

First Year Writing

ENGL 1A

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

Contact Information

Instructor: Samuel Michael

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Office Hours: MW 3:00pm-4:00pm

Class Days/Times: TR 12pm-1:15pm

Classroom: Duncan Hall 243

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

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)

GE Area 1A: Written Communication I

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 others. 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.

Grading Information

For this class, I grade a little different. I don't use minuses. Here is the breakdown:

95%-100%: A+

90%-94%: A

85%-89%: B+

80%-84%: B

75%-79%: C+

70%-74%: C

65%-69%: D+

60%-64%: D

0%-59%: F

Late work is accepted till the end of the semester, but note you will lose points for every missed week. I highly, highly recommend getting your work in by the due date.

In addition, I offer extra credit in the form of a discussion board and at various points over the semester. Please keep an eye out for that. Usually this is for the CLA's readings.

Your assignments are graded based on what we learn in-class, unless there are extensive mistakes. We do talk about grammar in this class, so any grammatical rules that are mentioned will be used to grade work. For example, if we talk about how to use semi-colons in class, every semi-colon you use should, hopefully, be correct.

Any AI-generated work will NOT be accepted and will result in an automatic fail. I will also have to report this to the Dean, as per university policy. Please, please, please make sure you don't use AI of any kind!

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	Day	Topics

1	1/22	Introductions, syllabus overview, introduce semester notebook, Canvas Introduction
2	1/27	Why writing matters Activity: Write What You See
	1/29	BEFORE CLASS: read the pages on the discussion board "Unlearning high school essays" and answer the prompts. Unlearning high school essays: elements of an essay.
3	2/3	BEFORE CLASS: read the pages on the discussion board "Writing again? No problem" and answer the prompts. Read <i>Well Said!</i> Chapter 2, section "ARISTOTLE'S THREE MODES OF PERSUASION: ETHOS, PATHOS, AND LOGOS" and answer the discussion board Introduce project: Elements of Composition, brainstorm
	2/5	 EXTRA CREDIT: CLA event at 6:30pm Rhetorical Devices
4	2/10	BEFORE CLASS: Read Justin Scott's "Corpse Colloque" and respond to the discussion board of the same name. How to Analyze a Prompt
	2/12	 BEFORE CLASS: read "Analyzing Your Own Writing" and answer the discussion board prompts. How to analyze your writing Peer reviews (in-class) & draft of Elements of Composition due

5	2/17	BEFORE CLASS: Respond to discussion board "What is the proper way to write?" Read Norton Sampler: Chapter 1, "Reading as a Writer" (pg 1-13)
	2/19	Grammar Refresher EXTRA CREDIT: CLA event at 6:30pm Analyzing What You Read/Reading as a Writer
6	2/24	Creative Confidence and Presentation introduction Project: Elements of Composition due at 11:59pm.
	2/26	EXTRA CREDIT: Share EOC Project Creative Presentations for Persuasion
7	3/3	In-class activity: Analyzing presentations, analyzing writing, analyzing the world
	3/5	BEFORE CLASS: read "Persuasive Presentations," sections "Consider the Audience," "Organizing Your Persuasive Presentation," and "What You've Learned." Answer the discussion board prompts. Sentence Variety
8	3/10	Grammar Refresher 2
	3/12	All day in-class activity: YouTube Apology Videos
9	3/17	Presentations all week!
	3/19	

10	3/24	BEFORE CLASS: Read Norton Sampler, Chapter 13, "Argument". Respond to the discussion board titled "Argument!" pages 461-474 Introduce final essay
	3/26	BEFORE CLASS: Read Norton Sampler, Chapter 4, "Writing Paragraphs"; read from page 51-page 66 College Essays!
11	3/30	Spring break!
	4/2	
12	4/7	BEFORE CLASS: Read Norton Sampler, "Be a Gamer, Save the World"; pages 496-501. Answer the discussion board: "Writing Argumentative Essays" In-class: Analyzing different argumentative essays (Norton Sampler)
	4/9	Opposing Sides Outline due at 11:59 PM

13	4/14	BEFORE CLASS: Read the page "What is the point?" and respond to the discussion board. What is the point? Proper Academic Paper Formatting and Work Cited page
	4/16	Writing Exercises Essay draft due at 11:59pm
14	4/21	Essay Refresher
	4/23	EXTRA CREDIT: CLA event at 6:30pm Activity: Write What You See, Part 2
15	4/28	Extra Credit Day! EXTRA CREDIT: read "News media literacy, perceptions of bias, and interpretation of news" introduction, "Perceptions of bias," and "News media literacy," then respond to the discussion board News Media Literacy, Lateral Reading
	4/30	Proper MLA Format

16	5/5	Peer Reviews, Final Recap In-class: Notebooks due!
	5/7	Last day! + Writing Day and Final Activity! In-class: Notebooks due if not completed on 5/6
17	5/11	Essay Due
	TBD	SOTES, FYW Portfolio

LATE WORK ACCEPTED THROUGH 5/13