

**San José State University**  
**Department of English and Comparative Literature**

**English 1A, Composition 1 (GE A2)**  
**Section 34 and 46**  
**FALL 2013**

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<b>Office Hours:</b>	W 3:30 to 4:30 (and by appointment)
<b>Class Days/Time:</b>	section 34: 12:00 to 1:15; section 46: 1:30 to 2:45
<b>Classroom:</b>	section 34: BBC 128; section 46, BBC 121
<b>GE/SJSU Studies Category:</b>	Written Communication A2

**Faculty Web Page and MYSJSU Messaging**

Copies of the course materials such as the syllabus, major assignment handouts, etc. may be found on my faculty web page at <http://www.sjsu.edu/people/Joan.McMillan> or accessed through the Quick Links>Faculty Web Page links on the SJSU home page. You are responsible for regularly checking with the messaging system through MySJSU (or other communication system as indicated by the instructor).

**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.

English 1A is intended to increase the student's ability to write, read, and think both critically and clearly. I have a conviction that if you have come this far in your educational journey, you have important things to say and can communicate them in both your writing and speaking. English 1A will help you strengthen these skills. We will discuss various modes of composition throughout the semester, all of which will contribute to building strengths for you as a writer. Strong writing skills will help you no matter what career you choose in life, and it is my goal as an instructor to help you gain confidence in communicating ideas. This is a challenging course which I hope will increase and strengthen your skills as both a writer and a critical reader.

### **Textbooks:**

*The Confident Writer*, Carole Kanar, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition, ISBN 9780618958467

*A Thousand Lives*, Julia Scheeres, 12<sup>th</sup> Edition, ISBN 9781416596400

*The Everyday Writer*, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition, ISBN 9781457667121

### **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).

## **Dropping and Adding**

Students are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures about add/drop, grade forgiveness, etc. Refer to the current semester's [Catalog Policies](http://info.sjsu.edu/static/catalog/policies.html) section at <http://info.sjsu.edu/static/catalog/policies.html>. Add/drop deadlines can be found on the current academic year calendars document on the [Academic Calendars webpage](http://www.sjsu.edu/provost/services/academic_calendars/) at [http://www.sjsu.edu/provost/services/academic\\_calendars/](http://www.sjsu.edu/provost/services/academic_calendars/). The [Late Drop Policy](http://www.sjsu.edu/aars/policies/latedrops/policy/) is available at <http://www.sjsu.edu/aars/policies/latedrops/policy/>. Students should be aware of the current deadlines and penalties for dropping classes.

Information about the latest changes and news is available at the [Advising Hub](http://www.sjsu.edu/advising/) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/advising/>.

## **Assignments and Grading Policy**

[Academic Policy S12-3](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/S12-3.htm) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/S12-3.htm> has defined expected student workload as follows:

“Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of forty-five hours over the length of the course (normally 3 hours per unit per week with 1 of the hours used for lecture) for instruction or preparation/ studying or course related activities including but not limited to internships, labs, clinical practical. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus.”

## **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.

Reader Responses particularly fulfill the following Learning Objectives: SLO 2, SLO 4 (developing facility of expression and learning to write for different audiences), via semester-long practice in the use of prompts and the analysis of ideas and themes in the course readings.

Course readings fulfill SLO 1, SLO 2, SLO 3, SLO 4 through the illumination of ideas, expressions and varieties of diversity, and sophistication of expression.

Essays fulfill SLO 1, SLO 2, SLO 3, and SLO 4 through incorporation of all the learning objectives in the creation, workshop, and revision process of each essay, via peer workshops, prewriting, generation of ideas, and instructor feedback.

Peer editing workshops particularly support SLO 1, SLO 2, and SLO 3 through the use of peer feedback to enhance facility in expression, correct grammar and usage, and encouraging clearly expressed concepts and ideas.

Grammar homework, instruction, and grammar quizzes particularly support SLO 3 by enhancing the ability to understand and use proper grammar, mechanics, expression, and citation.

The final portfolio assignment particularly fulfills SLO 1, SLO 2, SLO 3, and SLO 4 through incorporation of these objectives in the planning, creation, and revision process of this cumulative project.

## **Classroom Protocol**

**Essays:** We will do six required essays for this class, as well as a final portfolio project which includes an essay (due on the last day of class). There will thus be three in-class essays and four out-of-class essays.

**Final Portfolio Assignment:** During this course, you will create a portfolio of your work, including a written reflection of 1000 words, worth ten percent of your grade. Think of it as a scientific study of your progress as a writer over the next four months. What you include in your portfolio doesn't have to be perfect. Remember, writing is a process. Collecting your work and then reflecting on that work is part of the process. The portfolio project is designed to get you thinking about your specific challenges, your strategies for improvement, your successes and failures, and your goals for the future. Every writer, no matter how accomplished, has room for improvement. This portfolio is your culminating experience. This course does not have a final exam.

**YOU MUST COMPLETE ALL ESSAYS IN ORDER TO PASS THIS COURSE!**

Expect to produce a minimum of 8,000 words this semester.

All out of class essays must be 4-5 pages in length (depending on the assignment), typed (double spaced), in a readable font (no gigantic fonts, 12 point Times New Roman or Ariel works well), with black ink. Follow the MLA guidelines for papers as shown on pages 197-191 of *The Confident Writer*.

**LATE PAPERS WILL BE DOWNGRADED ONE FULL LETTER GRADE FOR EVERY DAY LATE. NO ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE ACCEPTED WHICH ARE MORE THAN THREE DAYS LATE. OUT-OF-CLASS ESSAYS MUST BE TURNED IN VIA TURNITIN.COM.**

For in-class essays, please bring a yellow book and a blue or black pen; a dictionary and thesaurus are strongly encouraged.

**Reader Responses:** This is a one-page hand-written response, generally assigned during the first ten to fifteen minutes of class. I want you to truly consider and explain what worked for you in the reading, what moved you, disturbed you, inspired you, infuriated you, didn't work, or worked well for you. Many of my former students have told me that writing in class every day really helped them become better writers. Reader Responses are not graded individually, but are tallied as to the amount completed and comprise ten percent of your class grade. Ideal length for a Reader Response is one handwritten page.

**Workshops:** Good writing involves learning good revision skills. Workshops (in which others read and critique your work) are a valuable resource in learning revision. We will have several workshop sessions this semester, in small groups with other class members, in which constructive criticism will be given to help improve your paper (you will also be critiquing others' essays). We will also workshop outlines of in-class essays. You will be required to make copies of your essays for the workshop, generally 3-4.

**Presentation:** Beginning early in the semester, I would like to have each student take 5-10 minutes to present a piece of writing (the selection is up to you: it can be a news article, a short piece from a book, a poem, a selection from a play, something you wrote at any time of your life, etc.) You will read the excerpt to the class and talk about it a bit (why you chose the piece, what you think of the writing, what moved you and even constructive criticism if you are inspired to suggest it).

Other work, handouts, etc. may be assigned during the semester, occasionally and with fair notice.

**Attendance and Participation:** Since success in life involves showing up, consider this class a good exercise. There is a great deal of work and it is easy to fall terribly behind if you do not come to class or fail to complete assignments on time. Class participation also figures into your final grade. Please arrive promptly, as late folks disturb the class. If you do happen to be late, please enter the classroom quietly. If you must miss class, please let me know as soon as possible so that we can make necessary arrangements if you will miss in-class work.

Please participate in class discussions; everyone's opinion is important. Ask questions if you don't understand something, and I will do my best to answer.

**Classroom environment:** Courteous behavior towards other students and the instructor is mandatory, as this is a professional environment. If you disagree (or agree) with the opinion of another student, the instructor, or something in the readings, express your opinions respectfully. Some of the readings may express opinions or views that are somewhat controversial; they are presented to show the varied expression of such opinions or views, and no one is required to agree or disagree with them.

Cell phones and the like must be turned off. If you forget and it goes off, please muffle it accordingly. Wait until the end of class to check messages (and please refrain from texting under the desk, etc). If you must use a laptop because you have a learning or other disability, please let me know and also bring me a signed note from the Disability Resource Center; otherwise, laptops are to be shut off and kept closed in this class unless we are using them for a specific assignment.

Coffee, tea, water, etc. may be consumed in class, quietly.

**Contacting your instructor:** My office hours, e-mail address, and phone number are listed at the top of this syllabus. Email or visit me during my office hours if you have questions about the class or your writing, want to go over an essay, etc. I enjoy working with students outside of class and want to help you succeed in English 1A, so don't hesitate to use my office hours! I can arrange other times to meet with you as well, and am always available by email.

## Assignments and Grading Policy

**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.

Essays in English 1A will be graded as follows:

A = Excellent. This essay is organized, well-constructed, and demonstrates a clear understanding of the topic. The thesis is focused; ideas are clearly presented and supported with specific details. Paragraphs are fully developed and move easily from one to the next. The language is used effectively and sentences are correctly constructed and syntactically correct; the language is lively and a pleasure to read. The “A” paper is as virtually free of mechanical errors as is humanly possible.

B = Very Good. This essay shows a clear understanding of the topic, but is less precise and original as the “A” paper. The main difference is that the “B” paper will demonstrate minor weaknesses in aspects such as sentence variety, grammatical errors, typographical errors, or may have less facility of expression as the “A” paper.

C = Average. This essay will complete all tasks required by the assignment, but demonstrates weaknesses in fundamental aspects such as paragraph development, supporting ideas, or many mechanical and/or grammatical errors. Word choice and syntax are unvaried and simplistic, and sentence construction is less varied.

D = Poor. This essay makes a general attempt to discuss the topic, but will be noticeably superficial in its treatment (generally this is an essay that is far too simplistic or short). The essay may reveal multiple problems in development, or grammatical, mechanical, or usage errors that are serious and frequent.

F=Unacceptable. This essay fails to fulfill any requirement of the assignment. It lacks clarity, development, and coherence. This essay does not show a competent or clear understanding of grammar, sentence mechanics, etc.

**Plagiarism:** Your own ideas are valuable and you are in this class to learn to express them effectively. To plagiarize is to present the ideas or writings of another as your own (including purchasing or copying essays from the Internet and turning them in as your own work). This includes paraphrasing another’s ideas or writing in your own words also without giving your source proper credit. If you would like to use someone’s ideas, writing, or thoughts in your essay, cite them. The Confident Writer has a large section on proper citation and we will also be covering this in class. Plagiarism is a very serious offense and will result in automatic failure on the assignment and possible failure in the course and dismissal from the university. For this and every course at SJSU, be familiar with the “Policy on Academic Integrity” printed in the SJSU Catalog.

I will be using turnitin.com for all out-of-class essays; we will discuss the signup information in class during our first meeting after the primary diagnostic essay. All out-of-class essays must be uploaded to turnitin on the day the essay is due. I will be using Grademark (a grading program included in turnitin.com) for all responses on the out-of-class essays.

**Grade break-down:**

Out-of-Class Essays	35%
In-Class Essays	20%
Reader Responses	15%
Final Portfolio and Essay	10%
Participation, incl. final letter and presentation	10%
Grammar, quizzes, etc.	10%

**Grading scale:**

A+	97%	100%
A	95%	96.9%
A-	90%	94.9%
B+	85%	89.9%
B	79%	84.9%
B-	75%	78.9%
C+	69%	74.9%
C	65%	68.9%
C-	61%	64.9%
D	58%	60.9%
D-	56%	57.9%
F	0%	55.9%



## **University Policies**

### **Academic integrity**

Your commitment as a student to learning is evidenced by your enrollment at San Jose State University. The [University's Academic Integrity policy S07-2](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/S07-2.htm), located at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/S07-2.htm>, requires you to be honest in all your academic course work. Faculty members are required to report all infractions to the office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development. The [Student Conduct and Ethical Development website](http://www.sjsu.edu/studentconduct/) is available at <http://www.sjsu.edu/studentconduct/>.

Instances of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Cheating on exams or plagiarism (presenting the work of another as your own, or the use of another person's ideas without giving proper credit) will result in a failing grade and sanctions by the University. For this class, all assignments are to be completed by the individual student unless otherwise specified. If you would like to include your assignment or any material you have submitted, or plan to submit for another class, please note that SJSU's Academic Integrity Policy S07-2 requires approval of instructors.

### **Campus Policy in Compliance with the American Disabilities Act**

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need to make 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](http://www.sjsu.edu/president/docs/directives/PD_1997-03.pdf) at [http://www.sjsu.edu/president/docs/directives/PD\\_1997-03.pdf](http://www.sjsu.edu/president/docs/directives/PD_1997-03.pdf) requires that students with disabilities requesting accommodations must register with the [Disability Resource Center](http://www.drc.sjsu.edu/) (DRC) at <http://www.drc.sjsu.edu/> to establish a record of their disability.

### **Student Technology Resources (Optional)**

Computer labs for student use are available in the [Academic Success Center](http://www.sjsu.edu/at/asc/) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/at/asc/> located on the 1st floor of Clark Hall and in the Associated Students Lab on the 2nd floor of the Student Union. Additional computer labs may be available in your department/college. Computers are also available in the Martin Luther King Library.

A wide variety of audio-visual equipment is available for student checkout from Media Services located in IRC 112. These items include DV and HD digital camcorders; digital still cameras; video, slide and overhead projectors; DVD, CD, and audiotape players; sound systems, wireless microphones, projection screens and monitors.

## **SJSU Peer Connections**

Peer Connections, a campus-wide resource for mentoring and tutoring, strives to inspire students to develop their potential as independent learners while they learn to successfully navigate through their university experience. You are encouraged to take advantage of their services which include course-content based tutoring, enhanced study and time management skills, more effective critical thinking strategies, decision making and problem-solving abilities, and campus resource referrals.

In addition to offering small group, individual, and drop-in tutoring for a number of undergraduate courses, consultation with mentors is available on a drop-in or by appointment basis. Workshops are offered on a wide variety of topics including preparing for the Writing Skills Test (WST), improving your learning and memory, alleviating procrastination, surviving your first semester at SJSU, and other related topics. A computer lab and study space is also available for student use in Room 600 of Student Services Center (SSC).

Peer Connections is located in three locations: SSC, Room 600 (10th Street Garage on the corner of 10<sup>th</sup> and San Fernando Street), at the 1st floor entrance of Clark Hall, and in the Living Learning Center (LLC) in Campus Village Housing Building B. Visit [Peer Connections website](http://peerconnections.sjsu.edu) at <http://peerconnections.sjsu.edu> for more information.

## **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) at <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. (Note: You need to have a QR Reader to scan this code.)

## English 1A Fall 2013 Course Schedule

### Notes:

- **The syllabus is subject to change with fair notice.**
- **All readings are due on the day indicated.**
- **Class and outline workshops are mandatory and your paper will be downgraded if you do not attend.**
- **Please bring a large yellow exam book to class on the days of the in-class essays.**
- **We will do a DAILY handwritten Reader Response, based on the course readings, using prompts supplied by the instructor.**
- **There will be no Reader Response on days which are scheduled for in-class essays so as to use the maximum time for essay writing.**

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
1	8/21	Welcome; go over the syllabus; general business
2	8/26	Essay #1: Diagnostic (in-class); bring a yellow or green book, a blue or black pen, and a dictionary. Essay #2 assigned, Narrative, due 9/16
	8/28	Reading: handout: "One Liar's Beginnings" (Udall)
3	9/2	No class—Labor Day
	9/4	Readings: handout: "Good Workers" (Price); "Silent Dancing" (Cofer); <i>Confident Writer</i> , read pgs 195-208; pay special attention to "Salvation" by Langston Hughes, 197-198.

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
4	9/9	Readings: handout, <i>I Like Guys</i> (Sedaris); Confident Writer, 209-223
	9/11	Reading: introduction and chapters 1-3, <i>A Thousand Lives</i> Mandatory workshop for the narrative essay; please bring three copies of your rough draft to class for a peer workshop.
5	9/16	Essay #2, Narrative, due today; please upload to turnitin.com. Essay #3 assigned, Process Analysis, written in-class 9/30. Readings: excerpt from “A Match to the Heart” (Gretel Erich), Confident Writer 225-231; pay special attention to David Levy’s “When The Big Clouds Gather” (226-229)
	9/18	Reading: chapters 4-6, <i>A Thousand Lives</i> . Grammar homework assigned, due 10/2
6	9/23	Readings: (handouts): “Prison Man Considers Turkey” “The Deck” (Komunyakaa); Confident Writer: p. 233-242; pay special attention to Sarah Colman-Bradley’s “Horses” (233-235).
	9/25	Reading: chapters 7-9, <i>A Thousand Lives</i> ; Mandatory outline workshop for the process analysis essay; please bring three copies of your outline to class today
7	9/30	Essay #3, Process Analysis, written in-class today (bring a yellow or green book, blue or black pen, and a dictionary). Essay #4 assigned, Description (out-of-class), due 10/14
	10/2	Reading: chapters 10-12, <i>A Thousand Lives</i> . Grammar homework due, more assigned, due 10/16

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
8	10/7	Readings: (handouts) “Twigs,” “Artifacts”; <i>Confident Writer</i> , pages 66-82 (pay special attention to “Navajo Dog” (Momaday) 76-77.
	10/9	Reading: chapters 13-15, <i>A Thousand Lives</i> . Mandatory workshop for the description essay; please bring 3 copies of your rough draft class.
9	10/14	Essay #4, Description, due today (upload to turnitin.com). Essay #5 assigned, Compare/Contrast (in-class), written 10/28. Readings: (handouts): “The Tyger” and “The Sick Rose” (William Blake); <i>Confident Writer</i> , 267-286; pay special attention to “University of Arkansas Versus Arkansas Tech University (p. 281-282).
	10/16	Reading: chapters 16-18, <i>A Thousand Lives</i> . Grammar homework due; more assigned, due 10/30.
10	10/21	Readings: (handout): “Two Hearts” (Doyle); <i>Confident Writer</i> : 311-313, “The Perfect Family” (Hoffmann)
	10/23	Reading: chapters 19-21, <i>A Thousand Lives</i> . Mandatory outline workshop for the compare/contrast essay; please bring 3 copies of your outline to class.
11	10/28	Essay # 5, Compare/Contrast, written in-class today (bring a yellow or green book, a blue or black pen, and a dictionary). Essay # 6 assigned, Argumentation/Persuasion, due 11/25.
	10/30	Reading: chapters 22-24, <i>A Thousand Lives</i> . Grammar homework due, more assigned, due 11/13.
12	11/4	Final Portfolio assigned, including Essay #7, Portfolio Reflection, due 12/9 (last day of class). <i>Confident Writer</i> , 333-338; pay special attention to “The World is Watching and No One Cares” (Queenan), 331-332.

<b>Week</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines</b>
	11/6	Reading: chapters 25-27. <i>A Thousand Lives</i>
13	11/11	No class—Veteran’s Day
	11/13	Readings: chapters 29 and 29, <i>A Thousand Lives</i> Out of class reader response assigned for <i>A Thousand Lives</i> , due 12/2. Grammar homework due. Grammar quiz.
14	11/18	Readings (handout): excerpt from <i>1984</i> (Orwell); Confident Writer, "The Ways of Meeting Oppression" (King), 384-386
	11/20	Readings: (handout): “My Grandmother’s Choice” (Tan); confident writer, 337-349; pay special attention to Tara Tedrow’s “Everyone’s Business” (345-346). Mandatory workshop for the argumentation / persuasion essay; please bring 3 copies of your outline to class. Grammar homework assigned, due 12/4
15	11/25	Essay # 6, Argumentation/Persuasion, due today (upload to turnitin). Readings: (handout), excerpt from <i>The Power of Myth</i> (Campbell), "Cinderella" (Grimm)
	11/27	Readings: (handout) “Remembering” (Remen),

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
16	12/2	<p>Out-of class reader response for A Thousand Lives due.</p> <p>Workshop for final portfolio.</p> <p>Confident Writer: Chapter 6, 127-126.</p>
	12/4	<p>Mandatory workshop for Essay #7, Portfolio Reflection, please bring 3 copies of your essay to class.</p> <p>Reading: Confident Writer, Chapter 6, 127-152.</p> <p>Grammar homework due.</p> <p>Grammar quiz.</p>
17	12/9	<p>Portfolio due (including Essay # 7. Portfolio Reflection).</p> <p>Final housekeeping and business, thanks, and cookies.</p> <p>Last reading: (handout), “You Are Here” (Sagan)</p>