

First Year Writing

ENGL 1A

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

Contact Information

Course and Contact Information

Instructor:	Katherine Hamilton
Contact:	Canvas inbox or katherine.hamilton@sjsu.edu with 24 hours response time M-F.
Office Hours:	Tuesdays 1:30-2:30 pm, & by appt. FOB 222
Class Days/Time:	TR 12-1:15 pm, Sweeny Hall 348
GE/SJSU Studies Category:	GE Area A2 Written Communication I

Course Information

ENGL 1A Cours Info

GE Area 1A: Written Communication I

ENGL 1A is an introductory writing course that will help you understand the writing process and the goals, dynamics, and genres of written communication. Through interpretation and analysis of texts, you will learn to think clearly and write effectively as you give form and coherence to complex ideas. You will explore writing for various audiences, purposes, and contexts. **Please note that this is not a literature class, and as such we will not be studying literary works in this class, though we will be studying how to write effectively.**

Area 1A is a prerequisite for Area 1B: Critical Thinking. Completion of Area 1A with a grade of C- or better is a CSU graduation requirement.

GE Area 1A Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of an Area 1A 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 requirement

Area 1A courses require a minimum of 6000 words, at least 4000 of which must be in revised final draft form.

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 and we will be doing lots of it! Our exploration of writing will allow us to prepare ourselves and each other for academic and real-world writing scenarios. You will learn how to go through the writing processes of prewriting, organizing, writing, revising, and editing. The specific descriptions and instructions will be distributed for all major assignments in class.

Reading: There will be weekly reading that you are expected to read before each class and to engage with through weekly assignments. Readings will be posted on the syllabus one week in advance of when they need to be read. Readings are often accompanied by small assignments.

Final Portfolio: 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.

Course Materials

You will need a computer to fully participate in this class. If you do not have one, you may borrow one for free from the school for the semester. More info: [SJSU Equipment Loans](#). You should also bring paper and a pencil to class each day, as we will be doing writing activities in class.

Course materials such as syllabus, handouts, prompts, assignment instructions, etc. can be found on Canvas (login at <http://sjsu.instructure.com>). Log in and look for "FA25: ENGL-1A Sec 09 - First Year Writing" among the courses in your dashboard. I will use Canvas messaging and announcements to update you, so

be sure to check for emails from me via Canvas.

Required Texts/Readings

There is no required textbook to purchase for this class. All readings will be posted on canvas and will be accessed electronically.

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.

Satisfies 1A. Written Communication I (Formerly Area A2).

Prerequisite(s): Completion of Reflection on College Writing

Grading: Letter Graded

Classroom Protocols

Participation

For a class like this one, much of the learning happens in class. Therefore, it is imperative that you be in class every day and participate in class activities and discussions. The quality of our learning depends on our preparedness and engagement. It is therefore expected that **every** student will come to class having read the reading for the day and ready to talk about it. Class participation entails: (1) demonstrating that you've completed the readings/out-of-class assignments, (2) contributing to class discussions, and (3) completing in-class assignments. **ATTENDANCE:** While attendance itself will not be graded, we will have in-class activities and writing turned in for participation credit.

Time Commitment

College courses are designed around the expectation that you will spend 3 hours per unit, per week on each class, including instruction, preparation/studying, or course related activities. Ours is no different!

It's a writing course, I know, but let's do some math. ENGL 1A is a 3-unit course. That means we are signing up to do a minimum of 9 hours of study per week just for this class. 2½ hours will be class time. The remaining 6½ hours a week, you will work on your own or with your peers to prepare for class and complete reading and writing assignments. The class has been designed with these expectations in mind in order to prepare you for other academic classes, which will have a similar structure.

Late Policy

Late work will be accepted, but will be 10% the first day from your earned grade and 5% each subsequent day for each day it is late. It is therefore still beneficial to complete and turn in work, even if it will be late. An assignment is considered late the minute after a deadline has passed. So, an assignment due at 11:59 pm is late at 12:00am.

Extensions may be granted if you communicate with me with advance notice. Generally speaking, extensions will not be granted within 24 hours of the due date, so please don't email me the night before. If you have extenuating circumstances that you need to discuss with me, please reach out and provide documentation where possible.

Plagiarism

I trust each of you to be honest in all academic work, consistent with the academic integrity policy as outlined in SJSU's Office of Student Conduct's [Academic Integrity Policy](#). However, it's necessary to have a shared understanding of what constitutes plagiarism so you can produce your best work. When work is not appropriately cited when it is borrowed, directly or indirectly, from another source, that is plagiarism. Presenting someone else's work as your own is plagiarism. Content generated by an Artificial Intelligence third-party service or site (AI-generated content) is regarded as another form of plagiarism.

Engaging with plagiarism could result in an automatic failing grade for the assignment, and reporting to the Office of Student Conduct.

AI

This class asks us to practice the processes of thinking, brainstorming, and writing necessary to produce written work. As such, in this class you are not allowed to use generative AI to create or revise content for ANY written materials submitted to our class, including outlines, freewrites, and drafts. This includes Grammarly and any AI that does the work of sentence revision or constructs phrasing and sentences for you (NOT PERMITTED). What I'd like you to know is that the work you can come up with yourself is good enough. I want to know your ideas and to grow your thinking, which cannot happen if AI does the thinking for you.

If you choose to use AI on ANY portion of your submitted work in a way that you think is appropriate, you must indicate exactly where you used it and for what purposes. If you misrepresent anything as your own work without clearly indicating that it was created by AI, 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 keep in mind, this class does not allow you to use generative AI to create or revise written work, as stated above. To be safe, I recommend not using it in this course.

Some uses of AI that are not permitted in this class:

- Asking AI to revise your written work
- Asking AI to create an outline for you
- Asking AI to create reasoning or logic for your writing that you did not come up with yourself
- Asking AI to create a draft that you either revise or use as the foundation for your own writing
- And more. We will discuss appropriate and non appropriate uses of AI during our class. If you are unsure whether your use of AI violates our class policies, please reach out to your instructor to ask.

All formal assignments submitted in this class via Canvas will be run through the TurnItIn plagiarism and AI detection tool. Knowing that false positives can be determined from online tools, I use my own judgment and assessment of your writing style and voice, in addition to the work you produce in class, to determine cause for concern. One way of protecting yourself from a misrepresentation of your work as AI is to document any step in the process in which you used AI, including researching and brainstorming.

Extra Credit

You can earn 10 extra credit points (equivalent to 1 discussion board or annotation) by scheduling a conference meeting with me during office hours in which we discuss your writing. Otherwise, you are expected to earn points in class through the assignments available.

Special Needs or Accommodations

Any student that needs accommodations or assistive technology due to a disability should work with the [Accessible Education Center](#) (AEC), and the instructor.

If you have special needs or accommodations requests, see me as soon as possible. Failure to do so may result in forfeiting accommodations to which you're entitled.

Community Norms and Expectations

We will work together at the beginning of the semester to create community norms and expectations for our class. Anticipating how conflicts could arise, let's have a discussion to create policies that can work to create a supportive, productive environment for all of us. In order to build a high-functioning community, we need to work hard to integrate the perspectives of ourselves and our diverse community members. The policies we create at the beginning of the class can be revised throughout the semester if necessary.

Please note: sometimes projects and discussions include material that can be contentious and even potentially upsetting. We may encounter materials that differ from and perhaps challenge our ideas, beliefs, and understanding of reality. Students are encouraged to discuss issues about such materials with me. In class, discussion is welcome and encouraged, but comments found to be intentionally offensive, disrespectful, or combative are not allowed.

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 Requirements and Assignments

Assignments

Assignment sheets will be posted on Canvas for each project/ assignment. We will also discuss each assignment throughout the semester in class. The following descriptions are not meant to be instructions for the assignment.

Major Assignments:

Writing Projects:

Project #1: Narrative Essay

Project #2: Analysis Essay

Project #3: Multimodal Transformation

Points for each project will be accumulated through the process (outlines, drafts, peer review, and other elements of the writing process).

Other Assignments:

Discussion Boards and Annotations: A discussion board post or reading annotation will be due every class day unless another project related assignment is due on that day.

Participation/In-class work: We will have small writing activities due in class that will be used to check attendance and will count towards your participation grade.

Portfolio and Reflection: All English 1A courses culminate in a digital Reflection and Portfolio Assignment. In this assignment, we will gather writing we have produced throughout the semester and will write a reflection essay that explains our learning. We will submit our portfolio for consideration to other people in the first-year writing program.

Final Examination:

For your final exam, you will share your multimodal transformation projects with the class.

✓ Grading Information

Grading Information:

Assignment Word Count Chart	Percent of Grade	Points 500 Total	Word Count	GELO
Major Assignments: Essays + Process	60%	300	3-5K	1-5
Participation: In Class Work/ Discussion	16%	80	1K	1-5
Homework (Discussion Boards /Annotations/Small Assignments)	20%	100	1K	1-5
Final Portfolio + Reflection	4%	20	750	1-5

Your final grade in the course will be recorded as a letter grade, ranging from A to F on the following scale:

Grade	Percentage	General Expectations
A+	97 to 100%	A = Student work fulfills or exceeds the expectations in assignment and
A	93 to 96%	grading sheets to the fullest extent. The
A minus	90 to 92%	student is an active participant in class and is present for nearly all classes.
B plus	87 to 89%	B=Student work fulfills most of the expectations outlined in class
B	83 to 86%	assignments. Student is an active participant in class and is present
B minus	80 to 82%	for the majority of classes (no more than 4 absences).
C plus	77 to 79%	C = Student work fulfills minimum
C	73 to 76%	requirements for completing an assignment. Student participates in class
C minus	70 to 72%	sometimes and is present for a majority of classes with significant absences.
D plus	67 to 69%	
D	63 to 66%	
D minus	60 to 62%	
F	59% and below	

**Important Grading Information for GE A2 Courses:
This course must be passed with a C- or better as a
CSU graduation requirement.**

Breakdown

ENGL 1A / First-Year Writing, Spring 2026, Course Schedule

Calendar subject to change with fair warning

Readings listed should be read BEFORE class

All assignments are due the HOUR BEFORE class starts (11AM)

"In Class" means the topics we will be covering that day

DB = Discussion Board

Course Schedule

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
1	1/22	Community Building + Syllabus Scavenger Hunt + Annotations Due By Midnight: Intro Form (will share in class)
2	1/27	Read Before: "Navigating AI as an Author" Due HW #1: Annotation, Welcome Form In Class: Tools for Success: Reading strategies, Understanding AI
2	1/29	Due HW #2 (Rhet. Situation) In Class: Intro to Rhetorical Situations, AI
3	2/3	Read Before: Literacy Narrative Due HW #3: Annotation In Class: What are literacy narratives?

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
3	2/5	<p>In Class: Why I Write, Brainstorming for Lit Narratives</p> <p>HW #4 Due: Pitch your lit narrative idea (single out defining focus)</p>
4	2/10	<p>Read before: My mother's English (or other lit narrative)</p> <p>Due HW #5: Annotation</p> <p>In Class: My Mother's English Discussion/ Outlining</p>
4	2/12	<p>Lit Narrative Partial Draft Due</p> <p>Writing Techniques - Personal Essay</p>
5	2/17	<p>Reading: Lit Narrative</p> <p>Due HW #6: Annotation</p> <p>In Class: Journey to Nine Miles Discussion</p>
5	2/19	<p>Due HW #7: Effective narration in reading DB</p> <p>In Class: What is Peer Review? Describe, Evaluate, Suggest</p>
6	2/24	<p>Full Rough Draft Due</p> <p>Peer Review Day</p> <p>(Instructor Feedback to you by 3/1)</p>
6	2/26	<p>Reading: Types of Feedback</p> <p>In Class: Engaging With Instructor Feedback</p> <p>Due HW#8: Annotation</p>
7	3/3	<p>Due HW #9: DB</p> <p>In Class: How do you make significant revisions? What is the Revision Report?</p>

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
7	3/5	ASYNCHRONOUS WORK DAY - OUT FOR CONFERENCE Due: Final Draft + Revision Report
8	3/10	Due HW#10 In Class: Lit Narrative Process Reflection, What is Essay #2?
8	3/12	Reading: TBD In Class: TBD Due HW#11: Project Pitch
9	3/17	In Class: Finding credible evidence Outline + 3 Sources Due
9	3/19	Reading: TBD In Class: Misinformation Due HW#11
10	3/24	In Class: Misinformation Continued/ Source Integration Due HW#12
10	3/26	Informational Essay Partial Draft Due In Class: Plagiarism/ Paraphrasing/ Citations
11	3/31	CESAR CHAVEZ DAY/ SPRING RECESS - NO CLASS
11	4/2	SPRING RECESS - NO CLASS
12	4/7	In Class: Peer Review Full Rough Draft Due

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
12	4/9	Read Before: Reading on Revision In Class: Envisioning Revision DB HW#15
13	4/14	VETERANS' DAY - CAMPUS CLOSED
13	4/16	Final Draft + Rhetorical Analysis Due In Class: Process Reflections, What is the multimodal transformation?
14	4/21	Read Before: Multimodal Reading or Video HW#16 In Class: Exploring Multimodal
14	4/23	Due: Multimodal Project Pitch
15	4/28	HW#17 In Class: Final Portfolios
15	4/30	THANKSGIVING/INDIGENOUS PEOPLES HOLIDAY - CAMPUS CLOSED
16	5/5	Due: Multimodal Partial Draft Peer Feedback
16	5/7	LAST DAY OF CLASS DUE BY 11:59 - Final Portfolios
Final Exam		FINAL EXAM DATE - Tuesday May 19th - 10:45 AM-12:45 PM Multimodal Projects + Presentation Due

Other SJSU Resources:

Library Liaison

Our library liaison is Peggy Cabrera. She is available to help you find resources to do your work in this course. She has set up for students [a library resource page for English 1A](#).

The tutorials on this page will help you to understand academic research processes and tools, and they will help you to develop an eye for the most valuable resources for your work.

You will find Peggy Cabrera's contact page by clicking on [this link](#).

Other Available SJSU Resources

The University provides all students several resources to help us successfully learn in this course. The services provided include counseling and psychological care, mentoring and tutoring, access to food and housing, to technology, and writing support.

- [Accessible Education Center](#)
- [Counseling and Psychological Services \(CAPS\)](#)
- [Peer Connections](#)
- [SJSU Cares](#)
- [Spartan Food Pantry](#)
- [Student Technology Resources](#)
- [Writing Center](#)
- [Immigration Services and Info](#)

University Policies

Per [University Policy 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>) web page. Make sure to visit this page to review and be aware of these university policies and resources.