

San José State University
Department of English and Comparative Literature
English 1A, Composition 1 (GE A2), Section 54, Spring 2012

Instructor: DJ Quinn
Class Days/Time: Monday/Wednesday 9:00-10:15
Classroom: Sweeney Hall, room 229
Office Hours: Monday 10:30-11:00/ Wednesday 1:30-2:00
Office Location: Faculty Office Building 105
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Required Readings

Textbooks

Joining the Conversation, Palmquist. ISBN: 0312412150.

Other Readings posted to the course website (sjsu.desire2learn.com) as needed.
Check the course outline below for details.

Other equipment / material requirements

One spiral notebook. You need to take notes, so you'll need one of these.
A folder for your essays and homework, all of which you will save until December.
"Blue Books" for in-class essays. At least three.
A data storage device of some kind, on which you will save your essays.
A computer with access to the internet and a printer (see below for details).
Highlighters (at least three different colors)
A recording device, such as an iPod or a digital voice recorder.

Course Description

English 1A is the first course in SJSU's two-semester lower-division composition sequence; it provides an introduction to baccalaureate-level composition, with attention to the "personal voice" and personal experience, on the one hand, and the more formal attitudes and demands of writing at the university (expository and argumentative essays), on the other. You will develop college-level reading abilities, rhetorical sophistication, and writing styles that will enable you to express complex ideas and feelings in an academic setting.

Though the class is graded A-F, the class must be passed with a C (73%) in order to move on to English 1B.

What This Means

In this class, you will begin to learn to write college-level essays in academic language, while maintaining your own voice, to communicate your increasingly complex through processes.

There are a few rules that I would like you to keep in mind, this semester:

- 1) You will write seven essays over the course of the semester, including in-class and out-of-class writing. This will work out to roughly one essay every two weeks. That is a lot of writing and it will go by much more quickly if you focus on writing essays that you would be interested in reading.
- 2) Let me repeat that: **Only write essays that you would be interested in reading.** This means that choosing topics you are engaged in and finding a way to talk about them that keeps you interested as you write. A list of topics to avoid will be provided, but as long as you keep this rule in mind your writing will be much more pleasant, for everyone.
- 3) Everything I assign has a purpose and fits into the overall plan for the course. From the reading blogs to the portfolio, every component of this course is meant to build on all of the others. The more pieces you miss, the less clear the final picture will be, for you. Students who fall behind almost never catch up enough to pass. As such, I make it policy not to accept late work.
- 4) Keep everything. Anything that I hand out to you, and anything that you hand in to me, may be referenced in our conversation or in future activities. As such, it is your responsibility to keep track of the instructions, assignments and homework and bring them to class. I will proceed with discussions and assignments with this assumption.
- 5) This is a seminar course and will involve considerable class discussion. You will encounter ideas that you disagree with, are confused by or find troubling. This is good, as is debate about these ideas. Attacking the person you disagree with is not, and personal attacks (or attacks on groups of people) will not be tolerated.

Course Goals

Students shall achieve the ability to write complete essays that demonstrate college-level proficiency in all of the following:

- Clear and effective communication of meaning.
- An identifiable focus, tailored to a particular audience and purpose (argumentative essays will state their thesis clearly and show an awareness, implied or stated, of some opposing point of view).
- The ability to perform effectively the essential steps of the writing process (prewriting, organizing, composing, revising, and editing).
- The ability to explain, analyze, develop, and criticize ideas effectively.
- Effective use within their own essays of supporting material drawn from reading or other sources.
- Effective organization within the paragraph and the essay.
- Accuracy, variety, and clarity of sentences.
- Appropriate diction.
- Control of conventional mechanics (e.g., punctuation, spelling, reference, agreement).

Classroom Protocol

Late Assignments

If you are not in class on the day an assignment is due, I will not accept that assignment. (Should you arrive in the last few minutes of class for the sole purpose of turning in your homework, I reserve the right to refuse that assignment.) Later in this packet, you will find three homework coupons. They may be used to hand in assignments up to one week late.

In the event of severe illness or other emergency, an exception might be made as long as the work is accompanied by written verification (only official doctors' notes will be accepted for this purpose). If you know in advance that you will be absent on a certain day, please make arrangements with me **before the absence** to turn in the necessary work. Arrangements may **never** be made after the class has already been missed. By then, it is too late.

Assignments and Grading Policy

Participation (Reading and cell phones)

Class participation is ten percent (10%) of your grade and consists of three parts:

- 1) Notes: Everyone will be assigned a day to take notes and will post them on the course wiki (english1b54.pbworks.com) within 24 hours. If your notes are incomplete, or are not posted, then you will not receive credit.
- 2) Review Presentation: At the end of the semester, each group will choose one topic to review for the class. The quality of your presentation will factor into your participation grade.
- 3) Discussion readiness: If you are regularly missing the necessary materials, including books, essays for review or notes, then you can not fully participate in class. In particularly egregious cases, additional points may be deducted from the grade. You will be warned in advance that this is happening. Likewise, sleeping, engaging in side conversations, doing other homework, playing with your cell phone, will damage your grade to the degree that I believe they damage the class dynamic.

Cell phones, in particular, are an area of developing etiquette. Students often consider them harmless distractions, while teachers consider them a drain on the classroom dynamic.

Since there is such a wide range of opinion on this issue, however, let us agree to this: I consider cell phone use (including "just looking at texts for a second") to be as disrespectful as standing on your desk and screaming obscenities, as a distracting as wearing headphones during a lecture. You may not agree, and I respect that. If you disagree to such a degree that you decide to refer to your phone at an inappropriate time, including keeping it on your leg just below my line of sight, I will call attention to your breach of etiquette and the entire class will be responsible for the following assignment:

Write a 4-page essay on the topic of “multitasking,” “technology and distraction” or “rudeness,” using the same grading criteria as our other essays. This essay must include at least four (4) relevant, credible sources. The first and only draft of the essay will be due the class after the breach of etiquette (regardless of the other homework that is already due that day) and will be worth 10% of your grade.

Required Writing

This is a composition course and, as such, will require significant writing on your part. Over the course of the semester, you will write seven (3-4 page) essays, some of which will be written in class, some outside of class. Some will be rough drafts, while others will be revised. Any reading that you do will be accompanied by a response blog, which you will use to write at least two of the smaller essays. There is, to put it mildly, a lot of writing in this class. At the end of the semester, you will assemble a portfolio of your work, which will include much of the writing you have done in this class, so hang on to everything.

Final Portfolio Assignment:

During this course, you will create a portfolio of your work, including a written reflection of 1000 words, worth fifteen percent of your grade. Think of it as a scientific study of your progress as a writer over the next four months. What you include in your portfolio doesn't have to be perfect. Remember, writing is a *process*. Collecting your work and then reflecting on that work is part of the process. The portfolio project is designed to get you thinking about your specific challenges, your strategies for improvement, your successes and failures, and your goals for the future. Every writer, no matter how accomplished, has room for improvement. This portfolio is your culminating experience. This course does not have a final exam.

The Fine Print (required of all 1A greensheets)

Faculty Web Page and MYSJSU Messaging

Copies of the course materials such as the syllabus, major assignment handouts, etc. may be found on the course webpage on Desire2Learn. You are responsible for regularly checking with the messaging system through Desire2Learn (sjsu.desire2learn.com) and keeping up with the course announcements posted there.

Academic policies

You are responsible for reading the SJSU academic policies available online:

<http://www.sjsu.edu/english/comp/policyforsyllabi.html>

- Course guidelines
- Academic policies (academic integrity, plagiarism, ADA and DRC policies)
- Adding and dropping classes

Prerequisites: Placement by the English Proficiency Test (EPT), or passage of an approved substitute course for the EPT.

SJSU Writing Center

The SJSU Writing Center is located in Room 126 in Clark Hall. It is staffed by professional instructors and upper-division or graduate-level writing specialists from each of the seven SJSU colleges. Our writing specialists have met a rigorous GPA requirement, and they are well trained to assist all students at all levels within all disciplines to become better writers. The [Writing Center website](http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter/about/staff/) is located at <http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter/about/staff/>.

Student Learning Objectives:

SLO 1: Students shall write complete essays that demonstrate the ability to perform effectively the essential steps in the writing process (prewriting, organizing, composing, revising, and editing).

SLO 2: Students shall write complete essays that demonstrate the ability to express (explain, analyze, develop, and criticize) ideas effectively.

SLO 3: Students shall write complete essays that demonstrate the ability to use correct grammar (syntax, mechanics, and citation of sources) at a college level of sophistication.

SLO 4: Students shall write complete essays that demonstrate the ability to write for different audiences.

Grading: A-F.

The Department of English reaffirms its commitment to the differential grading scale as defined in the official SJSU *Catalog* ("The Grading System"). Grades issued must represent a full range of student performance: A = excellent; B = above average; C = average; D = below average; F = failure.

- The "A" essay will be well organized and well developed, demonstrating a clear understanding and fulfillment of the assignment. It will show the student's ability to use language effectively and construct sentences distinguished by syntactic complexity and variety. Such essays will be essentially free of grammatical, mechanical, and usage errors.
- The "B" essay will demonstrate competence in the same categories as the "A" essay. The chief difference is that the "B" essay will show describable weaknesses in one of those categories. It may slight one of the assigned tasks, show less facility of expression, or contain some minor grammatical, mechanical, or usage flaws.
- The "C" essay will complete all tasks set by the assignment, but show weakness in fundamentals (usually development), with barely enough specific information to illustrate the experience or support generalizations. The sentence construction may be less mature, and the use of language less effective and correct than the "B" essay.
- The "D" essay will neglect one of the assigned tasks and be noticeably superficial in its treatment of the assignment—that is, too simplistic or short. The essay may reveal some problems in development, with insufficient specific information to illustrate the experience or support generalizations. It will contain grammatical, mechanical, and usage errors that render some sentences incomprehensible.
- The "F" essay will demonstrate a striking underdevelopment of ideas and insufficient or unfocused organization. It will contain serious grammatical, mechanical, and usage errors that render some sentences incomprehensible.

Student Technology Resources

Computer labs for student use are available in the Academic Success Center located on the 1st floor of Clark Hall and on the 2nd floor of the Student Union. Additional computer labs may be available in your department/college. Computers are also available in the Martin Luther King Library.

Learning Assistance Resource Center

The Learning Assistance Resource Center (LARC) is located in Room 600 in the Student Services Center. It is designed to assist students in the development of their full academic potential and to motivate them to become self-directed learners. The center provides support services, such as skills assessment, individual or group tutorials, subject advising, learning assistance, summer academic preparation and basic skills development. The [LARC website](http://www.sjsu.edu/larc/) is located at <http://www.sjsu.edu/larc/>.

English 1A, Spring 2012, Course Schedule (subject to change with notice)

REMINDERS:

- * Reading assignments should be completed **by the day** they appear on the schedule for discussion, as should any blog connected to the reading
- * The assignments due each day can also be found on the course website, in the class calendar.
- * Readings come from three sources: Joining the Conversation (JC) and Desire2Learn (D2L).

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
1	Wednesday 01/25	Where am I? Introductions
2	Monday 01/30	What kinds of writing will be we doing? All about genres, choosing topics Read: JC: "Making Connections" (3-25) D2L: Alexie: "Superman and Me" Bring greensheets
	Wednesday 02/01	What is an essay? Diagnostic Essay Read: JC: "Writing to Reflect" (95-103)
3	Monday 02/06	Where do we come from? Assign Literacy Narrative Read: JC: "Getting Started" (27-48)
	Wednesday 02/08	Where do other writers come from? Literacy Narrative Interviews Read: JC: "Writing to Reflect" (125-149) Write: Outline of your literacy history
4	Monday 02/13	How do college readers read? Discuss reading Read: JC: "Reading to Write" (50-73) "Who's Irish" and "Among the Believers" (112-124) Write: Blog for "Who's Irish" and "Among the Believers"
	Wednesday 02/15	What are we going to do differently? Peer review training Write: Literacy Narrative Draft Due (3 copies/ 2 pages)
5	Monday 02/20	How can I make this better? Literacy Narrative Peer Review Read: JC: "Working Together" (75-91) Peer review partners' essays Write: Peer Review Notes (2 copies/ 1 full page)
	Wednesday 02/22	What are we writing about? Charting the direction of the course: choosing topics Write: Literacy Narrative Revised Draft Due (3 pages)

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
6	Monday 02/27	What do I know? In-class essay Read: JC: "Writing to Inform" (153-157, 162-170, 177-202) Write: Blog for "Devices" and "Danger"
	Wednesday 02/29	What does college writing look like? Introduction to essay structure Read: JC: "Organizing and Drafting" (547-570) Write: Blog for "Organization and Drafting"
7	Monday 03/05	Grammar rants The difference between style and grammar Read: JC: "Writing to Analyze" (207-220) "Writing with Style" (617-630) Write: Blog for "Race" and "Population"
	Wednesday 03/07	How does writing work in college? Introduction to revision Read: JC: "Revising and Editing" (631-642) Find a blog about a topic that interests you. Write: Revised Informative Essay
8	Monday 03/12	Why does the thesis matter so much? Thesis statements Read: JC: "Developing a Thesis Statement" (535-546) "Writing to Analyze" (230-259) Write: Blog for "Developing a Thesis Statement"
	Wednesday 03/14	How should my essay look? Document design Advanced editing Read: JC: "Designing Your Document" (595-616) Write: Analysis Draft Due (3 copies/ 2 pages)
9	Monday 03/19	Is this any good? Assign Evaluation Essay Evaluation: Developing criteria Peer Review Read: JC: "Writing to Evaluate" (271-286) Write: Peer Review Notes (2 copies/ 1 full page)
	Wednesday 03/21	The midterm, already? Midterm Write: Analysis Revision Due Bring all essays written so far this semester (all drafts)
10	Monday 03/26	No Class: Spring Break
	Wednesday 03/28	No Class: Spring Break

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
11	Monday 04/02	What does a good essay look like? Evaluating the essays: peer review Read: JC: "Writing to Evaluate" (287-331) Write: Evaluation Draft Due
	Wednesday 04/04	How can I solve my own problems? Problem solving, difficulty and writing in college Review of essay structure Read: JC: "Writing to Solve Problems" (335-340) Write: Evaluation Revision Due
12	Monday 04/09	What more complex strategies can I use? Advanced essay structure Dealing with difficulty Read: JC: "Writing to Solve Problems" (376-390) Write: Difficulty Paper Part 1 Due
	Wednesday 04/11	Where do arguments come from? In-class essay Write: Difficulty Paper Parts 2 and 3 due Bring Evaluation and Analysis essays to class
13	Monday 04/16	How are arguments made? Argumentative tactics Read: JC: "Writing to Convince or Persuade" (401-406, 417-446) Write: Argument list of topics and thesis due
	Wednesday 04/18	Where does information come from? Revising for research Write: Argument basic outline and research plan due
14	Monday 04/23	What does "real revision" look like? Peer review, research and argumentation Write: Argument rough draft due (3 copies/ 2 pages)
	Wednesday 04/25	Where do we go from here? Introduce Portfolio and Reflection Write: Revised draft of persuasive essay due
15	Monday 04/30	What have we covered? Group presentations Bring all essays written so far this semester
	Wednesday 05/02	What do we need to know about revision, now? In-class revision practice Group presentations Write: Bring one page freewrite of the differences between your writing in January and your writing now.
16	Monday 05/07	How do I write about my own writing? Reads and revision of reflection Write: Rough draft of reflection (4 copies/ 2 pages)

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
	Wednesday 05/09	What have we learned about peer review? Read: Partners' reflections Write Reflection peer reviews
17	Monday 05/14	What have we been working on, all this time? Next steps/ Portfolio review Write: Final portfolio due, bring post-it notes

Important SJSU dates Spring 2012

January 25	First Day of Instruction – Classes Begin
February 6	Last Day to Drop Courses Without an Entry on Student's Permanent Record
February 13	Last Day to Add Courses & Register Late
March 26-30	Spring Recess
March 30	Cesar Chavez Day Observed - Campus Closed
May 15	Last Day of Instruction – Last Day of Classes
May 17-18	Final Examinations
May 21-23	Final Examinations
May 26	Commencement
<i>May 28</i>	<i>Memorial Day - Campus Closed</i>
May 29	Grades Due From Faculty - End of Spring Semester
May 29	End of Academic Year

Grading:

Class Participation and activities: 100 points

Reading Blogs* (see handout): 75 points

Out of Class Essays: 675 points (5 @ 135 points each)

End-of-Semester Portfolio: 150 points

*Each assignment is graded on a credit/no credit basis – at the end of the semester, the percentage of completed assignments is converted to points.

965-1000 points = A+

865-894 points = B+

765-794 points = C+

665-694 points = D+

925-964 points = A

825-864 points = B

725-764 points = C

625-664 points = D

<600 points = F

895-924 points = A-

795-824 points = B-

695-724 points = C-

595-624 points = D-

Homework Coupons:

These homework coupons may be used **once** and must be handed in on the day the assignment is originally due. They may not be traded. They are not passes: you must still hand in the assignment within one week. Coupon #1 may only be used for reading blogs. The second coupon may be used for a major essay. The final coupon may be used for any assignment that is not a rough draft or a revised draft, including team assignments and reading blogs.

READING BLOG HOMEWORK COUPON	1
Student name: _____	
Class: _____	
Assignment: _____	
Reason: _____	
Date: _____	

OUT-OF-CLASS ESSAY HOMEWORK COUPON	2
Student name: _____	
Class: _____	
Assignment: _____	
Reason: _____	
Date: _____	

MISCELLANEOUS HOMEWORK COUPON	3
Student name: _____	
Class: _____	
Assignment: _____	
Reason: _____	
Date: _____	