

**San Jose State University**  
**English 1A – Composition**  
**Fall 2013**  
**Section 77**

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Office Hours:	MW 1:45 – 2:45
Class Day/Time:	FR 9:30-12:15
Classroom:	BBC 123

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

**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).

## Course Content

**Writing:** Writing assignments shall give students repeated practice in all phases of the writing process: prewriting, organizing, writing, revising, and editing. At least eight essays, appropriately sequenced throughout the semester and totaling a minimum of 8000 words, are required. This minimum requirement excludes the final examination, journal writing, quizzes, and any brief or informal assignments. However, it can include assignments that require major revisions of drafts already submitted for a grade and commented on by peers and/or instructor. A major revision is defined as a significant rethinking and reworking of an assignment, and not a simple “correcting” of mechanical errors noted on the original. At least three (but no more than four) essays shall be written in class. How the 8000 word minimum will be met and distributed is clearly indicated on this greensheet.

Students shall receive frequent evaluation of their writing from the instructor. In evaluating student writing, instructors shall comment on specific features of individual papers. Comments shall encourage and acknowledge student success as well as note errors and suggest ways to correct them.

**Reading:** Reading for the course shall be extensive and intensive and include useful models of writing for academic, general, and specific audiences.

**Research:** English 1A may initiate students in the use of the library, but library research is not a required element of the course.

**Diversity:** Assignments (both reading and writing) shall address issues of race, class, and gender when appropriate, and the perspectives of women and diverse cultural groups shall be incorporated into course instruction and materials in an inclusive and comprehensive manner whenever possible.

**Tutoring:** Students whose writing displays serious deficiencies in their control of standard English syntax, grammar, or punctuation will be advised to seek help from the University Writing Center.

Mandated Writing Center statement: “The SJSU Writing Center is located in Clark Hall, Suite 126. All Writing Specialists have gone through a rigorous hiring process, and they are well trained to assist all students at all levels within all disciplines to become better writers. In addition to one-on-one [tutoring services](#), the Writing Center also offers workshops every semester on a variety of writing topics. To make an appointment or to refer to the numerous online resources offered through the Writing Center, visit the Writing Center website: [www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter](http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter). For additional resources and updated information, follow the Writing Center on Twitter and become a fan of the SJSU Writing Center on Facebook.”

### **Course Materials:**

- Ballenger, Bruce. *The Curious Writer*. 4th Edition. Longman.
- Cohen, Samuel. *50 Essays: A Portable Anthology*. 3rd Edition. Bedford.
- Lunsford, Andrea A. *The Everyday Writer*. 5th Edition. Bedford.
- A dictionary
- Four large blue books for in-class essays
- Two yellow exam booklets for the final exam

**The University Essay Final Exam:** A common essay final, graded holistically, shall count 20 percent toward the course grade. A single university-wide final will be developed around a college-level reading passage each semester by the English Department Composition Committee. All faculty members teaching individual sections will grade the examination holistically under controlled conditions. Students must take the final exam in order to pass the course. **Final Exam Date: Saturday, Dec. 7th, 8 a.m.**

### **Student Learning Objectives (G.E. Area A2):**

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).
2. Students shall write complete essays that demonstrate the ability to express (explain, analyze, develop, and criticize) ideas effectively.
3. Students shall write complete essays that demonstrate the ability to express grammar (syntax, mechanics, and citation of sources) at a college level of sophistication.
4. Students shall write complete essays that demonstrate the ability to write for different audiences.

The following Content Objectives are specific to Area A2:

- Writing assignments shall give students repeated practice in pre-writing, organizing, writing, revising, and editing
- The number of writing assignments and their careful sequencing are as important as the total number of words written. Eight essays totaling a minimum of 8000 words are required. This minimum requirement excludes the final exam, journal writing, quizzes, and other informal or brief assignments.
- Although the majority of papers will be written outside of class, at least three essays shall be substantive, addressing the quality and form of writing.

- Reading for the course will be extensive and intensive. It shall include useful models of writing for academic, general, and specific audiences.

**Grading:** A-F. This class must be passed with a C or higher to move on to CORE GE Area A2 and to satisfy the prerequisite for English 1B (C- is not acceptable for 1B). A passing grade in the course signifies that the student is a capable college-level writer and reader of English.

### Information available online

You are responsible for reading the following information online at <http://www.sjsu.edu/english/comp/policy/index.html>

- Course guidelines
- Academic policies (academic integrity, plagiarism, ADA and DRC policies)
- Estimation of Per-Unit Student Workload
- Recording policies
- Adding and dropping classes

**Turnitin.com:** Students are required to submit all papers completed outside of class to [www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com) no later than 24 hours after each paper is due. Any paper not submitted by this time will receive late credit or no credit, depending on the situation.

### Grading Distribution:

3 In-Class essays (600 words each)	20% total, 6.7% each
Rough Draft of Argumentative Essay	10%
3 Take-Home Essays (Variable word count)	30% total, 10% each
Participation/Reading Response	20%
<b>Final Exam</b>	20%

All take-home essays must be submitted in hard copy. No email submissions will be accepted. In-class essays will be completed in blue books using a pen (no pencils). Final exam will be completed in yellow exam booklets. Participation will be graded based on contribution to class discussion, activities, and workshops, as well as written in-class assignments. Journal entries are well-thought out responses to the weekly readings assigned in your course schedule. There will be no extra credit available in this course.

**Late Policy:** Students are expected to submit all assignments on the date and time designated in the syllabus. Any essay turned in after class on its due date will receive an automatic reduction of one full grade (10%). Essays turned in after the week of instruction will not be accepted. Each student will be allowed to make up **one** in-class essay per semester with a 10% grade penalty. Other work done during class periods may not be made up.

**Electronic Devices:** All electronic devices must be turned off before entering the class. If

cell phones and pagers ring in class, they will be taken away from the student for the class period. Exceptions will be made only with clearance from the Disability Resource Center.

**English 1A Composition**  
**Fall 2013 – Course Schedule**

Note: This is a tentative schedule. Any changes will be notified in advance.

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
1	Fri 8/23	Introduction, Student questionnaire.
2	Fri 8/30	<b>In-class Diagnostic Exam.</b> (500 words) Cohen: Introduction: p. 1-10. “Superman and Me” – Sherman Alexie, p. 15. CW: Chapter 1, p. 3 -37 EW: Ch. 2, “Expectations for College Writing.” (LO 1, 2, 3, 4)
3	Fri 9/6	CW: Chapter 2, p. 39-49. Cohen: “I Just Wanna Be Average” – Mike Rose, p. 331. CW: Chapter 3, p.71-79, 87-101. Cohen: “Learning to Read” – Malcolm X, p. 257. Prewriting exercise. (LO 1, 2, 4)
4	Fri 9/13	Cohen: “Graduation” – Maya Angelou, p. 20, “The Fourth of July” – Audre Lorde, p.239. EW: Ch. 6, “Exploring Ideas” and 7a and 7b. Prewriting Exercise. (LO 1, 2) <b>First Take-Home Essay Due.</b> (1200 words)
5	Fri 9/20	CW: Chapter 2, 52 -73. Cohen: “The Crito.” – Plato. “Letter from Birmingham Jail” – Martin Luther King, Jr., p. 203. Group writing activity. (LO 1, 2, 4)
6	Fri 9/27	CW: Chapter 7, p.235-248, 260-278. Cohen: “A Modest Proposal.” – Jonathan Swift, p. 387. <b>In-Class Essay.</b> (600 words) (LO 1, 2, 3, 4)
7	Fri 10/4	Cohen: “The Ways We Lie” – Stephanie Ericsson, p. 159. “The Insufficiency of Honesty” – Stephen L. Carter. EW: Read 10b, “Get the most from peer review.” <b>Peer Review Workshop.</b> (LO 1, 2, 3, 4) <b>In class:</b> Summarize the feedback you received from your peer

		group. Explain two significant changes you will make in your revision and why.
8	Fri 10/11	<b>Rough Draft of Second Take-Home Essay Due.</b> (1400 words) CW: Chapter 13, p. 533 –551. Cohen: “Men, Women, Sex, and Darwin” – Natalie Angier Cohen: “No Name Woman” – Maxine Hong Kingston, p. 221. (LO 1, 2, 4)
9	Fri, 10/18	“The Lady with the Pet Dog” – Anton Chekov. CW: Chapter 8, p. 317-331. <b>In-Class Essay.</b> (600 words) (LO 1, 2, 3, 4)
10	Fri 10/25	<b>No Class</b>
11	Fri 11/1	Cohen: “Once More to the Lake” – E.B. White, p. 450. “The Ends of the World as We Know Them” – Jared Diamond, p. 98. Handout on how to write a descriptive essay. Cohen: “Where I Lived, and What I Lived For” – Henry David Thoreau, p. 403. Handout on how to write a compare/contrast essay. (LO 1, 2, 4)
12	Fri 11/8	EW: Ch. 14 Cohen: “Sex, Drugs, Disasters, and the Extinction of Dinosaurs” -- Stephen Jay Gould, p. 169. Prewriting Exercise. <b>Second Take-Home Essay Due. (1500 words)</b> In-class critical thinking activity. (LO 1, 2, 4)
13	Fri 11/15	<b>In-Class Essay. (600 words) (LO 1, 2, 3, 4)</b> Cohen: “Notes of a Native Speaker” – Eric Liu. Prewriting Exercise. (LO 1, 2)
14	Fri 11/22	“Battle Royal” – Ralph Ellison. <b>Peer Review Workshop. (LO 1, 2, 3, 4)</b>
15	Fri 11/29	<b>Thanksgiving Break. NO CLASS.</b>
16	Fri 12/6	<b>Third Take-Home Essay Due.</b> (1600) In-class critical thinking and writing activity (Prep for Final). (LO 1, 2 4) Course Wrap-Up: Volunteer readings of strongest essays and discussion of personal growth. (LO 1, 2, 4)

