

# Writing Workshop

## ENGL 100W

Spring 2026 Section 01 Hybrid 4 Unit(s) 01/22/2026 to 05/11/2026 Modified 01/26/2026

### Contact Information

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Instructor(s):	Dr. Meghan Gorman-DaRif
Email:	meghan.gorman-darif@sjsu.edu
Office Hours:	Monday, 11:30-12:30 via Zoom, and by appointment
Class Days/Time:	TTH 1:30-2:45 Sweeney Hall, 413

### Course Description and Requisites

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Integrated writing and literature course to develop advanced proficiency in college-level reading and writing that broadens and deepens understanding of forms and genres, audiences, and purposes of college writing developed in lower-division composition courses while developing mastery of the discourse and methods specific to the field of English literary studies. Repeated practice in close reading of literary texts, writing and revising informal and formal essays of literary analysis, and peer review of other students' writing.

*Satisfies Writing in the Disciplines (WID).*

**Prerequisite(s):** 1B or equivalent second semester composition course (with a grade of C- or better); completion of core GE; and upper division standing. Or Graduate or Postbaccalaureate level. Allowed Declared Majors: English. Other College of Humanities & Arts majors must ask for department consent.

**Grading:** Letter Graded

**Note(s):** Must be passed with C or better to satisfy the CSU Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement (GWAR). Required of all English majors before they achieve senior standing.

### Classroom Protocols

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## AI, phones, and laptops, oh my!

“AI promises compelling benefits—such as saving time in busy lives and helping your work to appear more creative or clever—but there are many important but invisible tradeoffs in using it, especially in the classroom. Therefore, at least in school, there’s good reason *not* to use or rely on AI/LLMs while you’re still learning new skills and growing as a person, even if it’s ok to use it in future jobs where *producing work* is more important than *learning*.” [Patrick Lin](#)

Because in this an English class, we are primarily concerned with developing close reading and analytical thinking skills, I am going to do my best as your Professor to compel you to do that reading and thinking and writing yourself, without AI. While AI can provide great shortcuts – and we **all love shortcuts** – however, such shortcuts in process are detrimental to student learning since thinking IS process. Learning happens in the direct encounter with the text in front of you and your responses to it. It happens in our classroom discussions when your classmates offer alternative takes and perspectives that encourage you to think more deeply about your own takes. While AI is a useful tool that you no doubt will engage with, it is not part of the skill development of this particular English course and I will ask you not to use it, and I will promise I will not use it either in my development of course materials, lectures, assignments, and grading feedback. As an experiment, let’s try it this way and see what the experience is to read, think, discuss, and reflect together.

Part of the cultivation of this engaged learning community will also be a commitment to each other to keep our phones and laptops away. This is not punitive, but practical. Not only do we all love shortcuts, but we all love distraction. I am just as guilty of internet scrolling on my phone and laptop as any of my students! So, we’re going to remove the option, and again – see how it goes. Of course, if you need to be reachable in emergencies I’m happy to accommodate (I have programmed in emergency overrides for my daughter’s daycare teacher, for example). But beyond emergencies and exceptions, I will expect phones and laptops to be silent and away for the duration of our class time together.

**Scholastic Honesty:** Turning in work that is not your own, including the use of AI, or any other form of scholastic dishonesty, will result in a major course penalty, possibly failure of the course. This standard applies to all drafts and assignments, and a report of the incident will be submitted to the appropriate Dean’s office on campus.

## University Policies

Per [University Policy S16-9](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 [Syllabus Information web page](#) (<http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo>), which is hosted by the Office of Undergraduate Education. Make sure to visit this page to review and be aware of these university policies and resources.

**Accessibility:** Universal design is an accessibility principle by which expanding access to a space (like a classroom) or a conversation (like a curriculum) benefits everyone. I aim for universal design in my courses, and at the same time, I assume that each student learns differently. If you are facing a barrier to access in my class, I invite (and encourage!) you to talk with me about it in my office hours or by e-mail.

## Program Information

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Writing in the Disciplines (WID) courses develop students' abilities to communicate effectively in their major course of study and in their careers. With an emphasis on critical thinking, these upper-division core courses advance students' understanding of the genres, audiences, and purposes of college writing while preparing them for successful communication in their chosen professions. Completing Writing in the Disciplines with a C or better is an SJSU graduation requirement.

**Writing in the Disciplines Learning Outcomes** Upon successful completion of a Writing in the Disciplines course, students should be able to:

1. explain, analyze, develop, and critique ideas effectively, including ideas encountered in multiple readings and expressed in different forms of discourse;
2. organize and develop complete discipline-specific texts and other documents for both professional and general audiences, using appropriate editorial and citation standards; and
3. locate, organize, and synthesize information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose, and to communicate that purpose in writing;
4. produce discipline-specific written work that demonstrates upper-division proficiency in language use, grammar, and clarity of expression.

**Writing Practice:** Students will write a minimum of 8000 words, at least 4000 of which must be in revised final draft form.

## Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs)

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**Writing Practice:** Students will write a minimum of 8000 words, at least 4000 of which must be in revised final draft form. The GE writing requirement will be met in this class by means of both formative and summative writing assignments, many of which will be peer-reviewed and revised, with an aggregate word count of 8,000+ words, as follows:

### Short writing assignments

- Weekly reading notes and reflections (>250 wds)
- Final essay worksheet (>750 wds)
- In-class writing w/peer review and revision:
  - 4 Close readings (>250 wds each)
  - 2 Research summaries (>250 wds each)
  - 2 Research synthesis/literature review paragraphs (>500 wds each)
  - 2 Introductory paragraphs and thesis statements (>250 wds each)

### Summative writing assignments:

- In class essay: contextual analysis w/self grading and revision (>1000 words)
- Final essay: research paper (>1500 words)

1. The WID Learning Outcomes are met via the following connections with course assignments

explain, analyze, develop, and critique ideas effectively, including ideas encountered in multiple readings and expressed in different forms of discourse	Weekly reading notes and reflections; class discussions; research synthesis/literature review paragraphs, essays.
organize and develop complete discipline-specific texts and other documents for both professional and general audiences, using appropriate editorial and citation standards; and	Close readings, research summaries, research synthesis/literature review, intro paragraphs, essays.
locate, organize, and synthesize information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose, and to communicate that purpose in writing	Reading notes, research summaries, research synthesis/literature review paragraphs, essays.
produce discipline-specific written work that demonstrates upper-division proficiency in language use, grammar, and clarity of expression	Revision of in-class essay, final research paper.

## Course Materials

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### Textbooks

The Trial of Dedan Kimathi, by Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o ISBN: 9781478611318

Homegoing, by Yaa Gyasi ISBN: 9781101971062

**Recommended:** The Craft of Research, by Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams

### Library Liaison

Peggy Cabrera Email: [Peggy.Cabrera@sjsu.edu](mailto:Peggy.Cabrera@sjsu.edu) Phone: 408-808-2034

## Course Requirements and Assignments

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### Weekly Notes and Reflection

Deep engagement with the books we are reading is a primary goal of the course and the building block for writing in the discipline. Taking notes or annotating a text improves comprehension and enables critical engagement and analysis all of which will strengthen your own understanding of the texts, facilitate the writing process, and deepen our in-class discussions. To provide some structure for this kind of close reading practice, you will be required to submit your weekly notes with a brief reflection on what has stood out to you in the week's reading. Feel free to focus the reflections to highlight what most interests you in the text, be it content, style, emerging themes, key arguments, transferable ideas, etc. An example of what these should look like is provided on Canvas.

### Short Writing Assignments

There will be a series of writing assignments in each unit, including close readings, research summaries, literature review paragraphs, and introductory paragraphs with thesis statements. These are designed to build the skills necessary for the essays, both our in-class midterm and the final research paper. For each of the short writing assignments there will be either an opportunity for peer review or self-grading, and then subsequent revision.

### Quizzes

You will be quizzed on reading, viewing, and lecture materials covered in readings or during class time. If you are regularly attending class and keeping up with readings, these should be an easy way to keep your grade up – I see them as built-in accountability to encourage you to stay on top of materials.

### Participation

As you may have discovered, active participation is key to success the classroom. Active participation will help us develop a community to discuss ideas, collaborate, and discover new insights into the texts through the perspectives of others. Participation includes more than merely attending class, as I expect each of you to arrive prepared by having carefully read assigned readings, and to actively participate in full class discussions and smaller group discussions and in class projects and activities. Part of this active engagement in class and participation in the group dynamic of the classroom is to **keep your cell phones and computers for the duration of class.**

### In class essay

At the end of the second unit on *The Trial of Dedan Kimathi*, there will be an in-class essay. You will be able to use your short writing assignments for this essay (which I will explain further in class). This essay will assess your skills at essay crafting and execution, focusing on clear introductory paragraphs with thesis statements, literature/research review, and close reading.

### Final Research Paper

In your final paper, you will use the close reading, contextual analysis, and research skills you've practiced in earlier papers to develop an original interpretation of *Homegoing*. You have three broad goals in this paper: (1) to develop an argument about a specific topic in the novel; (2) to support this argument with textual evidence and outside research; (3) situate your argument within an existing scholarly debate.

## Grading Information

Grade breakdown as follows:

Weekly Notes and Reflection	15%
Quizzes	15%
Participation	15%
In class writing assignments	30%
Research Paper	25%

A (93%-100%)	B- (80%-82.9%)	D+ (67%-69.9%)
A- (90%-92.9%)	C+ (77%-79.9%)	D (63%-66.9%)
B+ (87%-89.9%)	C (73%-76.9%)	D- (60%-62.9%)
B (83%-86.9%)	C- (70%-72.9%)	F (0%-59.9%)

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## Course Schedule

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### Course Schedule

**NOTE:** Syllabus subject to change – modifications will be announced in class and reflected in Modules on Canvas. **Please refer to modules in Canvas for up-to-date list of activities/requirements/descriptions of tasks.**

Week One	1/22 Introductions/Syllabus	HW: Watch Yeats' video from minute 11:30-end. Read, <a href="#">How to Read a Poem</a> ; Norton Introduction to Yeats
Week Two	1/27 Notes due  1/29	HW: Read Michael North, "W.B. Yeats: Cultural Nationalism", Yeats: "Wild Swans of Coole" "September 1913" and "Easter 1916"  HW: Read "Nineteen Hundred and Nineteen";
Week Three	2/3 Notes and reflection due  2/5	HW: Read "On a Political Prisoner" and "No Second Troy" and Cullingford "Shrill Voices, Accursed Opinions" (Canvas),  HW: "Sailing to Byzantium" and "The Second Coming"
Week Four	2/10  2/12 In class writing	
Week Five	2/17 Review/Self-grading  2/19 Revision day (if needed)	

Week Six	<p><b>2/24</b> Historical context of play</p> <p><b>2/26</b></p>	<p><b>HW:</b> Read <i>The Trial of Dedan Kimathi</i>, First Movement (1-22)</p> <p><b>HW:</b> Play Second Movement (22- 40 ending “They go out), Read, from <a href="#">Gikandi’s book on Ngugi</a>: section from the Intro: “Ngugi and the Drama of (post) Colonialism” (pages 3-12)</p>
Week Seven	<p><b>3/3</b> In class writing</p> <p><b>3/5</b></p>	<p><b>HW</b> Play Second Movement 41 (Street) – end 58)</p> <p><b>HW:</b> Play Third Movement (58-end)</p> <p><b>Recommended Readings/Viewing:</b></p> <p>Entangled Temporalities of Postcolonial Violence in Kenyan Literature, “Anticolonial Kenyan Literature: Creating the Nation” (pg. 3-7).</p>
Week Eight	<p><b>3/10</b></p> <p><b>3/12</b> In class writing</p>	<p><b>HW:</b> Find/read/annotate 1 source for your topic of interest – bring hard copy with notes to class.</p> <p><b>HW:</b> Find/read/annotate 2<sup>nd</sup> source for your topic of interest-bring hard copy with notes to class.</p> <p><b>Recommended Readings/Viewing:</b></p> <p><a href="#">Gikandi’s book on Ngugi</a> Chapter 6: Performance and power: the plays</p>



Week Nine	3/17 Synthesis explanation and in class writing work (leave with Professor)	HW:
	3/19 Intro/thesis explanation and in class writing work (leave with Professor)	HW: Watch <i>The Thirteenth</i>
Week Ten	3/24 In class essay, contextual analysis	HW: Read <i>Homegoing</i> Effia, Esi
	3/26: <a href="#">Ending the Slavery Blame Game</a> and <a href="#">Owning up the Past?</a> And discussion post (No in person class meeting)	<p>HW: <i>Homegoing</i>, Quey, Ness, James, <a href="#">Ending the Slavery Blame Game</a> and <a href="#">Owning up the Past?</a></p> <p>Recommended Readings/Viewing:</p> <p>Roots, History Channel, 2016 available on Hulu; Ta-Nehisi Coates, <a href="#">"The Case for Reparations"</a></p>
	SPRING BREAK	Introduction and Chapter One of <a href="#">Scenes of Subjection</a> by Saidiya Hartman
Week Eleven	4/7 In class writing	HW: <i>Homegoing</i> , Kojo, Abena
	4/9	<p>HW: <i>Homegoing</i>, H, Akua, Willie</p> <p>Recommended Readings/Viewing:</p> <p><a href="#">Introduction and Chapter 1 of Michelle Alexander's <i>The New Jim Crow</i></a></p>

Week Twelve	4/14 In class writing	HW: <i>Homegoing</i> , Yaw, Sonny
	4/16 Saidiya Hartman; discussion of <i>Homegoing</i>	HW: <i>Homegoing</i> , Marjorie, Marcus, locate, read, annotate 2 sources on your potential topic  Recommended Readings/Viewing:  <a href="#">Reading and Interview with Yaa Gyasi</a> ;
Week Thirteen	4/21 discussion of <i>Homegoing</i>	HW: locate, read, annotate 2 sources on your potential topic
	4/23 In class writing	HW: <a href="#">Wikerson's Review of Homegoing</a> ;
Week Fourteen	4/28 In class writing	HW: Work on Final Paper
	4/30: Work on essays in class with feedback	
Week Fifteen	Work on Essays (no class meeting)	Final Papers Due May 10 <sup>th</sup> by midnight