

English 1A – Composition
Fall 2007, San José State University
Section 42: T/Th 1:30-2:45pm, HGH 124

Dr. Katherine D. Harris

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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.

COURSE 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).

The above objectives will all be realized through the writing process developed in the following course content.

REQUIRED BOOKS & MATERIALS

Maasik. *Signs of Life in the USA*. 5th ed. Bedford (ISBN 9780312431334)

Hacker, Diana. *A Writer's Reference*. 6th ed. Bedford (ISBN: 9780312450250)

Dictionary (*Webster's* or equivalent college-level)

Notebook (Bound)

Exam Booklets (for in-class exams & final exam)

Computer disk or flash drive

Email account & Turnitin.com account

GRADE DISTRIBUTION

10% Participation

10% Writing Exercises & Journal

60% Essays

20% Final Exam

Class Discussion & Participation

English 1A is a reading-intensive course. You will have reading assignments to complete for almost every class period, and each reading will be accompanied by some form of writing. In addition, all or most of the assigned

essays will be based on the reading. It is therefore imperative that you complete the readings *prior to each class* and come with your book prepared to discuss them in class. In addition, a typed writing assignment will be due at almost every class meeting, so prepare your schedules accordingly. Between the assigned essays, revised drafts and writing exercises, you will write more than the 8000 words of formal writing required for this course. The readings will come from *Signs of Life* and other readings that are supplied as handouts. Our work begins immediately. Please have the textbooks by our next class meeting. *Bring Signs of Life with you to every class meeting unless you are told otherwise.*

A student's participation is assessed by his/her contribution throughout the semester. Use the following as guidelines for this portion of your final grade:

- To earn a "C," do the minimum: at every meeting, read and prepare assigned readings so you are never at a loss if you are asked a question, but speak only when called upon, do "ordinary," plain-vanilla presentations and responses. This is the "bottom line" for getting a "C" in this part of the course.
- To earn a "B," at every meeting, prepare assigned readings thoroughly, initiate discussions about them by asking good questions or suggesting ways to interpret readings, do presentations that reveal that you have done good additional work that you can make both interesting and meaningful to our discussions, and participate actively in those discussions.
- For an "A," take it up another level entirely: at every meeting, prepare readings thoroughly, find and talk about connections among them and among other aspects of culture (then and now), take a real leadership role in class discussions, including working actively to get others involved in the talk, make your presentations and responses "sparkle" by bringing to them something really special in terms of your own contributions, interests, skills, and abilities to think in broad even interdisciplinary terms. Most of all, remember that an "A" indicates the very best grade a person can get; that should tell you what sort of work you need to do to earn the grade of "A."

If you miss class, contact a classmate for notes, reading assignments and handouts – or check our Course Website. (Please do not email me to ask “Did I miss anything important?”) If you miss an in-class quiz or a writing assignment, you will receive a zero. There will be no opportunities for making up missed work.

Writing Exercises & Daily Journal

All journal writing (informal, ungraded) should be done in a spiral bound notebook that will contain only notes, writings and materials from this course. *Bring this journal with you to every class* because we will write in it at every meeting. On occasion, I will collect these journals to review your progress (which will be indicated by a check mark in my grade book). If you do not want me to read the contents on a particular page, fold that page.

Written Exercises are due at the beginning of each class. These exercises need to be typed in 12pt font and double-spaced with one inch margins. While the writing exercises do not receive a letter grade, the quality of your efforts will be recorded and applied toward your final course grade. Each Writing Exercise receives a ✓-, ✓, ✓+, U (unsatisfactory), NC (no credit). If you need a letter grade correlation, think of a ✓= B, which represents that the minimum requirements for that exercise were completed. You can gauge your progress by these writing exercises. Unsatisfactory Writing Exercises will be revised and resubmitted for credit. *Please note that I do NOT accept assignments via email.*

Essays

Each essay varies in purpose and will focus on differing sets of academic writing skills. By the time we reach the last essay, you will have learned about both the major and minor elements of writing. Each essay is based on readings from *Signs of Life* and a series of progressive writing exercises (about four per essay) that will help you to create a first draft. Each essay will receive a letter grade based on the Departmental Grading Policy below. Every essay will be submitted to Turnitin.com. Instructions are on our course website.

Rough drafts of essays should be typed and double-spaced. On due dates for rough drafts, bring one copy to class for group workshop and email a copy to me by 1pm. Final drafts of essays must be carefully revised, typed and double-spaced on 8 ½ x 11" white paper in 12 point font with one inch margins. Keep all notes, writing exercises, drafts and final copies of essays. Some of these materials will be turned in with the final draft of each essay. (Be

sure to save drafts on the computer as different documents.)

Final Exam

A common essay final exam, graded holistically, will count 20% toward the course grade. The final will be held on Saturday December 1, 8-10am. *Because this is a department-wide final graded by other instructors, if you fail this exam, you will automatically fail the course.* The test will consist of an in-class essay on a specific topic. Please be on time and bring two yellowbooks, pens, and a (non-electronic) dictionary.

GRADING POLICY

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. For final grades, 100-90 is an A, 89-80 is a B, 79-70 is a C, 69-60 is a D, and below 60 is an F. Pluses and minuses are the middle of each range. In calculating the final grade, a set number will represent each letter grade; for example, B+ is 87.5, B is 85, and B- is 82.5.

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. Grades issued will represent a full range of student performance (no extra credit offered) and will adhere to the following SJSU academic standards of assessment:

- 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 some descriptably slight 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.

Note: This is an A, B, C, No Credit course, but individual essays will be graded on an A to F scale. *There are no C- final grades in English 1A. You must earn at least a C in order to pass.* Any student with a final grade below a C will receive an NC and must repeat the course.

COURSE POLICIES

Late Assignments/Essays

Since this is a workshop course, you need to be prepared at every class meeting with the readings and your written exercise. If you cannot meet a deadline, you must contact me *at least 72 hours prior* to our class meeting to discuss the situation. Otherwise, there are steep consequences for submitting late assignments and essays:

- Writing Exercises: For every day that a writing exercise is late (due at the beginning of each class), you will be penalized one grade step on the final draft of that essay (A becomes an A-, etc.).

- Rough Drafts: Failure to come to workshops with a printed copy of your rough draft will result in a loss of one grade step on the final draft of your essay (A becomes an A-).
- Final Drafts of Essays: All essays must be handed in on time, otherwise you will lose one full letter grade for each day that the essay is late (A becomes a B).

Weekends count as one day. Unless you have prior permission or the assignment specifically requests it, *absolutely no assignment will be accepted via email.*

Academic Honesty

Your own commitment to learning, as evidenced by your enrollment at San José State University, and the University’s Academic Integrity Policy requires you to be honest in all your academic course work. Please know that submitting work from another course (recycling) is also against the Academic Honesty Policy. Faculty members are required to report all infractions to the Office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development. The Policy on academic integrity can be found at: http://sa.sjsu.edu/student_conduct.

Avoiding Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the unacknowledged use of somebody else’s words or ideas and is considered an instance of academic dishonesty that instructors must report. You commit plagiarism by

- buying, stealing, or borrowing a paper;
- hiring someone to write a paper;
- building on someone’s ideas without providing a citation;
- or copying from another source or using a source too closely when paraphrasing.

In other words, submit only your own work. To learn how to cite sources accurately and forthrightly, consult your handbook. If you have any questions about when or how to document a source, do not hesitate to ask me for clarification. Turning in plagiarized work will result in immediate failure in the assignment and possible failure in the course and dismissal from San José State University. See King Library’s definition, the University policy and a plagiarism tutorial: www.sjlibrary.org/services/literacy/info_comp/plagiarism.htm

Plagiarism checks will be performed by asking students to submit various written exercises or essays to Turnitin.com, a service which scans documents for all references to Web sources and other essays. The instructor reserves the right to revise the requirements and to notify students of such revision in a timely manner.

Classroom Environment

Respect your fellow students and I: Arrive on time (excessive tardiness will effect your participation grade) and do not partake in disruptive behavior. If you are late, wait for an appropriate moment to enter so you do not disturb the class. Turn off cell phones or put them on silent mode during the class period.

Email

Email is the best possible way to contact me (9am-5pm) and has the added bonus of recording our conversations. When emailing me, please consider it a formal communication: include the appropriate salutation, your name and your question/comment. Know that long conversations over email are not fruitful merely because of the limitations of technology. If you have an extended question or dilemma, please visit me during office hours. I will amass a class email list and will occasionally send out information regarding our meetings or the readings. *Please provide an email address that you check daily.*

Course Website – <http://www.sjsu.edu/faculty/harris/>

As we move along in the semester, course materials and updated reading schedules will be posted on the course website. After you have entered, simply click on our class title to print the current schedule or handouts, visit outside web projects, print copies of lost documents, find the SJSU Writing Center, check my office hours, discover local literary events or double-check the meaning of “plagiarism.”

SJSU Writing Center

Visit me during office hours for help with your writing. For even further help, go to the Writing Center located in Clark Hall, Suite 126. Hours: Monday-Thursday 9-7 and Friday 9-1; Call for appointments at 924-2308 or go online at www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter. Work with tutors in a one-on-one environment. Make appointments online at the above website.

LARC (Learning Assistance Resource Center)

The Learning Assistance Resource Center is an on-campus facility that provides peer tutoring for San José State University students. LARC offers assistance with writing, and if you feel that you need intensive help beyond what I can offer during office hours, please request a writing tutor. The Center is located in The Student Services Center in the 10th Street Parking Garage, Room 600. The phone number is (408) 924-2587.

Disabilities Policy

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, or see me during office hours. Presidential Directive 97-03 requires that students with disabilities register with the DRC to establish a record of their disability.

English 1A (Fall 2007)
Dr. Katherine D. Harris

Name: _____

E-mail: _____

STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE
Please respond using complete sentences.

1. Do you have access to a computer at home? Yes No
(If not, become familiar with SJSU's computer labs.)
2. **Briefly** summarize the important policies presented on this syllabus.
3. Write one or two sentences defining "plagiarism."
4. Why did you choose to attend SJSU?
5. What do you expect to learn from this course? What grade do you expect to earn?

By signing below, the individual acknowledges receiving a copy of the class syllabus and understands the schedule of work, participation requirements, grading criteria and other important information. The individual also acknowledges understanding plagiarism and its consequences.

Name: _____ Signature: _____

SCHEDULE of READINGS & ASSIGNMENTS

Engl 1A, Section 42 (Fall 2007)

Syllabus subject to change

See www.sjsu.edu/faculty/harris/Courses.htm for most current schedule

HO = Handout

SoL = *Signs of Life*

Online = see our class website for clickable url

Date	Topics	Reading Due	Assignment Due
Thur 8/23	<i>Introductions: Me, You, College Writing</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greensheet Policies & Schedule • “Why It’s All About Me” (HO) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Questionnaire • Letter to Self (In-Class)
Tues 8/28	Diagnostic Writing		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set up Turnitin Account • Diagnostic Essay (In-Class) -- Bring exam booklet
Thur 8/30	Writing Center Visit & Workshop Diagnostic Essay	Writing Center Services (Online: www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter/services/)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary of Services offered by Writing Center (150 words)
Tues 9/4	<i>Essay 1: Your Consumer Culture</i> Discuss Summary & Essay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "The Art of Dancing" (HO) • Student Samples (HO in-class) • Hacker, Section C4: Writing Paragraphs <p style="text-align: center; font-size: small;">Note: 9/5 Last day to drop courses without “W” on record</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plagiarism Tutorial (Online) • Writing Exercise 1 (In-Class)
Thur 9/6		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Popular Signs” (1-19) • “Writing About Popular Culture” (31-58) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing Exercise 2: Summary (300 words)
Tues 9/11		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Blue Jeans" (101-108) <p style="text-align: center; font-size: small;">Note: 9/12 Last day to add courses & register late</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing Exercise 3: Public Culture (600 words)
Thur 9/13		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Counterculture Consumerism" (136-139) • "Hip Hop Sales Pop" (Online) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing Exercise 4: Overconsuming Culture? (600 words)
Tues 9/18		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hacker, Section A2: Constructing Reasonable Arguments <p style="text-align: center; font-size: small;">Note: Enrollment Census Date 9/20</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing Exercise 5: Letter to Friend (600 words)
Thur 9/20	Guest Speaker on tThe Writing Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hacker, Section C2: Drafting 	
Tues 9/25	Group Workshop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hacker, Section S (Sentence Style) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Draft Due (800 words) • Sentence Fragments & Run-On Sentences Exercises (HO in class)
Thur 9/27	Group Workshop		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Second Draft Due (300 words)
Tues 10/2	<i>Essay 2: Visual Networks</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Blue Nude" by Matisse (Online; print for class) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing Exercise 1: Artwork (300 words)
10/3 & 10/4 Banned Books Week See here for events: www.sjsu.edu/reading/calendar.htm			
Thur 10/4		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Educating by Design” (697-706) • “Reality TV Meets Plastic Surgery” (229-231) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing Exercise 2: Images & You (600 words)

Date	Topics	Reading Due	Assignment Due
Tues 10/9		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Homosexuality on Television” (287-307) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FINAL DRAFT -- ESSAY 1 (1200 words) • JOURNAL • Writing Exercise 3: Television Critiques (600 words)
Thur 10/11		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Class and Virtue” (373) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing Exercise 4: Class Critiques (600 words)
10/11, 3-4:30, Rose Castillo Guilbault (King Library, 2 nd Flr) Author of <i>Farmworker's Daughter: Growing Up Mexican in America</i>			
Tues 10/16		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Understanding Star Wars” (326-330) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing Exercise 5: Letter to Director (600 words)
Thur 10/18	Group Workshop		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Draft (800 words)
Deadline for Student Essay Contest on ZZ Packer’s <i>Drinking Coffee Elsewhere</i> (\$250 Prize) See here for details: http://www.sjsu.edu/reading/Essay_Contest.htm			
Tues 10/23	Group Workshop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hacker Sections S6b, S7, W2 & W4 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Second Draft (300-400 words) • Wordy Sentences, Appropriate Language (HO in-class)
Thur 10/25	<i>Essay 3: In-Class Essay</i> (Mid-Term)	<i>Bring Exam booklets, dictionary & pens</i>	
Tues 10/30	Group Workshop on Essay 3	Grading Rubric: 1-6 (HO)	
Thur 11/1	<i>Essay 4: Editorializing</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blogging Article, Editorial Cartoon (Online) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing Exercise 1 (In-Class)
Tues 11/6		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring Editorials from previous class 	Writing Exercise 2 (600 words)
Thur 11/8		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bloggers Article (Online) Find a blog (see below) <u>Lists of Blogs</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • http://www.blogwise.com/ • http://blogsearch.google.com/ <u>Some Current Issues Blogs</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • http://www.rnc.org/Blog/Default.aspx (Republican party) • http://www.dnc.org/blog.html (Democratic party) • http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/opinions/columnsandblogs/ (Washington Post) • http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/blogs/sfgate/about?blogid=14 (San Francisco Gate’s 11/8 Election) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FINAL DRAFT -- ESSAY 2 (1000 words) • JOURNALS • Writing Exercise 3 (400 words)
November 8 th , 7:30pm Salman Rushdie , Morris Daily Hall See Other Authors & Discuss Books at the CLA Events (www.litart.org)			

Date	Topics	Reading Due	Assignment Due
Tues 11/13		Find 3 editorials from below periodicals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spartan Daily (online) • San Jose Mercury News (online) • San Francisco Chronicle (online) • New York Times (online) • Washington Post (online) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sign up for Mandatory Student Meeting (in-class) • Writing Exercise 4 (900 words)
Thur 11/15		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter to Editor (Online) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing Exercise 5 (150 words) • Mechanics & Style (HO in-class)
Tues 11/20	NO CLASS MEETING	Mandatory Student Meetings	
Thur 11/22	Thanksgiving - No Class		
Tues 11/27		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Home Alone" (<i>New York Times</i> Op-Ed) • Hacker Sections W3 & W5 	
Thur 11/29	Group Workshop	Prepare for Final Exam: Review graded Essay 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Draft (1000) • Active Verbs and Exact Language (HO in-class)
FINAL EXAM: Saturday, December 1, 8-10am (<i>Bring exam booklets</i>)			
Tues 12/4	Group Workshop		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Second Draft (700 words)
Thurs 12/6		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review Progress: Letter to Self 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FINAL DRAFT -- ESSAY 4 (750 words) • JOURNALS (in-class review)