SJSU SAN JOSÉ STATE UNIVERSITY

College of Humanities and the Arts · English & Comparative Literature

Argument and Analysis Section 14

ENGL 1B

Spring 2025 In Person 3 Unit(s) 01/23/2025 to 05/12/2025 Modified 01/22/2025

👤 Contact Information

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FOB 219

🕐 Course Information

When Harold Bloom famously postulated that Shakespeare had "invented the human," he was arguing that it was the writer, the artist, who had uncovered our kindness and malice, our compassion and apathy. It was the artist who had expounded our 'fullness,' not only in our contradictions, but also in our supposed autonomy and superiority among all other species. But Bloom was also suggesting that the state of being human wasn't necessarily fixed or inherent. Instead, it was a tenuous demarcation that had been created and could presumably be undone.

Our humanities departments have long maintained an anthropocentric view, in which we, humans, constitute and mitigate the world in which we live and reign. But recently, writers, artists, and theorists have been calling that perspective into question, asking not only what it might mean to be human in an era of digitized selves and medical breakthroughs, but whether we, through techno-scientific invention and intervention, have unwittingly devised our own end.

In this class, we will read four short stories and two chapters from a novel that lend themselves well to new questions about what it has meant to be human and how that meaning/understanding may be shifting. The stories are what we might call dystopian science fiction, and most of them, though older, seem to have predicted or even created the world we now occupy. You can find PDFs of each story listed below in Canvas Modules:

1) E.M. Forster's "[The Machine Stops (https://sjsu.instructure.com/courses/1603040/files/80550597?wrap=1)](https://sjsu.instructure.com/courses/1603040/files/80550597?wrap=1)" (1909)

2) Ray Bradbury's "[A Sound of Thunder (https://sjsu.instructure.com/courses/1603040/files/80550603?wrap=1)](https://sjsu.instructure.com/courses/1603040/files/80550603?wrap=1)" (1952)

3) Philip K. Dick's "[We Can Remember It For You Wholesale (https://sjsu.instructure.com/courses/1603040/files/80550591?wrap=1)](https://sjsu.instructure.com/courses/1603040/files/80550591?wrap=1)" (1966)

4) Octavia E. Butler's ["Bloodchild" (https://sjsu.instructure.com/courses/1603040/files/80550689?wrap=1)](https://sjsu.instructure.com/courses/1603040/files/80550689?wrap=1) (1995)

5) Kazuo Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go*: Chapter 1

6) Kazuo Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go*: Chapter 23

These stories are not what you'd call light reading. They will raise difficult questions about human rights - and who has rights to them - and morality. Where is the line, we'll ask, between right and wrong? We will discuss how each story portrays the human and challenges or upholds our current understanding of humanity. We will draw from literary theory to situate these novels within extant academic discourses and evaluate whether the human can survive the posthuman world it is constructing.

Some 'housekeeping' items:

You will not need to buy or carry any textbooks, but you will want to have a laptop or tablet for in-class and out-of-class reading and writing. If you need help renting a laptop on campus, let me know.

This is a synchronous, in-person class. To get the most out of our discussions and workshops, you will need to prioritize your attendance.

To best support you, I employ a non-traditional grading system, which will be housed under the "SJSU Official Syllabus" tab on your left sidebar. We'll review this in detail together, but please let me know if at any point you have any questions.

🖥 Course Description and Requisites

English 1B is a writing course that focuses on argumentation and analysis. Through the study of literary, rhetorical, and professional texts, students will develop the habits of mind required to write argumentative and critical essays. Particular emphasis is placed on writing and reading processes. Students will have repeated practice in prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing, and repeated practice in reading closely in a variety of forms, styles, structures, and modes.

GE Area(s): C2. Humanities

Prerequisite: ENGL 1A or ENGL 1AS with a C- or better.

ENGL 1B is not open to students who successfully completed ENGL 2.

Letter Graded

✳ Classroom Protocols

ENGL 1B

ENGL 1B is open to (1) students majoring in Marine Biology, Biochemistry, Geology, and Engineering (Aerospace, Biomedical, Chemical, Civil, Computer, Electrical, General, Industrial and Systems, Mechanical, and Software); and (2) transfer students who have completed GE Area A3 (Critical Thinking) requirement and still need to take a second semester of English composition for GE Area C2.

This course is not open to students who have successfully completed ENGL 2.
Prerequisite: ENGL 1A or Stretch English (with a grade of C- or better)
Satisfies GE Area C2: Letters

ENGL 1B 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. Writing assignments will give you repeated practice in prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing. This class requires a minimum of 6000 words, at least 4000 of which must be in revised final draft form. Assignments include in-class writing as well as revised out-of-class essays.

Reading: In addition to being writing intensive, ENGL 1B is also a reading course. You will read a variety of literary, rhetorical, and professional works of the human intellect and imagination. Secondary materials will be read to help situate the historical and cultural contexts in which the primary texts were created. All the readings serve as useful models of writing for academic, general, and specific audiences.

Critical Thinking: In addition to focusing on how to write arguments, the course also teaches you how to analyze and evaluate texts critically. More specifically, you will practice evaluating arguments for purpose, audience, rhetorical strategies, conclusions; evaluating ideas by contextualizing your assumptions and values (historical, cultural, socio-economic, political); and evaluating your own understanding of ideas by identifying your own interpretative lens.

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 1B 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 1B, 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).

AI Policy

OUR CLASS POLICY RE CHATGPT AND OTHER GENERATIVE AI:

As AI is emerging in the workforce, you will likely encounter and use AI in your daily tasks. We will use AI technology in this class as a means of assistive technology during the writing process. One of the course goals is to help you learn to write and communicate effectively, which requires practice. Therefore, you must learn how to create, edit, and recognize high-quality writing yourself. If AI can do these tasks without you, you won't have employable skills. We will learn how to ethically use AI, and you will be responsible for any final product and limitations or potential biases from LLMs. You will also be responsible for disclosing when and how you used AI.

Misusing AI (i.e., using it to write the majority of the essay without significant contributions or revision) or failing to disclose the use of AI will result in consequences ranging from a written/verbal warning to failing the assignment or course and a report to the Student Conduct Board. **If you are unsure, ask!**

STUDENT ROLE:

The San José State University Academic Integrity Policy requires that each student:

1. know the rules that preserve academic integrity and abide by them at all times, including learning and abiding by rules associated with specific classes, exams, and course assignments;

2. know the consequences of violating the Academic Integrity Policy;

3. know the appeal rights and procedures to be followed in the event of an appeal;

4. foster academic integrity among peers.

You can access the SJSU's comprehensive academic integrity policy here: https://www.sjsu.edu/studentconduct/docs/SJSU-Academic-Integrity-Policy-F15-7.pdf [Generative Artificial Intelligence (Chat GPT) Links to an external site. (https://www.sjsu.edu/studentconduct/docs/SJSU-Academic-Integrity-Policy-F15-7.pdf%20Generative%20Artificial%20Intelligence%20(Chat%20GPT))](https://www.sjsu.edu/studentconduct/docs/SJSU-Academic-Integrity-Policy-F15-7.pdf%20Generative%20Artificial%20Intelligence%20(Chat%20GPT))

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT AI PLATFORMS:

Large language models, like Chat GPT, perform intensive mining, modeling, and memorization of vast stores of language data "scraped" from the internet. They have been trained to learn language patterns and to predict the most probable next word or sequence of words based on the context they receive. In other words, it imitates or mimics what humans have put on the internet (think about that for a minute). AI writing platforms have become savvy enough to write essays, create apps, help with excel, and nearly any conceivable writing situation that relies on linguistic patterns. In this class, we'll practice learning and thinking with them. ChatGPT, like all generative AI systems, is a tool. Tools are used by humans to accomplish specific tasks. Thinking of it that way helps unlock its potential, but also avoid its pitfalls

Disclosure Agreement

If you use AI to assist you, you must disclose how and how much you used AI in your writing process. Below are samples of how you can disclose your use of AI tools.

- I did all of this work on my own without assistance from tools, technology, or AI.
- I did the first draft but then asked AI paraphrase/grammar/plagiarism software to read it and make suggestions. I made the following changes after this help:
  - Fixed spelling and grammar
  - Changed the structure or order
  - Rewrote entire sentences/paragraphs
- I used AI to help me generate ideas. (Describe that process.)
- I used AI to do an outline/first draft, which I then edited. (Describe the nature of your contributions.)

▤ 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).

.ıll Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs)

GE Area C2: Humanities

Area C Arts and Humanities courses help students to respond subjectively as well as objectively to aesthetic experiences and to develop an understanding of the integrity of both emotional and intellectual responses. C2 Humanities courses encourage students to analyze and appreciate works of philosophical, historical, literary, aesthetic, and cultural importance.

GE Area C2 Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of a C2 course, students should be able to:

1. analyze and understand works of philosophical and humanistic importance, including their temporal and cultural dimensions;
2. explore and articulate their own subjective aesthetic and intellectual responses to such texts;
3. analyze and assess ideas of value, meaning, and knowledge, as produced within the humanistic disciplines; and
4. research and write effective analyses of works of the human intellect and imagination

Writing Practice: Students will write a minimum of 1500 words in a language and style appropriate to the discipline.

📖 Course Materials

There is no need to purchase any books for this course; all readings will be posted as PDFs in Canvas. You will, however, need a laptop or tablet for completing in and out-of-class activities and assignments.

≔ Course Requirements and Assignments

You will complete a total of three course-specific major assignments. To pass this class, you must submit all three:

1) **Literary Analysis**: "The Machine Stops": what does the story mean? - 10 points

2) **Argument**: Tech and "A Sound of Thunder" or "We Can Remember It For You Wholesale": are our technological developments helping or hurting humanity? - 10 points

3) **Presentation**: "Bloodchild" or *Never Let Me Go*: Who has, or ought to have rights to human rights? - 10 points

In lieu of a final exam, you will also complete a program-wide **Self-Reflection/ePortfolio**, worth 5 points.

In addition, you will complete a number of out-of-class minor assignments, each of which will be worth 1 point. Note: late minor assignments will receive 0/1.

✔ Grading Information

Determination of Grades

Hybrid Grading Contract:[1]

In this class, we will work as a learning community to develop our approaches to reading and writing different types of texts. We will experiment with unfamiliar strategies, and at times we will feel unsure about the direction of our work and our comprehension of the work of others. We will develop writing processes to help us, including prewriting, drafting, workshopping, and revising. We will rely on each other for feedback and support, but we will also take charge of our own learning and success. What does that mean in terms of grading?

This class is meant to improve your skills and experiences as college-level writers, drawing from each of your unique funds of knowledge. Therefore, we will not be using a traditional grading system. Instead, you will be largely responsible for your own grade.

If you do all that is asked of you in the manner and spirit in which it is asked, if you work through the processes we establish and the work we do throughout the semester, if you continue to improve those processes in order to gain more intensity and engagement in your writing, then you will do well in this course. If you miss in-class activities, turn in assignments late, fail to increase your work's intensity, or fail to submit assignments, your grade will be lower.

*Minor assignments will be graded for completion; you will receive a 1/1 for every finished minor assignment you turn in **on time.** Minor assignments that appear "late" in Canvas will receive 0/1. Our three course-specific major assignments will be graded out of 10 points; we will break down the requirements for each assignment and the conventions of each genre you need to meet to achieve each point value (1-10). This means that while major assignments will be assessed for things like development, organization, and coherence, they will not be weighted enough to have a huge bearing on your overall course grade (so long as you are keeping up with the minor assignments). In lieu of a final exam, we will complete an asynchronous self-reflection essay/ePortfolio, graded out of five points.*

You are guaranteed success in this class if:

1. *You complete the majority of all in-class and out-of-class minor assignments on time, including collaborative work (e.g. idea maps and brainstorms), reading responses, and outlines and drafts. **Note**:*

You must be in class to receive credit for in-class activities, and minor assignments that appear "late" or "missing" in Canvas will receive 0/1. Likewise, incomplete minor assignments will receive 0/1.

2. *You prioritize attendance and participate in in-class activities.*

3. *You abide by the classroom protocol we establish as a writing/learning community.*

4. *You work cooperatively and collegially in groups. We will come up with parameters for constructive criticism and a shared vocabulary for discussing potentially sensitive subjects.*

5. *You complete all course-specific major assignments **on time**. Except:*

6. *You may turn in one course-specific major assignment up to two weeks late without penalty. **Note**: To pass this class, you must submit all three course-specific major assignments. A missing course-specific major assignment will result in a course grade of C- or lower.*

7. *You complete the self-reflection essay/ePortfolio. **Note**: although you do NOT need to submit this 5-point major assignment to pass this class, choosing not to submit it may affect your grade. To pass this class, you will need a C- (70%) or higher.*

8. *You provide thoughtful peer feedback during class workshops and commit yourself to other collaborative work.*

9. *You honor the writing process and complete all steps thereof (e.g. reading/researching, prewriting, drafting and revising).*

    1. *Revisions should indicate significant changes – extending or changing up the thinking or organization – not just editing or changing words.*

Your grade will correspond to your percentage in the "Total" column in Canvas. This will combine points received for in-class and out-of-class minor assignments (1 point each) as well as those for the three course specific major assignments (10 points each) and the self-reflection essay/ePortfolio (5 points). The breakdown is as follows:

A: 94-100%   A-: 90-93%   B+: 88-89%   B: 84-87%   B-: 80-83%   C+: 78-79%

C: 74-77%   C-: 70-73%   D+: 68-69%   D: 64-67%   D-: 60-63%   F: 59% and lower

Plea:

Sometimes life happens (e.g. a hospitalization, pregnancy, or death in the family) and we are unable to get our work done on time. This plea is not an "out clause" for anyone who happens to not fulfill the contract in some way; it is for rare and unusual circumstances out of the control of the student. If the plea is invoked, it is to ensure the student a passing grade (C-), not to allow the student to make up enough assignments to achieve a desired grade. If you something has happened and you fear yourself in danger of failing because of it, please let me know. I will do all I can to support you an ensure your success.

CONTRACT AGREEMENT: By staying in this course and attending class, you accept this contract and agree to abide by it. I (Dr. Amanda Emanuel Smith) also agree to abide by the contract and oversee it fairly and impartially.

[1] 1 Adapted from Professor Angela Clark-Oates's ENGL 220D syllabus, Dr. Ti Macklin's ENGL 10/11 syllabus, and the scholarship of Dr. Asao Inoue and Professor Peter Elbow.

🏛 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.

📅 Course Schedule

Please note: This is a tentative course schedule and is therefore subject to change. Any changes will be announced through Canvas, so be sure to enable notifications. Every assignment and activity will be published with due dates and times. To make the schedule as easy to navigate and remember as possible, all out-of-class minor assignments will be due at the start of class Mondays. Remember: you will not receive credit for in-class or out-of-class assignments that show up late in Canvas.

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
1	M 1/27	Course Introduction: Overview of readings, assignments, and grading policy Class Introduction: Meet your learning community!
2	W 1/29	Video Clip: Sherry Turkle's "Connected But Alone" In-class Free-write: What is life in an oligarchy/technocracy? Are we replacing ourselves with machines? Is there still hope for the human? Introduce first author: E.M. Forster
2	M 2/3	DUE: Week 2 Canvas Discussion(s) In-class Activity: Review E.M. Forster's "The Machine Stops"
3	W 2/5	In-class Activity: Unpack the prompt for Essay 1 Discuss summary and context: What information would your audience need to know about "The Machine Stops" to follow your analysis without having read the story?
3	M 2/10	DUE: Week 3 Canvas Discussion(s) In-class Activity: Review Article 1: What is the writer saying about "The Machine Stops"? What are their claims/subclaims? With what do you agree and disagree? Why?

4	W 2/12	In-class Activity: Discuss textual interpretations: themes, ideas, literary devices Draft working thesis statements
4	M 2/17	DUE: Week 4 Canvas Discussion(s) In-class Activity: Review outlines and quotations from "The Machine Stops" and Article 1
5	W 2/19	In-class Activity: Review sample essay Draft first body paragraph, integrating primary and secondary sources
5	M 2/24	DUE: Week 5 Canvas Discussion(s) In-class Activity: In-class Activity: Workshop Drafts for Essay 1
6	W 2/26	Unpack the Prompt for Essay 2 Introduce second and third authors: Ray Bradbury and Philip K. Dick
6	M 3/3	DUE: Week 6 Canvas Discussion(s) In-class Activity: Discuss Ray Bradbury's "A Sound of Thunder"
7	W 3/5	In-class Activity: Discuss textual interpretations: themes, ideas, literary devices
7	M 3/10	DUE: Week 7 Canvas Discussion(s) In-class Activity: Discuss current technological advancements related to "A Sound of Thunder"
8	W 3/12	In-class Activity: Discuss ethics of technology Revisit Free-write: What is life in an oligarchy/technocracy? Are we replacing ourselves with machines? Is there still hope for the human? Due: Friday, 3/14, 11:59 pm: Literary Analysis: "The Machine Stops"
8	M 3/17	DUE: Week 7 Canvas Discussion(s) In-class Activity: Discuss Philip K. Dicks's "We Can Remember It For You Wholesale"

9	W 3/19	In-class Activity: Discuss textual interpretations: themes, ideas, literary devices
9	M 3/24	DUE: Week 8 Canvas Discussion(s) Discuss current technological advancements related to "We Can Remember It For You Wholesale" Draft working thesis statements
10	W 3/26	In-class Activity: Pre-write for Essay 2
10	M 3/31	SPRING BREAK
11	W 4/2	SPRING BREAK
11	M 4/7	DUE: Week 10 Canvas Discussion(s) In-class Activity: Workshop Drafts for Essay 2
12	W 4/9	Unpack the Prompt for Presentation 1 Introduce fourth and fifth authors: Octavia E. Butler and Kazuo Ishiguro
12	M 4/14	DUE: Week 11 Canvas Discussion(s) In-class Activity: Discuss Octavia E. Butler's "Bloodchild"
13	W 4/16	In-class Activity: Discuss textual interpretations: themes, ideas, literary devices Question: What are "(fundamental) human rights" and how do we see them challenged in the story? Due: Friday, 4/18, 11:59 pm: Argument: Tech and "A Sound of Thunder" or "We Can Remember It For You Wholesale"
13	M 4/21	DUE: Week 12 Canvas Discussion(s) In-class Activity: Discuss Chapter 1 of Kazuo Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go*

14	W 4/23	In-class Activity: Map out what we know about Kathy, Tommy, and Ruth Question: Where do we see ourselves in their story?
14	M 4/28	DUE: Week 13 Canvas Discussion(s) In-class Activity: Discuss Chapter 23 of Kazuo Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go*
15	W 4/30	In-class Activity: Map out what we think we know about Kathy, Tommy, and Ruth What are the functions of donors and carers? Question: What are "(fundamental) human rights" and who should have rights to them?
15	M 5/5	DUE: Week 14 Canvas Discussion(s) In-class Activity: Pre-write for Presentation 1 Remember: Presentations should be 2-3 minutes, so you must be selective in choosing information and details that help you achieve your purpose and deliver your message
16	W 5/7	DUE: Presentation: Who has Rights to Human Rights? In-class Activity: Unpack Prompt for Self-Reflection Essay and ePortfolio Start Presentations
16	M 5/12	DUE: Week 15 Canvas Discussion(s) Finish Presentations DUE: Friday, 5/16, 11:59 pm: Self-Reflection Essay and ePortfolio