

**San José State University**  
**Department of English and Comparative Literature**  
**English 1A, Composition 1 (GE A2), Sections 16, 26 Fall 2013**

**Instructor:** Julie Sparks, Ph.D.  
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**Office Hours:** TBA

**Class Days/Time:** Sec 16 TTh 9-10:15 BBC124  
Sec 26 TTh 10:30-11:45 BBC 124

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

**GE Category:** Written Communication A2

### **Faculty Web Page and MYSJSU Messaging**

Copies of the course materials such as the syllabus, major assignment handouts, etc. may be found on my faculty web page at <http://www.sjsu.edu/people/julie.sparks/> or accessible through the Quick Links>Faculty Web Page links on the SJSU home page. **You are responsible for regularly checking with the messaging system through MySJSU.**

### **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. Students will develop college-level reading abilities, rhetorical sophistication, and writing styles that give form and coherence to complex ideas and feelings.

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

### **Course Goals and Student Learning Objectives**

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).

#### **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.

#### **Required Texts/Readings**

**The CURIOUS WRITER, Concise Edition, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition 2011**

by Bruce BALLENGER ISBN: 9780205780402

**The EVERYDAY WRITER-(W/Access Card) By LUNSFORD 5<sup>TH</sup> ed. ISBN: 9781457667121**

**Note:** The Curious Writer is also available as an electronic book, but if you choose this option, you will need to bring a laptop or netbook to class every time so you will have the words in front of you. Please don't choose this option if you know you will not be able to resist the urge to do OTHER things on the Web. This is VERY important if you want to learn anything in this class!

#### **Other Readings**

Some course readings will be posted on the course Web site for you to print out and bring to class. A limited number of short readings will be printed on paper as in days of yore.

## Classroom Protocol

**Attendance and Participation:** It is very important that students come to this class regularly and come prepared to participate. This means that reading assignments should be finished **before** the class period when they will be discussed, and that students bring the text and a copy of the reading with them. Students should also bring the necessary rough drafts to writing workshops. There will be frequent, unannounced in-class writing of some sort, and these cannot be made up by students who miss class. Poor attendance and weak participation will significantly reduce your learning experience and your grade. Even good writers with a poor work ethic sometimes fail the class. Don't let it happen to you!

Participating in the mandatory peer review workshops is particularly crucial. If you skip these, you will miss out on valuable advice, as well as points. **Furthermore, if you miss the in-class peer review, it is your responsibility to get one on your own or your project's grade will be docked 20%.**

**Professionalism and maturity:** Perhaps this should go without saying, but students will be expected to treat each other and their professor with courtesy and respect. This includes the little things, like getting to class on time, turning your cell phones off in class, and refraining from toying with electronic devices and chatting with buddies in class. Professionalism also involves the more serious matter of avoiding rude or hostile remarks. We will be discussing some emotionally potent issues, so it will be important for us all to express ourselves carefully and try to keep our cool. Students who fail in this regard might be asked to leave the classroom.

### Academic Integrity

The University's Academic Integrity policy, located at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/S07-2.htm>, requires you to be honest in all your academic course work. Cheating on exams or plagiarism (presenting the work of another as your own, or the use of another person's ideas without giving proper credit, **or submitting your own work that you wrote for another class**) will result in a failing grade and sanctions by the University. For this class, all assignments are to be completed by the individual student submitting them unless otherwise specified. **Turniti.com:** To receive credit, all essays for this class and all extra credit must be submitted to Turnitin.com. Late submissions to Turnitin could be penalized—if I have to keep asking. . .

## Assignments and Grading Policy

**Grading:** A-F. **This class must be passed with a C or better to move on to CORE GE Area C3 and to satisfy the prerequisite for English 1B.** A passing grade in the course signifies that the student is a capable college-level writer and reader of English. A detailed assignment sheet will be handed out for each major assignment specifying the criteria on which it will be judged, but in general your writing will be graded on content and writing competence (grammar and such), as well as its effectiveness for its specific audience and purpose.

**Late Work:** I recognize that there are perfectly legitimate reasons for good people to miss deadlines on occasion. However, reflecting the seriousness with which such lapses are treated in the workplace, **I will penalize all late essays by 10% each day they are late (including weekends), and I will not accept a paper after one week from the due date.** If you do miss a deadline, you will harm your case further if you also fail to contact me about it. This, in addition to poor attendance, is the primary reason for student failure. **Late homework (small**

assignments) simply won't be accepted, nor will I accept homework sent by email. Note: There is a 10-minute grace period, and that's it. If you arrive later than that, your homework will not be accepted.

**Extra Credit:** To soften the no-late-homework policy and to encourage you to seek enriching extra learning experiences, I will periodically urge you to attend campus lectures or performances and write about those for extra points. I will also post a list of other options for extra credit. **There is a 30-point maximum per semester, per student, for extra credit.**

**Making up In-Class Essays:** If you miss an in-class essay and don't make it up, **you will fail the class**, so it is VERY important that you don't miss them. However, each student gets ONE chance to make up a missed essay. It is the student's responsibility to be at the make-up, which will probably be the last day of the semester.

### Assignments and Weighting

Diagnostic essay (800 words)	0 %	0 points	(SLO 2,3,4)
In-class essays (2) (1600 words)	20 %	200 points	(SLO 2,3,4)
Personal Essay (1200 words)	15 %	150 points	(SLO 1-4)
Interview Essay (1200 words)	15 %	150 points	(SLO 1-4)
Review Essay (1200 words)	10 %	150 points	(SLO 1-4)
Revision (1000 words)	10 %	100 points	(SLO 1-4)
Final reflection (1000 words)	10 %	100 points	(SLO 1-4)
Small assignments	15 %	150 points	(SLO varies)

### Final Assignment:

Instead of a final exam, you will write a critical reflection at the end of the class. Think of it as a scientific study of your progress as a writer over the next four months. Remember, writing is a *process*. Collecting your work and then reflecting on that work is part of the process. The final assignment 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 assignment is your culminating experience. This course does not have a final exam.

**Grading Policy** The following statement has been adopted by the Department of English for inclusion in all syllabi: In English Department Courses, instructors will comment on and grade the quality of student writing as well as the quality of ideas being conveyed. All student writing should be distinguished by correct grammar and punctuation, appropriate diction and syntax, and well-organized paragraphs.

The Department of English reaffirms its commitment to the differential grading scale as defined in the 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.

In written assignments for English 1A, this scale is based on the following criteria:

A [90-92=A-, 93-96=A, 97-100=A+] = Excellent: The "A" essay is articulate and well developed with fluid transitions and a clear and persuasive use of evidence, which is drawn from the literary text itself, lecture materials (when appropriate), and research materials. An "A" essay contains a fresh insight which teaches the reader something new about the subject matter.

B [80-82=B-, 83-86=B, 87-89=B+] Above average: The "B" essay demonstrates a good understanding of its subject, a clear and persuasive use of evidence, a certain level of ease of expression, and solid organization. However, it usually lacks the level of originality and creativity that characterizes the insight found in an "A" essay.

C [70-72=C-, 73-76=C, 77-79=C+] = Average: The "C" essay makes a good attempt at all the assignment's requirements. It has a reasonable understanding of its subject matter but its ideas are frequently simplistic or over-generalized. The writing style is also more bland and repetitive than the style shown by "A" and "B" essays and it often contains flaws in grammar, punctuation, spelling and/or word choice. It may also use textual evidence out of context.

D [60-62=D-, 63-66=D, 67-69=D+] = Below average: The "D" essay is poorly organized and generally unclear. It has inappropriate or inadequate examples, is noticeably superficial or simplistic, and/or contains some serious mechanical and grammatical problems. A "D" essay may also reveal some misunderstanding of the assignment requirements.

F = Failure: An "F" essay has not addressed the requirements of the assignment and is unacceptable work in terms of both form and content.

## Peer Connections

The Learning Assistance Resource Center (LARC) and the Peer Mentor Program have merged to become Peer Connections. Peer Connections is the new campus-wide resource for mentoring and tutoring. We are located in SSC 600 (10th Street Garage), at the first floor entrance of Clark Hall, and in the Living Learning Center (LLC) in Campus Village Housing Building B. See the Peer Connections website for more information ([peerconnections.sjsu.edu](http://peerconnections.sjsu.edu)).

## 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/>.

## English 1A Course Schedule (next page)

Note: Assignments after “Read” and “Due” should be completed *before* the class period on which they are listed; e.g. read “Scrimping on College” before class on 8/28 and bring it in.

Week	Date	
1	Th 8/22	Introduction to the Course, Begin film <i>Declining by Degrees</i>
2	T 8/27 Th 8/29	Finish film: <i>Declining by Degrees</i> <b>*In-class Essay #1: Diagnostic Essay</b> <u>Read:</u> “Scrimping on College Has Its Own Price” (online)
3	T 9/4 Th 9/6	Basics of argument <u>Read:</u> Text 173-185, 188, and “On College Graduation” (online) Writing as Inquiry <u>Read:</u> Text 3-20 and <u>Due:</u> Self-evaluation survey (to hand in)
4	T 9/11 Th 9/13	Discuss the Writing Process, brief in-class writing <u>Read</u> Text pp. 20-31, “Regrets of an Accomplished Child” (online) Discuss diagnostics, Grammar Review, practice for in-class essay #2 <u>Read:</u> “Why Chinese Parents are Superior” and “Why I Love my Strict Chinese Mom” (online)
5	T 9/18 Th 9/19	<b>Exploratory Writing: The Personal Essay</b> <u>Read:</u> “High Expectations” (2 essays, both online) <b>In-class essay #2</b> <u>Read:</u> <i>Film Club</i> excerpt (online)
6	T 9/24 Th 9/26	Writing from Experience <u>Read:</u> Text pp. 75-78, 86-97 <u>Due:</u> <b>Personal essay topic proposal</b> The Writing Process for the Personal Essay <u>Read:</u> Text 97-105 <u>Due:</u> Analysis/response “Beet Field of Dreams”
7	T 10/1 Th 10/3	Making it vivid: Descriptive details <u>Read:</u> Excerpt from <i>Working in the Shadows</i> (online) <b>Reflecting and Revising</b> <u>Read:</u> pp. 363-403, in-class work on introductions, conclusions
8	T 10/8 Th 10/10	<u>Peer review workshop</u> <u>Due:</u> <u>rough draft personal essay (2 copies)</u> <b>Unit Three: Writing About Culture: The Interview Essay</b> <u>Read:</u> “For Muslim Prom Queen, There’s No King” (online)
9	T 10/15 Th 10/17	Watch Film: <i>The Lost Boys of Sudan</i> <u>Read:</u> “Students’ journey takes them from Sudan to Bay Area” (online) <u>Due:</u> <b>Personal Essay</b> Workshop: Analyzing your audience/situation, Developing questions <u>Read:</u> Text 282-285 “Martin Curriel: Jefferson Award” <u>Due:</u> <b>topic proposal for interview essay</b>

Week	Date	
10	T 10/22  Th 10/24	Writing workshop: Structuring your interview essay <u>Read:</u> “In China, Betting it all on a Child in College” and “The Apprentices of a Digital Age” (online)  Writing Workshop: introductions/conclusions, choosing and using quotes <u>Due:</u> Questions for your interview (2 copies, typed)
11	T 10/29  Th 10/31	<b>*in-class essay #3</b> <u>Read:</u> “My Freshman Year: Worldliness and World View” (online)  <u>peer review of Interview essay</u> <u>Due:</u> <u>rough draft interview essay (2 copies)</u>
12	T 11/5  Th 11/7	<b>Writing a Review</b> introduce assignment, begin film  <u>Due:</u> <b>Interview Essay</b>  Finish film, discuss. Principles of writing a good review. <u>Read:</u> text 107-115, 124-127, 130-133
13	T 11/12  Th 11/14	Analyzing and responding to others’ reviews <u>Read:</u> Sample reviews (online) <u>Due:</u> Review topic proposal  Writing workshop, grammar review, catch-up day
14	T 11/19  Th 11/21	<u>peer review of Review essay</u> <u>Due:</u> <u>rough draft review essay (2 copies)</u>  *****THANKSGIVING!*****
15	T 11/26  Th11/28	<b>Final Unit: Reflection Assignment</b> <u>Due:</u> <b>Review essay</b>  Workshop on reflective writing (bring in all your in-class essays)
16	T 12/3  Th12/5	<u>peer review of revision essay</u> <u>Due:</u> <u>rough draft interview essay (2 copies)</u>  Make-ups <u>Due:</u> <b>Revised essay, Portfolio, Reflection</b>
		No final exam