

# First Year Writing

## ENGL 1A

Spring 2026 Section 49 In Person 3 Unit(s) 01/22/2026 to 05/11/2026 Modified 01/29/2026

### Contact Information

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#### Instructor: Jillian Murphy

Email: [jillian.murphy@sjsu.edu](mailto:jillian.murphy@sjsu.edu)

Office: FO room 221

Canvas Inbox recommended for all communication.

#### Office Hours

Drop-in Hour: In person

Wednesday, 12:15 PM to 1:15 PM, My Office (FO 221)

Drop-in Hour: On Zoom

Friday, 2:00 PM to 3:00 PM

For all Zoom appointments use the following link: <https://sjsu.zoom.us/my/jillian.murphy>

By Appointment

Zoom

To meet with me on Zoom outside of drop-in hours, message me on Canvas.

### Course Description and Requisites

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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

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## 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>)

# Our Class Policies

## Course Theme

While many of us see social media as a distracting nemesis in our work and study lives, certain online communities have embraced it as their primary motivation. First emerging on Tumblr as "Studyblr," the "study-media" culture has grown to include Studygram, StudyTube, and StudyTok. In these spaces, current and former students share motivation, study strategies, advice, and community.

In this course we will explore and analyze these study-media communities with two goals. First, to reflect on our own learning processes and develop metacognitive skills to find the habits that best support our goals. Second, to inspire conversations about the surrounding world of social media, tech, and the implications of these forces on both our work and our daily lives.

## Learning Environment

As college students, you are responsible for your success in this course. You should be attentive to instruction, engaged in discussions and activities, and caught up with all coursework. Participation is key to our collaborative learning environment, so I expect you to be civil and respectful toward me and the other students in the class.

Please note: sometimes projects and class discussions include material of a sensitive nature. In this course, students may encounter materials that differ from and perhaps challenge their ideas, beliefs, and understanding of reality. Students are encouraged to discuss issues about such material with the instructor.

## Lectures and Announcements

This is an in-person class, and as such instruction, guidelines, grading information, advice, announcements, and updates will be given during class sessions. Students should plan to be on-time and present for every class session. Major assignments will be scored on the concepts and writing strategies taught during class time. It is your responsibility to keep up with class material or visit office hours for help.

## Office Hours

Being available during scheduled office hours to help students with their writing or new concepts is one of the best parts of my job. Visit drop-in office hours as much as you need. If you are in class during that time, message me on Canvas to schedule a meeting over Zoom, though my availability may be much more limited.

## Assignment Guidelines

All assignments have their own instructions and grading policies, outlined on the prompt. Make sure to read and understand each assignment well before the due date.

If you have questions about an assignment, reach out to me or a classmate with enough time to complete the work correctly, or request an extension (see Extensions, below).

Hyperlinks will not be accepted as submissions for coursework (unless an exception is specified). Make sure you understand how to submit a .doc, .page, or .pdf. Work submitted incorrectly will be scored down according to the late policy.

I can only grade an assignment once. Familiarize yourself with the extension policies and make sure that the copy you submit is the one you want graded. Re-written/re-submitted work without an extension will be scored down according to the late policy.

### **Plagiarism and AI**

In line with university policies, plagiarism is not permitted in our class. Students will learn and follow guidelines for citing outside sources in MLA. Our class will focus on practicing skills of critical thinking, ethos building, audience engagement, and unique authorial voice, so students who rely on LLM ("AI") tools at any point in the writing process will be at a disadvantage and should expect lower scores. This includes tools like Grammarly. Need help? Use a human!

Projects that cite fabricated sources and hallucinated information or heavily plagiarize will receive a failing grade. For questions, clarification, or help, visit me in office hours.

### **Late Policy**

Late work will be graded down 10% (one letter grade) for each calendar day it is turned in after the deadline, starting with the due date. It is your responsibility to turn in thoughtful and complete work by the deadline listed or correctly request an extension (see: Extensions, below).

Note: The Portfolio Final Draft cannot be turned in late.

Assignments more than 5 days late can be turned in for 50% credit at any point in the semester up until the day of our final class meeting, 5/11, at 11:59pm. This late work will not receive feedback, so visit office hours if you would like feedback on this work.

To earn late credit, assignments must be complete; incomplete late work will earn a 0.

### **Participation and Absent Policies**

This course is offered in-person, so I have designed instruction and activities for each class session that will prepare students for our major essay assignments and my approach to grading. Students should plan to attend all class meetings and take advantage of the following policies to catch up on any missed materials and assignments.

To earn full points for in-class work, students must be present and participating and must turn in work before the end of class. Students must be present in class to earn credit for group work. Students who do not submit work to Canvas before the end of the class period (including replying to group work with their name) will get a late penalty.

Absent students can make up work as follows:

1. Connect with a trusted classmate to get notes, announcements, and clarification on the in-class assignments you missed. Read the full module for the week and note any questions about materials.
2. Complete the day's assignment in full, individually, within 3 calendar days of the missed class to earn 70% of the participation points.
3. To make up the in-class portion of the participation points and earn full credit (the last 30%), visit me in office hours within 2 weeks of your absence to show your understanding of the topics we covered and ask any clarifying questions you have.

After 3 calendar days points of an assignment missed due to absence will be docked in accordance with the late policy (outlined above). If you are too ill to complete your work within that period, message me on Canvas ASAP and we will check back in when you are well.

### **Extensions**

Students can request an extension (for up to 1 week) on take-home work by filling out the Extension Request Form and submitting it to an [EXTENSION] assignment before the original assignment's deadline. I do not require an explanation or doctor's note, but you must complete and submit the form correctly and on time to receive the extension, and it is your responsibility to keep track of your assignments and new deadline. If you request the extension right before the assignment is due, there will be a delay in its approval.

The new deadline you set for your extension (up to 1 week from the assignment deadline) will serve as your due date for the assignment, and after it passes the late policy will apply. To extend an extension, submit another request before this new deadline. Extensions cannot exceed 1 week past the original assignment deadline.

Work turned in late (including due to an approved extension) will be graded after all on-time work has been graded. To get feedback sooner, visit me in office hours. As always, it is your responsibility to keep up with the pace of the class. If you are struggling, don't hesitate to reach out.

Note: All late work besides the Final Portfolio, including due to an approved extension, is due by 5/11 at 11:59pm. Students cannot request an extension on the Final Portfolio.

### **Extra Credit**

Students with exceptional contributions to our in-class collaborations can earn 1 extra credit point per class session, with a maximum of 15 points for the semester.

### **Questions**

For questions about any of our class policies, message me on Canvas or visit me during office hours.

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 \(https://sjsu.edu/general-education/ge-requirements/overview/learning-outcomes.php\)](https://sjsu.edu/general-education/ge-requirements/overview/learning-outcomes.php).

## Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs)

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### 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

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Coursework will be completed digitally through Canvas. You will need to have a laptop or tablet with internet access in order to submit work in-class and for homework. If this is a concern, message me and we will figure out a solution.

All course materials are available digitally at no cost. If you have any trouble accessing a text, message me asap.

Reading assignments may be added or removed (with notice) based on our needs as a group.

## Course Requirements and Assignments

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### Essay: Multimodal Analysis

Rough Draft Due: Monday 2/16

In-Class Peer Review Workshop: Monday 2/16

Final Draft Due: Monday 3/2

Word count: 1000

Points: 200

### Essay: Argument

Rough Draft Due: Monday 3/16

Peer Review Workshop: Monday 3/16

Final Draft Due: Monday 4/6

Word count: 1200

Points: 200

### Video and Process Writing: Multimodal Project

Rough Draft Plan Due: Monday 4/13

In-Class Peer Review Workshop: Monday 4/13

Final Draft Video and Process Writing Due: Monday 5/4

Word count: 1200

Points: 250

# Portfolio: Final Reflection

Rough Draft Due: Monday 5/11

In-Class Peer Review Workshop: Monday 5/11

Final Draft Due:

(Section 49) Fri, May 15 8:30-10:30 AM

(Section 50) Wed, May 13 10:45 AM-12:45 PM

Word Count: 600

Points: 100

## Homework and Classwork: Participation

Students will have regular reading and writing homework to prepare before each week of class. We will also complete writing, analysis, and group work in class. All assignments will be turned in on Canvas. See the section on Class Policies (above) for details about absences, late work and extensions.

Links will not be accepted as submissions for homework or in-class assignments.

Word count: 4000+

Points: 250

## ✓ Grading Information

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### Criteria

Type	Weight	Topic	Notes
Multimodal Analysis Essay	20%	1000 words	GELO 1-5 (Focus on GELO 3)
Argumentative Essay	20%	1200 words	GELO 1-5 (Focus on GELO 4-5)
Multimodal Project	25%	1200 words	GELO 1-5 (Focus on GELO 2-3)

Type	Weight	Topic	Notes
Portfolio	10%	600 words	GELO 1-5 (Focus on GELO 1)
Homework and Classwork	25%	4000+ words	GELO 1-5

## Breakdown

Grade	Range	Notes
A	93% to 100%	
A-	90-92%	
B+	87% to 89%	
B	83% to 86%	
B-	80% to 82%	
C+	77% to 79%	
C	73% to 76%	
C-	70% to 72%	
D+	67% to 69%	
D	63% to 66%	
D-	60% to 62%	
F	0% to 59%	

## 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

Week 1 (1/26-28): Welcome!

Week 2 (2/2-4): Homework 2/2 "Ethos and AI"

Week 3 (2/9-11): Homework 2/9 "Welcome to Studyblr"

Week 4 (2/16-18): Homework 2/16 "Multimodal Analysis Rough Draft Outline"

Week 5 (2/23-25): Homework 2/23 "Choose your own study media adventure"

Week 6 (3/2-4): Homework 3/2 "Final Draft Multimodal Analysis"

Week 7 (3/9-11): Homework 3/9 "The Enshittification of TikTok"

Week 8 (3/16-18): Homework 3/16 "Argument Rough Draft Outline"

Week 9 (3/23-25): Homework 3/23 "The Age of IG Face"

Week 10 -- SPRING BREAK --

Week 11 (4/6-8): Homework 4/6 "Argument Final Draft"

Week 12 (4/13-15): Homework 4/13 "Rough Draft Multimodal Plan"

Week 13 (4/20-22): Homework 4/20 "In Praise of the Flâneur"

Week 14 (4/27-29): Homework 4/27 "Multimodal Progress Check"

Week 15 (5/4-6): Homework 5/4 "Multimodal Project Final Draft"

Week 16 (5/11): Homework 5/11 "Portfolio Rough Draft"

***Finals: Portfolio Final Draft due dates***

**(Section 49) Fri, May 15 8:30-10:30 AM**

**(Section 50) Wed, May 13 10:45 AM-12:45 PM**