

First Year Writing

ENGL 1A

Spring 2026 Section 41 In Person 3 Unit(s) 01/22/2026 to 05/11/2026 Modified 01/28/2026

Contact Information

Prof. Tony Papanikolas, Ph.D.

tony.papanikolas@sjsu.edu

Office Hours: Thur 1:30-2:30 and Fri 12:30-1:30 (or by appointment)

Faculty Offices Building Rm 226

Course Information

ENGL-1A Section 41

TuTh 3:00-4:15

Boccardo Business Center Rm 223

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

Classroom Policy

-Please arrive punctually.

-Please do not surf the net, use social media, watch movies, play video games, etc. in class.

- Please participate and ask questions!
- Please carefully read the Canvas messages I send.

Policy on ChatGPT and similar LLMs

The use of ChatGPT or any similar LLMs to compose a written assignment in full or in part is prohibited in this class.

A decision is a conclusion we arrive at after thinking critically about something. A choice is a selection we make between one of several options that have already been laid out for us.

Writing is a process of making decisions about language: we decide on tone, diction, structure, the scope of our argument, and the sources we cite.

ChatGPT asks us to give up our prerogative to make these decisions in exchange for the much easier task of making a choice between which response we think our reader will prefer. It is the difference between making something and commissioning something to be made for us.

Please be aware that I am not invested in seeing polished, grammatically flawless writing. While I will provide feedback, grammar and style will not affect your grade unless they make it excessively difficult for me to understand your ideas.

Above all: when we submit a piece of writing under our own name, we are telling our readers that we stand by its content. As a student and adult, you are accountable for what you submit!

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 Goals

Like any skill you'd like to develop, writing requires practice and experimentation. In this course, we will be writing regularly and thoughtfully, and reflecting on why we make the decisions that we do. The capstone project in this class is a formal, scholarly research paper --leading up to this assignment, you will write two shorter essays and complete several smaller assignments and activities (some in class and some at home) intended to hone the kinds of analytical, compositional, and research skills that will help you write a successful research paper.

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.

Course Materials

All readings and resources will be made available via Canvas (there is no textbook to be purchased!)

✓ Grading Information

Grading Breakdown

Assignment	Point Value
Response to "Desire"	20 pts
"The Art of the Text Message"	20 pts
Analytical Response to "You Sound Like ChatGPT" Draft+Revision (Only revision is graded: must first submit draft)	150 pts
Music and Genre Essay Draft+ Revision (Only revision is graded: must first submit draft)	150 pts
Precis of a peer-reviewed article	50 pts
Research Proposal	100 pts

Research Paper Draft + Revision (Only revision is graded: must first submit draft)	250 pts
Misc. in-class assignments, activities, and quizzes	150 pts
Conference Attendance	60 pts
End of Semester Self-Reflection Essay	50 pts

For all late submissions, I will deduct a half grade (i.e. an A paper would receive an A-) if you miss the submission deadline UNLESS YOU REACH OUT TO ME AHEAD OF TIME!

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.

Course Schedule

Week	Day	Class Agenda	Assignment(s)

1	Thurs 1/22	1/22: Introductions/ Course overview + policies/ activity	Read David Lynch's "Desire" Short Response due Fri 1/23 at 11:59 PM
2	Tues 1/27 Thurs 1/29	1/27: Discuss Short Responses + group activity 1/29: Reading quiz /discussion + intro Art of the Text Message	Read Sara Parker's "You Sound Like ChatGPT" for 1/29 class Art of the Text Message due Monday 2/2 @ 11:59 PM
3	Tues 2/3 Thurs 2/5	2/3: Introduce Analytical Response essay/introduce close reading + in- class assignment 2/5: Introduce rhetorical triangle + in-class activity/MLA Formatting and citation.	Analytical Response to Sara Parker (DRAFT) article due Mon 2/16 at 11:59 PM
4	Tues 2/10 Thurs 2/12	2/10: Conferences 2/12: Conferences	

5	Tues 2/17 Thurs 2/19	2/17: Global vs Local revision + activity 2/19: Introducing genre/ in-class reading (untitled David Gonzalez essay) + writing prompt	Find/read a review of an album of your choice for 2/24
6	Tues 2/24: Thurs 2/26:	2/24: Response to the review you found + group discussion/introduce Music and Genre essay 2/26: Group listening exercise	Analytical Response Essay Revision due Monday 3/2 at 11:59 PM Music and Genre Essay (DRAFT) due Monday 3/9 at 11:59 PM
7	Tues 3/3 Thurs 3/5	3/3: Conferences 3/5: Conferences	
8	Tues 3/10 Thurs 3/12	3/10: Mid-semester reflection (in-class)/ Introducing the Research Paper 3/12: Quiz on Graff and Birkenstein reading + discussion	Read Graff and Birkenstein Ch.15 for 3/12 class Read research paper example for Tues 3/17

9	Tues 3/17 Thurs 3/19	3/17: Quiz on research paper example/group outlining activity 3/19: Choosing a topic and devising effective research questions + group activity	Music and Genre Essay (REVISION) due Monday 3/23 at 11:59 PM
10	Tues 3/24 Weds 3/26	3/24: What is a peer-reviewed source? 3/26: What is a precis? + class time to work on the precis	Precis of scholarly source due Mon 3/30 at 11:59 PM
11	Tues 3/31 Thurs 4/2	SPRING BREAK!	
12	Tues 4/7 Thurs 4/9	4/7: Effective thesis statements + Research paper structuring exercise 4/9: Synthesis of ideas and arguments + group activity	Research paper proposal due Mon 4/13 at 11:59 PM
13	Tues 4/14 Thurs 4/16	4/14: Conferences 4/16: Conferences	
14	Tues 4/21 Thurs 4/23	4/21: Visual components? 4/23: In-class work period	Research Paper (DRAFT) due Monday 4/27 at 11:59 PM

15	Tues 4/28 Thurs 4/30	4/28: TBD 4/40: Extra office hours	
16	Tues 5/5 Thurs 5/7	5/5: Work on Spring 2026 Assessment Portfolio + SOTEs and SOLATEs 5/7: Work on Spring 2026 Assessment Portfolio + SOTEs and SOLATEs	Research Paper (Revision) due Fri 5/15 at 11:59 PM Fall 2025 Assessment Portfolio due Tues 5/19 at 11:59 PM

Note: There will be several in-class activities and writing assignments, as well as a handful of reading quizzes and writing conferences that will go towards your final grade. These are bolded on the week-by-week breakdown of classes.