

San José State University
Fall 2012
Humanities/English & Comparative Literature
English 1A: Composition I, Section 68

Instructor:	Dr. Mark Dowdy
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Office Hours:	Tuesdays and Thursdays: 1:30 – 2:30 a.m.; Thursdays: 6:00 – 7:00 p.m.; or by appointment.
Class Days/Time:	Tuesdays and Thursdays, 4:30 – 5:45 p.m.
Classroom:	Sweeney Hall 444
GE Category:	GE/SJSU Studies Category: GE Area A2

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: Passage of the English Proficiency Test (EPT), or passage of an approved substitute course for the EPT.

Texts (Available in the Spartan Bookstore)

- *Patterns for College Writing: a Rhetorical Reader and Guide* (paperback), Laurie G. Kerszner and Stephen R. Mandell (Bedford/St. Martin’s)
- *The Bedford Handbook*, 8th edition. Diane Hacker et al (Bedford/St. Martin’s)
- A Dictionary
- Blue/Yellow Books

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).

GE/SJSU Student Learning Objectives (SLOs)

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

Turnitin.com: In lieu of hard copies, you will be submitting both your Short Formal Essays and your Formal Research Essays to Turnitin.com. To sign up for the class, visit the site and enter the following information:

Class ID: 5399274
Password: Scholar

Desire2Learn: I will make class announcements on Desire2Learn (D2) so please be sure to check your account. If you have not used D2L before, go to sjsu.desire2learn.com and enter the following information:

Username: Your first name followed by your last, separated by a period (i.e. mark.dowdy).

Password: Your Tower ID. (Once you log in, you will be prompted to change your password)

Course Content

Writing: Writing assignments shall give students repeated practice in all phases of the writing process: prewriting, organizing, writing, revising, and editing. At least eight essays, appropriately sequenced throughout the semester and totaling a minimum of 8000 words, are required. This minimum requirement excludes the final examination, journal writing, quizzes, and any brief or informal assignments. However, it can include assignments that require major revisions of drafts already submitted for a grade and commented on by peers and/or instructor. *A major revision is defined as a significant rethinking and reworking of an assignment, and not a simple “correcting” of mechanical errors noted on the original.* At least three (but no more than four) essays shall be written in class.

Reading: Reading for the course shall be extensive and intensive and include useful models of writing for academic, general, and specific audiences.

Research: English 1A may initiate students in the use of the library, but library research is not a required element of the course.

Diversity: Assignments (both reading and writing) shall address issues of race, class, and gender when appropriate, and the perspectives of women and diverse cultural groups shall be incorporated into course instruction and materials in an inclusive and comprehensive manner whenever possible.

Tutoring: Students whose writing displays serious deficiencies in their control of standard English syntax, grammar, or punctuation will be advised to seek help from the University Writing Center.

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.

“A” work will be well-organized and well-developed, demonstrating a clear understanding and fulfillment of the assignment. It will show the student’s ability to use language effectively and construct sentences distinguished by syntactic constructions at the college level and appropriate to the work’s intended audience and purpose. Such work will be essentially free of grammatical, mechanical, and usage errors. Whether written or oral, “A” work succeeds in communicating ideas clearly and effectively to the target audience.

“B” work will demonstrate abilities in the same categories as “A” work. The chief difference is that “B” work will show notable weaknesses in one of these categories. It may inadequately fulfill parts of the assigned tasks, show less facility of expression and communication, or contain some grammatical, mechanical, usage, or delivery flaws that do not impede clear transmission of meaning.

“C” work will be generally competent and attempt to complete all tasks set by the assignment but show weaknesses in fundamentals, usually development or clarity, with barely enough specific information to illustrate the subject being addressed. The sentence construction, language, and/or delivery may be less effective and correct than “B” work, but will not seriously impede clear transmission of meaning.

“D” work will neglect one of the assigned tasks or directions and be noticeably superficial in development—that is, too brief or simplistic. The work may reveal some problems of development, detail, and/or audience. It will contain grammatical, mechanical, usage, and/or delivery shortcomings that are frequent and/or serious enough to impede clear transmission of meaning.

“F” work shows a disconnection with the course and a lack of understanding of the task and the writing conventions that are being taught. The writing is incoherent and riddled with sentence level errors. It is clear in this essay that the writer is not engaged in the class and/or the assignment.

Letter grades will be translated into the following percentages:

Essay and Course Grades

Grade	Percentage	Grade	Percentage	Grade	Percentage
A+	98-100	B	84-87	C-	70-73
A	94-97	B-	80-83	D+	68-69
A-	90-93	C+	78-79	D	65-67
B+	88-89	C	74-77	F	64-0

The Department of English reaffirms its commitment to the differential grading scale as defined in the official SJSU *Catalog* (“The Grading System”). Grades issued must represent a full range of student performance: A = excellent; B = above average; C = average; D = below average; F = failure. Courses graded according to the A,B,C,NoCredit system shall follow the same pattern, except that NC, for NoCredit, shall replace a C-, D, or F. In A,B,C,NoCredit courses NC shall also substitute for W (for Withdraw) because neither NC nor W affects students’ grade point averages.

In English Department courses, instructors will comment on and grade the quality of student writing as well as the quality of the ideas being conveyed. All student writing should be distinguished by correct grammar and punctuation, appropriate diction and syntax, and well-organized paragraphs. Note: This includes email notes to the instructor!

The Grade

Three Formal Essays (2,000 words each; SLOs 1-4)	45%
Final Exam (800-1200 words; SLOs 1-4)	20%
Three Short Essays (500 words each; SLOs 1-4)	15%
Two In-Class Essays (800-1,000 words; SLOs 2-4)	10%
Homework and Participation (SLO 1)	10%

Formal Essays (15 percent each; 45 percent of overall grade): Critical reading habits are essential to anyone who wants to write well. Consequently, each formal writing assignment will require you to respond to one or more essays from *Patterns for College Writing*, to summarize the arguments you encounter in these essays, and to develop your own claims. Essays will be 3-5 pages long, with 1 inch margins and a 12-point standard font (i.e. Times-New Roman or something similar). In order to receive credit for the essay, you will have to complete a first and final draft, both of which must be submitted electronically to Turnitin.com. I will respond to your

first draft electronically, providing comments and suggestions that you will be able to review at Turnitin.com. Your final draft will get fewer comments from me, but it will receive a letter grade. Important: This graded final draft must include significant revisions. It is not enough to correct mechanical errors; you must also strive to improve the essay's content and organization and to refine its language. In short, even papers that have few errors in grammar, spelling, and punctuation can be made better.

Peer Review (required component of Formal Essay assignments): There will be three peer review sessions this semester. On the class day before the scheduled peer review session, bring three photocopies of your formal essay. Distribute these among your assigned group members. At this time, you will also receive essays from your peers (groups will be no larger than four members). Before the next class, read and evaluate those essays you received in return. I will provide you with an evaluation sheet, but feel free to write comments in the bodies of the essays themselves. During the peer review session, take turns discussing your essays with one another. At this time, you will return the marked up essays to one another, along with the evaluation sheets. Do not lose your peers' marked up essays and evaluation sheets. Not only will they prove helpful during the revision process, but I will require you to submit them to me on the same class when the final draft is due. The only hard copies of your formal essays that you will be submitting to me are your peer reviewed essays.

Two important to keep in mind about Peer Review sessions:

1. You owe it to your peers not to lose marked up copies of your essays. If a group member does not provide you with a review copy of your essay, please let me know.
2. Failure to attend peer review sessions or to participate in them will result in a drop of one letter grade for the formal essay.

Final Exam (20 percent of overall grade): The final exam will consist of an in-class essay in which you will respond to a written prompt. The exam will be administered on Saturday, May 8 at 8 a.m. in location to be announced during the semester. Failure to take the final exam will result in an F in for the course.

Three Short Essays (5 percent each; 15 percent of overall grade): During the first month of the semester, you will write three short essays, each of which will be 500 words long (or at least two pages). The first two short essays will be a consumer review and a letter to the editor. I will provide guidelines for these essays during the second week of class. For your third short essay, you will revise or even rewrite one of your earlier essays – either the consumer review or the letter to the editor. This third short essay will help you develop the ability to evaluate your own work critically. As with your Formal Essays, your three Short Essays must be submitted to Turnitin.com.

Attendance and Participation (10 percent of overall grade): Regular attendance *AND* in-class contributions help me determine whether you've done your required reading. It also fosters a deeper understanding of the text at hand for *all* of us. For this reason you will be expected to come to each class prepared to discuss the assigned reading for the day. Moreover, you should strive to contribute to every class discussion, demonstrating an ability and willingness to listen to myself and your peers as well as the capacity to bring yourself and your experiences to the

reading assignment. If you have difficulty speaking in a classroom setting, please see me as soon as possible.

Two Short In-class Essays (5 percent each; 10 percent of overall grade): To prepare you for the final exam and the particular challenges inherent to in-class essay writing, I have scheduled two in-class essays. Both essays will use old prompts from previous final exams, so I encourage you to use these essays as an opportunity to practice for the final exam.

Classroom Protocol: To help foster a classroom environment in which everyone feels comfortable enough to participate, I will not tolerate blatant displays of disrespect towards your peers or towards me. There are ways to disagree with others respectfully and sincerely. In the unlikely event that anyone should exceed the boundaries of civility, he or she will be asked to leave for the remainder of the class session.

Headphones/Cell Phones/Texting etc. Attendance is both a physical AND mental state of being. Use that nifty gadget at your own risk. I won't interrupt class if I see you engaged in a spirited parley with your little electronic friend. I'll just write it down. Each time I see you texting/surfing/gaming/talking etc., I'll lower your participation grade by one letter grade.

Late Work: Unless you approach me in advance, late papers will be penalized 1/2 letter grade for each day late.

Student Technology Resources

Computer labs for student use are available in the Academic Success Center located on the 1st floor of Clark Hall and 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 digital and VHS camcorders, VHS and Beta video players, 16 mm, slide, overhead, DVD, CD, and audiotape players, sound systems, wireless microphones, projection screens and monitors.

Peer Connections

The Learning Assistance Resource Center (LARC) and the Peer Mentor Program have merged to become Peer Connections. Peer Connections is the new campus-wide resource for mentoring and tutoring. Our staff is here to inspire students to develop their potential as independent learners while they learn to successfully navigate through their university experience. Students are encouraged to take advantage of our 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 WST, improving your learning and memory, alleviating procrastination, surviving your first semester at SJSU, and other related topics. We are located in SSC 600 (10th Street Garage), at the first floor entrance of Clark Hall, and in the

Living Learning Center (LLC) in Campus Village Housing Building B. See the Peer Connections website for more information (peerconnections.sjsu.edu) and be sure to come see us!

SJSU Writing Center

The SJSU Writing Center is located in Room 126 in Clark Hall. It is staffed by professional instructors and upper-division or graduate-level writing specialists from each of the seven SJSU colleges. Our writing specialists have met a rigorous GPA requirement, and they are well trained to assist all students at all levels within all disciplines to become better writers. The Writing Center website is located at <http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter/about/staff/>. Appointments are only made online at the website, one week in advance, and you must bring a printed copy of your paper to the appointment.

Tentative Schedule*

***If any changes to schedule are made, I will notify you at least one class period PRIOR to the change.**

1		Thursday, 8/23
In Class		Introductions
2	Tuesday, 8/28	Thursday, 8/30
In Class	Ungraded diagnostic In-class essay (on topic for portfolio; 500 words)	<i>Patterns for College Writing (PCW)</i> : Ch. 1 Short Essay #1 (Yelp review; SLOs 1-4) due
3	Tuesday, 9/4	Thursday, 9/6
In Class	<i>PCW</i> : Chps. 2 and 3	<i>PCW</i> : Chps. 4 and 5 Short Essay #2 (letter to editor; SLOs 1-4) due
4	Tuesday, 9/11	Thursday, 9/13
In Class	<i>PCW</i> : Ch. 6 Group exercise: sentence imitation.	Introduction to Peer Review: Bring one of your short essays to class for group work (SLOs 1-4).
5	Tuesday, 9/18	Thursday, 9/20
In Class	Bedford: Exercise 8.1 (active verbs)	Short Essay #3 (revised draft; SLOs 1-4) due. Bedford: Exercise 21.1 (subject-verb agreement).
6	Tuesday, 9/25	Thursday, 9/27
In Class	<i>PCW</i> : Ch. 7 Bedford Exercise 20.1 (run-on sentences)	Bedford: Exercise 19.2 (sentence fragments)
7	Tuesday, 10/2	Thursday, 10/4
In Class	First Draft of Formal Essay #1 due (bring enough copies for everyone in your group; SLOs 1-4).	Mandatory Peer Review: Failure to attend will result in a lowering of essay grade by one full letter (SLOs 1-4).
8	Tuesday, 10/9	Thursday, 10/11
In Class	<i>PCW</i> : Ch. 9 Bedford: Exercise 22.1 (pronoun-antecedent)	Revised draft of Formal Essay #1 due (SLOs 1-4). Bedford: Exercise 4.1 (topic sentences).

	agreement).	
9	Tuesday, 10/16	Thursday, 10/18
In Class	PCW: Ch. 10 Bedford: Exercise 2.1 (thesis statements).	Bedford: Exercise 28.1 (verb tense and mood).
10	Tuesday, 10/23	Thursday, 10/25
In Class	PCW: Ch. 11 Bedford: Exercise 9.1 (parallelism).	
11	Tuesday, 10/30	Thursday, 11/1
In Class	In-class Essay #1 (500 words; SLOs 2-4)	First Draft of Formal Essay #2 due (bring enough copies for everyone in your group; SLOs 1-4).
12	Tuesday, 11/6	Thursday, 11/8
In Class	Mandatory Peer Review: Failure to attend will result in a lowering of essay grade by one full letter (SLOs 1-4).	PCW: Ch. 14 Bedford: Exercise 16.1 (word choice)
13	Tuesday, 11/13	Thursday, 11/15
In Class	PCW: Ch. 14, cont. Revised draft of essay #2 due (SLOs 1-4).	PCW: Ch. 14, cont.
14	Tuesday, 11/20	Thursday, 11/22
In Class	No class	Thanksgiving, no classes scheduled
15	Tuesday, 11/27	Thursday, 11/29
In Class	First Draft of Essay #3 due (bring enough copies for everyone in your group; SLOs 1-4).	Mandatory Peer Review: Failure to attend will result in a lowering of essay grade by one full letter (SLOs 1-4).
16	Tuesday, 12/4	Thursday, 12/6
In Class	Grammar Bowl! (Details tba.)	Revised draft of essay #3 due (500 words; SLOs 2-4).

Final Exam: Saturday, December 3, 8 a.m. Failure to take the final exam will result in an F in for the course.