

**San José State University
Department of English and Comparative Literature
English 1A, Composition 1 (GE A2), Section 29, Fall 2013**

Instructor:	Sara Cook
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Office Hours:	T & Th, noon – 1pm
Class Days/Time:	T & Th, 10:30am – 11:45am
Classroom:	Sweeney Hall 414
GE Category:	Written Communication A2

*It matters not how strait the gate,
How charged with punishments the scroll,
I am the master of my fate:
I am the captain of my soul.*

--Sir William Ernest Henley

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.

Information available online

You are responsible for reading the following information online at

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

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

Required Texts/Readings

Textbook

The Everyday Writer, by Andrea Lunsford

Course Reader available at Maple Press

The Other Wes Moore by Wes Moore

A College-level Dictionary

Classroom Protocol

In this class I expect you to:

1. Relax and enjoy yourself. Academic work doesn't have to be a drag – it is what you make of it.
2. Come to class on time. Tardiness is disruptive and disrespectful, and chronic tardiness will affect your grade.
3. Turn off your cell phone before class. If your phone rings during class, or you are texting during class I will ask you to leave.
4. Engage yourself in our class. If you are doing anything other than being present in our class work I will ask you to leave.
5. Take responsibility for your actions, positive and negative. Remember teachers do not “give” grades, you earn them.
6. Communicate with me. I am here to help you, but I have no way of knowing if you are unclear about an assignment or are otherwise having trouble unless you tell me. If you have questions about the work, speak up in class, come to see me in my office, or send an email.

Assignments and Grading Policy

Reading: Class discussions and activities are based on the reading. It is pertinent that you have the reading completed on the corresponding date on the schedule – I cannot emphasize the importance of this enough. I expect you to read slowly, attentively, and to annotate your text with a pen or pencil.

Essays: Six essays are required in this course: 3 in-class and 3 out-of-class, totaling 8000 words. **Students must complete all 6 essays to pass this course.** Essays will correspond to the readings and will increase in difficulty as we move through the semester. In-class essays will be written in large blue books or yellow books; please bring at least one blue or yellow book the day of an in-class essay along with pens and your dictionary. **In-class essays cannot be made up.** If extenuating circumstances apply, please see me well in advance (at least one week) of the date of the in-class essay. All out-of-class essays must be in MLA format, as detailed in The Everyday Writer, and are due in class. Unstapled papers will not be accepted.

Rough Drafts & Workshops: Essay assignments require rough drafts. The original rough draft must be turned in with your final draft in order to receive a grade. If you only turn in one draft of an essay where a rough draft and final draft are due, you will receive an “F” for that essay assignment. Workshops are a chance for you to test drive your essay and are very important to the writing process. You must attend! If you miss the workshop, you must still turn in a rough draft with your final draft, and you will forfeit one letter grade on the assignment.

Other work: You will have various other homework and in-class assignments. These cannot be made up.

Participation: This is a **seminar** course; oral participation is necessary: your thoughts and questions are important to the discussion and our communal growth as writers. The potency of our class depends upon our commitment to reading, discussing, and writing with conscientiousness and consistency. You are expected to participate with flawless preparation and awe-inspiring enthusiasm.

Late Work: I do not accept late work, or work over email. In-class work cannot be made up. See the last page of this syllabus for the one exception to this policy.

Attendance: Regular attendance is crucial to your success in this class. Remember, there are no “excused” absences in college. If you fail to attend a class, you are still expected to turn in the assignments due that day, get details on whatever topics were covered in class, and complete the homework for the next meeting. It is your responsibility to contact me or a classmate to see what you missed.

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.

In-class essays (5% each)	15%
Out-of-class essays (15% each)	45%
Other Work	10%
Participation	10%
Final exam	20%

Grade Calculation:

A = 93% +	B = 83 – 86%	C = 73 – 76%	D = 63 – 66%
A- = 90 – 92%	B- = 80 – 82%	C- = 70 – 72%	D- = 60 – 62%
B+ = 87 – 89%	C+ = 77 – 79%	D+ = 67 – 69%	F = below 60%

Essays in this class will be graded according to the following criteria:

A = Excellent. This essay is organized and well constructed. It demonstrates a clear understanding of the topic and has a focused thesis. Ideas are clearly presented and supported with specific details. Paragraphs are fully developed and flow easily from one to the next. The language is varied, lively and syntactically complex. This paper is virtually free of mechanical errors and is a pleasure to read.

B = Very good. This essay shows an understanding of the prompt, but is less precise and original than the “A” paper. This paper exhibits clear ideas and supports them with examples, but may lack sentence variety and a consistent, smooth flow. This paper may contain minor grammatical and/or mechanical errors, however it does exhibit overall confidence.

C = Average. This essay discusses the prompt, but in a superficial or overly generalized way. The paragraphs show a lack of firm control of the ideas and neglect to provide sufficient support and detail. Word choice and syntax is unvaried and simplistic and mechanical errors may be frequent enough to distract the reader.

D = Poor. This essay makes an attempt to discuss the prompt, but is poorly organized, vague, and lacks appropriate and/or adequate examples. The paper exhibits a weak control of ideas and syntax and is full of mechanical and grammatical errors.

F = Unacceptable. This essay does not adequately fulfill any of the requirements of the assignment. It fails to address the prompt or misrepresents it significantly. It lacks coherence, clarity and development. This essay does not demonstrate a competent understanding of grammar and mechanics.

SJSU Writing Center



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](http://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.

A Few Last Words

Once you graduate with your Bachelor’s degree, you will be among the top 1% educated people in the world. From this fact I would like you 1) take pride in this, and 2) don’t take this opportunity for granted. Don’t slack. Don’t be disrespectful. Enjoy your time at SJSU and work hard.

Writing well is difficult, and like anything else you have to work at it. Don’t sit back and wait for your brain to effortlessly absorb the material. Engage yourself and you may discover that your writing reveals things to you that you didn’t know *and* that your writing is better than you thought. Lastly, please ask me about any assignment if it is unclear to you. And, please do not hesitate to come talk to me about anything – assignments or otherwise. I am here to help you, and look forward to working with you this semester.

English 1A, Fall 2013, Course Schedule

This schedule is subject to change.

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
1	8/22/13	Introduction
2	8/27/13	Essay #1: in-class (LO 1,2,3,4) (900 words)
	8/29/13	<i>The Everyday Writer</i> , Chapter 2 (pages 12-19)
3	9/3/13	“Becoming Members of Society” (reader)
	9/5/13	“Lego is for Girls” (reader)
4	9/10/13	“Bros Before Hos” (reader)
	9/12/13	“Appearances” (reader)
5	9/17/13	Workshop: Essay #2 (LO 1,2,3,4)
	9/19/13	Meet in Sweeney Hall 229
6	9/24/13	Student Conferences
	9/26/13	Student Conferences
7	10/1/13	Essay #2 due (LO 1,2,3,4) (1800 words)
	10/3/13	“Offensive Play” (reader)
8	10/8/13	“After the NFL” (reader)
	10/10/13	“Performance Enhancing Drug Use in Baseball: The Impact of Culture” (reader)
9	10/15/13	“The Only Good Reason to Ban Steroids in Baseball: To Prevent an Arms Race” (reader)
	10/17/13	Workshop: Essay #3 (LO 1,2,3,4)

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
10	10/22/13	Essay #3 due (LO 1,2,3,4) (1800 words)
	10/24/13	<i>The Other Wes Moore</i> (Intro-45)
11	10/29/13	<i>The Other Wes Moore</i> (46-107)
	10/31/13	<i>The Other Wes Moore</i> (108-145)
12	11/5/13	<i>The Other Wes Moore</i> (146-183)
	11/7/13	Essay #4: in-class (LO 1,2,3) (900 words)
13	11/12/13	“Hellhole” (reader)
	11/14/13	“Class in America – 2006” (reader)
14	11/19/13	Workshop: Essay #5 (LO 1,2,3,4)
	11/21/13	Essay #5 due (LO 1,2,3,4) (1800 words)
15	11/26/13	Research day
	11/28/13	Thanksgiving – no class
16	12/3/13	Essay #6: in-class (LO 1,2,3) (900 words)
	12/5/13	Preparation for final exam
Final Exam	Saturday, Dec 7	8:00am – 10:00am, location TBD Department Final Exam

Happy Winter Break!

The one-time-only

Emergency Pass

Guidelines: With this pass, you may turn in essay #2 OR essay #4 OR essay #5 OR essay #6 up to one week (7 days) late. This pass may not be used for any other assignments. I highly suggest you save this pass for an actual emergency (i.e. car accident on the way to school, relative dying, etc.)

Directions: Staple this pass to the top of your essay, signing and dating below. You must turn in your late essay in class, within the one-week timeframe.

Other pertinent info:

- Essays slipped under my office door will not be accepted
- Essays that are more than one week (7 days) late will not be accepted.
- Remember that you must complete all 7 essays to pass this course