First Year Writing

ENGL 1A

Spring 2026   Section 13   In Person   3 Unit(s)   01/22/2026 to 05/11/2026   Modified 01/11/2026

👤 Contact Information

Instructor:	Faith Kirk, Ph.D.
Instructor Email:	faith.kirk@sjsu.edu
Office Hours on Zoom:	Tuesdays, 10:00-11:00 am PST, and by appointment
Zoom Link:	https://sjsu.zoom.us/j/89159340774?pwd=OQqjdrwIgwdNqnIld1gIgApLImeOC1.1
Passcode:	487114

Class Days and Times:	Mondays and Wednesdays, 10:30-11:45 am
Class Location:	Duncan Hall, 219

💻 Course Description and Requisites

English 1A is an introductory course that prepares students to join scholarly conversations across the university. Students develop reading skills, rhetorical sophistication, and writing styles that give form and coherence to complex ideas for various audiences, using a variety of genres.

Satisfies 1A. Written Communication I (Formerly Area A2).

Prerequisite(s): Completion of Reflection on College Writing
Grading: Letter Graded

✳ Classroom Protocols

ENGL 1A Course Content

Diversity: SJSU is a diverse campus. As such, our course is designed to include an emphasis on a diverse range of voices and viewpoints. We will engage in integrated reading and writing assignments to construct our own arguments on complex issues that generate meaningful public discussions.

Writing: Writing is at the heart of our class. Our exploration of writing will allow us to prepare ourselves and each other for academic and real-world writing scenarios. Assignments give students repeated practice in all phases of the writing process: prewriting, organizing, writing, revising, and editing. Our class requires a minimum of 8000 words, at least 4000 of which must be in revised final draft form. More specific descriptions and instructions will be distributed for all major assignments in class.

Reading: There will be a substantial amount of reading for our class, some of which will come from texts I select and some of which will be from sources you locate.

Final Experience: We will compile a portfolio at the end of the semester that includes selected examples of your writing produced for our class, as well as materials from your RCW Canvas course. We will talk more about the portfolio later in the semester.

Time Commitment

Success in ENGL 1A 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 1A, 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.

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.

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)](https://www.sjsu.edu/english/frosh/program-policies.php)

Late Work

Because I understand that life happens, I will accept late work.

For minor assignments, all Canvas rubrics are designed to give credit for timely submissions.

For major assignments, I will accept submissions up to 5 days past the deadline, but I will deduct 5% for each day that the work is late (including weekends).

If you have an exceptional circumstance that prevents you from submitting work, please let me know. I am happy to support you in your efforts to do the work and pass the course.

Avoid Plagiarism by Asking Questions

Plagiarism is:

1.) When you take someone else's words or ideas and pass them off as your own, and/or

2.) When you submit/publish writing generated by AI without significant, intentional revision, and/or

3.) When you submit/publish writing which contains AI-generated language without disclosing AI use.

While plagiarism is wrong, asking about it is not!

If you are not sure if something counts as plagiarism or not, go ahead and ask me, either in class, individually before or after class, or via email.

After teaching for many years, it is pretty obvious to me when a writer forgets to cite a source or does not understand how to cite a source correctly. It also obvious when a writer blatantly inserts someone else's language or ideas into their own writing. *If I find a case of plagiarism that is not the result of misunderstanding or incorrect citation, I am required to refer you to the university for disciplinary action.*

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).

📊 Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs)

GE Area 1A: Written Communication I

Written Communication I courses cultivate an understanding of the writing process and the goals, dynamics, and genres of written communication, with special attention to the nature of writing at the university. A grade of C- or better designates that a student has successfully oriented reading and writing practice in English to support college level research and learning and to share learning with others. Area 1A is a prerequisite for Area 1B: Critical Thinking. Completion of Area 1A with a grade of C- or better is a CSU graduation requirement.

GE Area 1A Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of an Area 1A course, students should be able to:

1. demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the content, context, effectiveness, and forms of written communication;
2. perform essential steps in the writing process (prewriting, organizing, composing, revising, and editing);
3. articulate an awareness of and write according to the rhetorical features of texts, such as purpose, audience, context, and rhetorical appeals;
4. integrate their ideas and those of others by synthesizing, explaining, analyzing, developing, and criticizing ideas effectively in several genres; and
5. demonstrate college-level language use, clarity, and grammatical abilities in writing.

Writing requirement

Area 1A courses require a minimum of 6000 words, at least 4000 of which must be in revised final draft form.

📘 Course Materials

There are no course materials to purchase for this class.

All texts will be provided by your instructor, either digitally or in hard copy.

☰ Course Requirements and Assignments

ASSIGNMENT	COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES
Personal Narrative	1,2,3,5
They Say/I Say Essay	2,4,5
Feature Story	1,2,3,4,5

Webpage	1,2,3,4,5
Self Reflection Essay and Portfolio	1,2,3,4,5

This semester you will complete five major assignments. Before each assignment, you will receive a detailed prompt and an evaluation rubric. We will discuss each assignment in class and use class time to work toward completing them.

AI Use Policy

Using AI tools ethically and effectively is an essential 21st-century skill. The CSU recognizes that and has integrated university-specific versions of ChatGPT and Gemini into Canvas, our Learning Management System.

It can be tempting to use AI to do the hard work of writing for you. When you do that, you give up the power to think on our own and develop skills as college-level writers. Large language models (LLMs) are word-guessing programs. Unlike real writers, they cannot replicate the emotions, imagination, and real-life experiences that make writing a complex, very human activity.

In this course, you will learn how to integrate AI tools into your writing process. LLMs are tools that all writers can use to learn about a topic, aid in the research process, learn about genre and audience, get real-time feedback, and edit their own writing.

You will be required to document any AI use by completing and submitting a student AI disclosure form (SAID (https://the-said.pages.dev/)**) for each assignment.**

✔ Grading Information

My teaching philosophy is that assessment should always be an **explicit and transparent** process.

This means that:

1. You should always know the expectations for assignments ahead of time.
2. It should be clear to you how you earned your numerical score.
3. You are invited to talk about your grades with me at any time, no questions asked or appointments needed.

With this teaching philosophy in mind, here is the assessment process I have designed for our course:

1. **You will see a rubric for each assignment in our course ahead of time** so you can plan how to meet the expectations for each task.
2. **You will receive a grade and a completed rubric for each task that you submit. For your major assignments, you will receive a grade, a completed rubric, and written feedback.**
3. **I will be holding weekly office hours on this semester on Zoom.** Feel free to join me there, whether you have made an appointment of not, to discuss grades privately. You can also ask me questions after class and via email.

Your Final Grade Breakdown

UNIT/CANVAS MODULE	
MODULE 1: WHAT DO I SAY?	15 percent
MODULE 2: WHAT DO THEY SAY?	15 percent
MODULE 3: ADD TO THE CONVERSATION	25 percent
MODULE 4: MAKE A WEBPAGE	15 percent
MODULE 5: REFLECT	10 percent
PARTICIPATE	20 percent

🏛 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

M, 1/26	Introductions Discuss: What constitutes class participation?
W, 1/28	Exercise: Considering Audience Learn about Module 1 and Major Assignment 1: Write a Personal Narrative

M, 2/2 MODULE 1	Drafting: Generate Freewriting
W, 2/4 MODULE 1	Drafting: Assess Yourself Quiz
M, 2/9 MODULE 1	Drafting: Organizing Ideas/ Planning Major Assignment 1: Submit a First Draft by Tuesday, 2/10, at 11:59 pm
W, 2/11 MODULE 1	Revising: Peer Review in class (25 points)
M, 2/16 MODULE 1	Revising: Storytelling Techniques
W, 2/18 MODULE 2	Learn about Module 2 and Major Assignment 2: Write a They Say/I Say Essay Major Assignment 1: Revise and Submit your Final Draft by Friday, 2/20, at 11:59 pm
M, 2/23 MODULE 2	Drafting: Try Graphic Organizer 1 Use your reading notes to draft
W, 2/25 MODULE 2	Drafting: Try Graphic Organizer 2 Use your reading notes to draft Compare note taking methods

M, 3/2 MODULE 2	Drafting: Try Graphic Organizer 3 Use your reading notes to draft Planning your draft **Major Assignment 2: Submit your First Draft by Tuesday, 3/3, at 11:59 pm**
W, 3/4 MODULE 2	Revising: **Peer Review in class (25 points)**
M, 3/9 MODULE 2	Revising: Organizing Ideas
W, 3/11 MODULE 3	Learn about Module 3 and Major Assignment 3: Write a Feature Story **Major Assignment 2: Revise and Submit your Final Draft by Friday, 3/13, at 11:59 pm**
M, 3/16 MODULE 3	Learn about Genre and Audience
W, 3/18 MODULE 3	Drafting strategies
M, 3/23 MODULE 3	Drafting strategies
W, 3/25 MODULE 3	Drafting strategies **Major Assignment 3: Submit your First Draft by Friday, 3/27, at 11:59 pm**

M, 3/30	SPRING BREAK: NO CLASSES
W, 4/1	SPRING BREAK: NO CLASSES
M, 4/6 MODULE 3	Revising
W, 4/8 MODULE 3	Revising: **Peer Review in class (25 points)**
M, 4/13 MODULE 4	Learn about Module 4 and Major Assignment 4: Create a Webpage in Teams **Major Assignment 3: Revise and Submit your Final Draft by Monday, 4/13, at 11:59 pm**
W, 4/15 MODULE 4	Team Meetings: Meet your Team and Discuss Norms, Communication Strategy, and Compose Workplan
M, 4/20 MODULE 4	Team Meetings: Learn about audience and purpose Planning and drafting
W, 4/22 MODULE 4	Team Meetings Drafting Major Assignment 4: Submit your First Draft by Friday, 4/24, at 11:59 pm
M, 4/27 MODULE 4	Team Meetings Revising

W, 4/29 MODULE 4	Team Meetings Revising	
M, 5/4 MODULE 5	Learn about Module 5 and Major Assignment 5: Compose a Self-Reflection Essay and Portfolio **Major Assignment 4: Submit your Revised Webpage by Monday, 5/4, at 11:59 pm**	
W, 5/6 MODULE 5	Drafting **Major Assignment 5: Submit your First Draft by Friday, 5/8**	
M, 5/11 MODULE 5	LAST DAY OF INSTRUCTION Revising	

Portfolios due to Canvas by Wednesday, 5/13, at 11:59 pm PST

[Please Note: This work schedule is tentative and subject to change based on class needs.]