

Critical Thinking and Writing Section 28

ENGL 2

Spring 2025 In Person 3 Unit(s) 01/23/2025 to 05/12/2025 Modified 01/17/2025

Course Information

Course Objectives/Description

English 2 is a thematic course that focuses on the relationship between language and logic when composing arguments. Drawing on systems of analysis from rhetorical theorists and logicians (for instance, Aristotle, Rogers, Burke, and Toulmin, among others), students learn to reason effectively and think rhetorically to invent, demonstrate, and express arguments clearly, logically, and persuasively.

Reading a variety of texts, students study conventions of formal writing as well as textual cues that control the development of logical inferences.

Course-specific information:

Our course theme will be "Current Events and Cultural Memory." In the 21st Century it is easy to feel disconnected from the events unfolding locally, nationally, and globally. How do we really know if the world is getting warmer or that the climate is changing? Why does it matter that there is a trade war between the US and China? Who knows why so many migrants from Central America are fleeing their homes? What effects do events from 50 or even 150 years ago have on our lives today? Through our course readings we will begin to think and write about our connections to these events, and speculate as to how we might influence the future.

In my own work, I am inspired by the philosopher Walter Benjamin who writes:

Historicism contents itself with establishing a causal connection between various moments in history. But no fact that is a cause is for that very reason historical. It became historical posthumously, as it were, though events that may be separated from it by thousands of years. A historian who takes this as his point of departure stops telling the sequence of events like the beads of a rosary. Instead, he grasps the constellation which his own era has formed with a definite earlier one. Thus, he establishes a conception of the present as the 'time of the now' which is shot through with chips of Messianic time. — *Theses on the Philosophy of History*, 1940.

What You Need for This Class:

The Autobiography of Malcolm X

Additionally, students will be expected to have writing materials (paper, pen/pencil, etc.) and reference materials such as a dictionary and thesaurus. It is also recommended that you get a copy of the most recent edition of the MLA handbook.

Learning Outcomes

General Education Course Learning Outcomes (GELO)

Upon successful completion of the course, students should be able to

1. locate and evaluate sources, through library research, and integrate research through appropriate citation and quotation;
2. present effective arguments that use a full range of legitimate rhetorical and logical strategies to articulate and explain their positions on complex issues in dialogue with other points of view;
3. locate, interpret, evaluate, and synthesize evidence in a comprehensive way in support of your ideas;
4. identify and critically evaluate the assumptions in and the context of an argument;
5. distinguish and convey inductive and deductive patterns as appropriate, sequencing arguments and evidence logically to draw valid conclusions and articulate related outcomes (implications and consequences).

Course Description and Requisites

English 2 is a course that focuses on the relationship between language and logic in composing arguments. Students learn various methods of effective reasoning and appropriate rhetorical strategies to help them invent, demonstrate, and express arguments clearly, logically, and persuasively.

GE Area(s): A3. Critical Thinking and Writing

Prerequisite(s): Completion of GE Area A2 with a grade of "C-" or better.

Note(s): ENGL 2 is not open to students who successfully completed ENGL 1B.

Letter Graded

Classroom Protocols

ENGL 2

This course is open to all students needing to fulfill GE Area A3 (Critical Thinking). It is not open to students who have successfully completed ENGL 1B.

Prerequisite: ENGL 1A or Stretch English (with a grade of C- or better)

Classroom Policies for English 2

PARTICIPATION: Each student is expected to come to class prepared to engage in discussions of the week's readings and to participate in individual and group writing assignments (drafting, peer review, editing, etc.). It is imperative that you keep up with the reading schedule. Discussions and in-class assignments will help each of you develop your ideas for essays. Students are expected to complete a total of three hours of coursework per unit, per week, which for this four unit course amounts to 12 hours per week.

Your **participation** in class discussions and peer review is **factored into the grade of each out-of-class essay** and worth up to 10% of your grade (see the rubric for each assignment). It is crucial that you keep up with the reading and discussion schedule, that you submit your essay drafts on time, and that you participate meaningfully in the peer review process (see peer review guidelines on Canvas). If you miss these assignments, you can expect to lose participation points on your essays as well. Except for documented medical emergencies and COVID-related absences, **no late work will be accepted unless an extension has been requested and approved 24 hours prior to the assignment due date.**

OFFICE HOURS & INSTRUCTOR COMMUNICATION: As your instructor, my goal is to help you successfully navigate all aspects of our course, as well as academics in general. To that end, I hold weekly office hours during which you are free to come in and discuss anything relevant to your education. This is a time for you to ask clarifying questions, seek guidance, and express your interests or concerns. Over the years, I have found that it is crucial for students to communicate with instructors early and often. I do not require that students come to office hours, but have noticed that in the majority of cases, those who do tend to be more successful in the course. I am also available via email (see [Email Guidelines](#)).

ATTENDANCE: You are allowed **two** absences. I **do not distinguish between "excused" and "unexcused" absences**; your two allowed absences are yours to take or leave as you want or need to, and you don't need to explain the reason to me. **Excessive absences** (more than one week of classes), tardiness, or early departure without prior approval from the instructor **will result in lost participation points** and greatly diminish your chances of passing the course. Should you have to miss all or part of

any class, it **will not be the instructor's responsibility to fill you in on what you missed.** During the first week of classes, we will do a partner activity where you exchange email or phone information with some of your classmates so that you can stay on top of things.

ELECTRONICS: Excessive use of personal electronic devices diminishes the sense of community in the classroom. It is impossible for you to participate in discussions and class exercises in a meaningful way when your focus is elsewhere. Cell phones, laptops, and music listening devices are not permitted during class. Phones should be put away with ringers off so that you can focus on the material covered that day (I make an exception to this rule for parents with small children or other caretakers). If you are unable to sit for the duration of our class time without these devices, then this class will likely not work for you—and you will earn a failing grade. On occasions when class exercises require use of computers for research or paper editing, gaming and/or checking social media sites (TikTok, Instagram, Twitter, etc.) will not be allowed. Those who violate this policy will be asked to leave for the day.

LANGUAGE: Be respectful of your classmates and instructor. Derogatory, insulting, sexist, racist, or homophobic language **will not be tolerated.** You are encouraged to freely engage in classroom discussions and to express your opinions and perspectives, but remain mindful of *how* your language is being used. Points will be deducted for repeat-offenders, and in certain cases you may be asked to leave. The exception to this policy is where the texts and sources we will use are concerned.

ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY:

Use of AI

Text from generative AI, like ChatGPT, must be cited like any source for quotation, paraphrase, and summary, as well as citation for brainstorming, essay content, or organization (outlines) resulting from AI prompts. When using corrective AI, like Grammarly, indicate use through direct communication with your instructor or through a note in your essay. Check with the instructor of any other class for their AI policy, and be sure to give credit where it's due and avoid plagiarizing.

MLA Documentation of AI

Paraphrased in Your Prose

While the green light in *The Great Gatsby* might be said to chiefly symbolize four main things: optimism, the unattainability of the American dream, greed, and covetousness (“Describe the symbolism”), arguably the most important—the one that ties all four themes together—is greed.

Works-Cited-List Entry

"Describe the symbolism of the green light in the book *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald" prompt. ChatGPT, 13 Feb. version, OpenAI, 8 Mar. 2023, chat.openai.com/chat.

As a former community college student, I understand that life outside of school can pose many challenges to our academic pursuits. I want this course to be a place where you can escape those distractions to focus on sharpening your writing skills and learning new ones. When you are participating in this course, I ask that you:

- ○ Trust the value of your own intellect.
- Demonstrate your own achievement and abilities.
- Do original work for each class.
- Undertake research honestly and credit others for their work.

- **Ask for help from me, or for more time if you need it!**

All written work submitted for this course must be your own. After we have completed our MLA unit, you will be fully responsible for accurately and consistently using in-text citations and a Work(s) Cited page.

If an assignment has improperly formatted/missing in-text citations, or is otherwise the product of plagiarism:

The First time, you will be asked to make the necessary revisions so that your paper does not contain plagiarized material, and you will receive a "zero" until this is done. Once you've made these revisions, you will receive the score your paper would have otherwise earned.

If there is a second time, you will receive a "zero" until the necessary revisions are made, and lose of 10% (per day that it is late) of the total score your paper would have earned otherwise.

These will be your only opportunities to correct the issue. Further instances will incur consequences up to and including failure of the assignment, failure of the course, and/or referral to the administration for further action.

Course Content

Diversity: SJSU studies include an emphasis on diversity. You will engage in integrated reading, Writing, and oral assignments to construct your own arguments on complex issues (such as diversity and ethnicity, class and social equality) that generate meaningful public debate. Readings for the

course will include writers of different ethnicities, genders, and socio-economic classes.

Writing: You will write a series of essays informed by research and articulating fully developed arguments about complex issues. Assignments emphasize those skills and activities in writing and thinking that produce the persuasive argument and the critical essay, each of which demands analysis, interpretation, and evaluation. Writing assignments give you repeated practice in prewriting, organizing, writing, revising, and editing. This class requires a minimum of 6000 words, at least 4000 of which must be in revised final draft form.

Logic: You will learn methods of argument analysis, both rhetorical and logical, that will allow you to identify logical structures (such as warrants, evidence, qualification, rebuttal; enthymemes and syllogisms) and distinguish common logical fallacies.

Reading: In addition to being writing intensive, ENGL 2 is also a reading course. You will read a variety of critical and argumentative texts to help develop your skills for understanding the logical structure of argumentative writing.

Oral: You will be presenting your arguments orally to class both as an individual and as part of a group.

Faculty Web Page and MYSJSU Messaging

Course materials such as syllabus, handouts, notes, assignment instructions, etc. can be found on the Canvas Learning Management System course login website. You're responsible for regularly checking with the messaging system through MySJSU to learn of any updates. For help with using Canvas see Canvas Student Resources page.

Time Commitment

Success in ENGL 2 is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of 45 hours over the length of the course (normally three hours per unit per week) for instruction, preparation/studying, or course related activities, including but not limited to internships, labs, and clinical practica. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus.

Final Examination or Evaluation

In ENGL 2, our learning culminates in a digital Reflection and Portfolio Assignment. In this assignment, we will gather samples of our writing that demonstrate our learning; we will write a reflection essay that explains what we have learned, how we learned it, and how we will use it in future learning; and we will submit our portfolio for consideration to other people in the first-year writing program. This is our chance to identify and articulate what we've learned and what we'll take forward with us into future learning/writing experiences.

Program Policies

First-Year Writing policies are listed at the following website:

<https://www.sjsu.edu/english/frosh/program-policies.php>

(<https://www.sjsu.edu/english/frosh/program-policies.php>).

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 A3: Critical Thinking and Writing

Area A3 courses develop students' understanding of the relationship of language to logic. By engaging students in complex issues requiring critical thinking and effective argumentation, A3 courses develop students' abilities to research and analyze important topics and to construct their own arguments on issues that generate meaningful public debate and deliberation. Courses include explicit instruction and practice in inductive and deductive reasoning as well as identification of formal and informal fallacies of language and thought. Completion of Area A2 (Written Communication I) with a minimum grade of C- is a prerequisite for enrollment in Area A3. Completion of Area A3 with a grade of C- or better is a CSU graduation requirement.

GE Area A3 Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of an Area A3 course, students should be able to:

1. locate, interpret, evaluate, and synthesize evidence in a comprehensive way, including through library research; and integrate research findings into oral and written arguments through appropriate citation

- and quotation;
2. use a range of rhetorical and logical strategies to articulate and explain their positions on complex issues in dialogue with other points of view;
 3. identify and critically evaluate the assumptions in and the contexts of arguments; and
 4. use inductive and deductive logic to construct valid, evidence-supported arguments and draw valid conclusions.

Writing Practice: Students will write a minimum of 6000 words, at least 4000 of which must be in revised final draft form.

✓ Grading Information

Course Assignments	Percent of Total Grade
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Three out-of-class Essays*:	70%
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Essay 1: Personal Narrative Essay (Minimum: 1000 Words) (15%)

Essay 2: Research Essay: Current Event (Minimum: 1500 words) (25%)

Essay 3: Persuasive Argument (Minimum: 2500 words) (30%)

Quizzes, Homework, Class Work, etc.	30%
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A student will not be eligible for a passing grade for English 2 unless all of these assignments are submitted and your Portfolio earns a passing grade. No late work will be accepted for credit without prior approval from me.

*All out-of-class writing assignments should be submitted as a link to a Google Doc through Canvas. **No late work will be accepted for credit without prior approval from me. Extensions must be requested no less than 24 hours prior to the due date.**

Grade Breakdown

94 - 100% A 74 - 76.9% C

90 - 93.9% A- 70 - 73.9% C-

87 - 89.9% B+ 67 - 69.9% D+

84 - 86.9% B 64 - 66.9% D

80 - 83.9% B- 60 - 63.9% D-

77 - 79.9% C+ 0 - 59.9% F

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.