Draft 2/27 11:59 pm
6	3/2 *Visual Rhetoric*	3/4 *Mental Health Check-In*
7	3/9 *Memes* **Due:** Self-Assessment due 3/10, 11:59 pm	3/11 *Visual Arguments* **Due:** PB4 11:59 pm
8	3/16 *Fallacies*	3/18 *Ethical Storytelling*
9	3/23 *Group Workshop* **Due:** Presentations 11:59 pm	3/25 *Presentations* **Due:** PB5 11:59 pm
10	*Spring Break*	
11	4/6 *Critical Analysis*	4/8 *Genre* **Due:** PB 6 11:59 pm
12	4/13 *Online Discourse* **Due:** Group Assessment 11:59 pm	4/15 *Writing Workshop*
13	4/20 *Meta-Analysis*	4/22 *Mental Health Follow-Up* **Due:** PB7 11:59 pm; Proposal 4/24, 11:59 pm

14	4/27 *Writing Workshop*	4/29 *Clarifying Arguments*
15	5/4 *Peer Review*	5/6 *Revision* **Due:** PB8 11:59 pm; Final Draft 5/8, 11:59 pm
16	5/11 *Last Day* **Due:** Extra Credit & PB Make-Up 11:59 pm	5/13 *No Class*
17	5/18 **Due:** Final Portfolio 11:59 pm	

This schedule is subject to change. For updates, see our Canvas page.