

**San José State University**  
**Department of English and Comparative Literature, English 7:**  
**Critical Thinking, Sections 2 and 4, Spring 2013**

<b>Instructor:</b>	Professor Williams
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<b>Office Hours:</b>	T/R 10:30-11:30
<b>Class Days/Time:</b>	T/R 9:00-10:15 and 13:30-14:45
<b>Classroom:</b>	BBC 128 and Dudley Moorhead Hall 354
<b>GE/SJSU Studies Category:</b>	Qualitative Reasoning (A3)

**Departmental Course Description**

English 7 fulfills the General Education requirements in Qualitative Reasoning (A3). This course integrates the study of reasoning with texts that express the concerns of our diverse culture, so that the student can become aware of, and sensitive to, the role of cultural and individual assumptions in reasoning.

Students will be introduced to the basic concepts of critical thinking: definition of terms, statements of assumptions, the process of inductive and deductive reasoning, distinctions between fact and opinion, use of evidence to support premises, recognition of standards of proof, common fallacies, and misleading logical and rhetorical devices. Students should be especially aware of the role that language plays in persuasive aspects of reasoning. Students will learn these skills of critical thinking by analyzing and discussing culturally oriented readings, which will be a substantial part of the course rather than incidental or supplemental to it.

**University Course Goals and Student Learning Objectives (SLO)**

The goal of this course is to enable students to critically analyze assumptions, evidence, and arguments in a multi-cultural context. The student learning objectives for this course as defined by general education guidelines are as follows:

SLO 1: Students should be able to distinguish between reasoning (e.g. explanation, argument) and other types of discourse (e.g. description, assertion).

SLO 2: Students should be able to identify, analyze, and evaluate different types of reasoning.

SLO 3: Students should be able to find and state crucial unstated assumptions in reasoning.

SLO 4: Students should be able to evaluate factual claims or statements used in reasoning, and evaluate the sources of evidence for such claims.

SLO 5: Students should be able to demonstrate an understanding of what constitutes plagiarism.

SLO 6: Students should be able to evaluate information and its sources critically and incorporate

selected information into their own knowledge base and value system.

SLO 7: Students should be able to locate, retrieve, organize, analyze, synthesize, and communicate information of relevance to the subject matter of the course in an effective and efficient manner.

SLO 8: Students should be able to reflect on past successes, failures, and alternative strategies.

### **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
- Recording lectures
- Student workload

### **Required Texts/Materials**

*Writing Logically, Thinking Critically*, Seventh Edition, Sheila Cooper and Rosemary Patton, Pearson, 2012. ISBN 10: 0-205-11912-3 or ISBN 13: 978-0-205-11912-7.

*Rereading America: Cultural Contexts for Critical Thinking and Writing*, Eighth Edition, Gary Colombo, Robert Cullen, and Bonnie Lisle, Bedford/St. Martin's, 2010. ISBN 10: 0-312-54854-0 or ISBN 13: 978-0-312-54854-4.

Large examination booklets, at least two.

**Recommended Text:** A current, college-level handbook, such as the *Bedford Handbook*.

### **Course Content**

**Writing:** Substantial writing assignments are to be integrated with critical thinking instruction. Writing will lead to the production of argumentative essays, with a minimum of 3000 words required. Students shall receive frequent evaluations from the instructor, with substantive comments that address the quality and form of writing. All writing (essays, homework assignments, in-class assignments, etc.) will be assessed for grammar, clarity, concision, and coherence.

**Reading:** Reading shall include useful models of arguments or position papers about issues of diversity, such as gender, class, ethnicity, and sexual orientation. Readings will also include information on the validity of deductive reasoning, the strength of inductive reasoning, and a consideration of common fallacies in both. Identification and assessment of deductive and inductive reasoning, including formal validity, and fallacies will be assessed.

**Grading:** A-F. See below for more details.

### **Classroom Protocol**

You will be on time to class and stay the entire time. Arriving late or leaving early will result in decreased participation points.

All electronic devices will be turned off and stowed before entering class, unless you have an exception from the DRC. Electronic devices used during class may be confiscated for the class period.

You will bring your book(s) to each class meeting, or you may be asked to leave class.

You will participate in class discussions, exercises, quizzes, and all other classroom activities.

This class focuses on controversial and challenging readings, and while you may disagree with them or your colleagues' opinions, you will respectfully respond to both the readings and your colleagues. There will be no talking or texting while someone else is speaking.

You will come to class prepared to participate, having read the assigned readings for the day, completed any homework, and prepared questions or comments about the assigned readings.

All homework will be assigned in class.

Quizzes and other class activities may not be made up.

If you miss a class, ask a classmate what you missed, including assignments.

If you miss class due to illness, please contact me via email to let me know, and bring a doctor's note when you return to class with any assignments that are/were due.

### **Assignments and Grading Policy**

There will be two essays and three exams for this class. The essays are designed to give you practice in developing your own arguments and responding to the arguments of others. You will follow MLA guidelines for formatting and documentation of your essays, and your writing must demonstrate both an understanding of the principles of critical thinking we are studying and a command of grammar, syntax, paragraphing, and essay form. The exams are designed to assess your understanding of the concepts taught throughout the semester.

**Readings:** All readings must be done prior to coming to class for the day they are assigned. Be prepared to discuss the readings in class, bringing pertinent questions or making helpful comments.

**Essays:** There will be two essays assigned for this class.

- You will receive essay assignments in class, detailing all of the requirements, including due dates and word requirements.
- All essays must be turned in on time, at the beginning of the class on the day they are due. I do not accept emailed or faxed essays.
- Late essays will be accepted only with a written medical excuse or other documentation I deem acceptable; within one week, there will be no penalty.
- The penalty for late essays that are not excused is a 10-point (10%) deduction for each calendar day late.
- Essays will follow MLA guidelines for formatting and citations; failure to follow MLA guidelines will result in point deductions.
- In addition to turning in the hard copy of the essay, essays must be uploaded to [www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com) prior to coming to class on the day they are due. Failure to upload the essay will result in a grade of F.
- Uploading the essay late will result in a 10-point (10%) deduction for each calendar day late.
- Peer-edited essays (when part of the assignment) must be turned in with the final essay or there will be a 10-point (10%) deduction.
- Essays will be graded with a rubric that will be discussed in class prior to the due date. Essays and rubrics will be commented upon and marked to help you improve your writing.

and thinking. It is your responsibility to understand all comments and show improvement in subsequent assignments.

**Please note:** All written work (essays, reader responses, homework assignments) must demonstrate competency in the grammatical, syntactical, and mechanical conventions of Standard English in order to receive a passing grade. In this course, a grammatically, syntactically, and mechanically competent piece of writing is one that contains no more than two errors that impede clear transmission of meaning and does not repeat an error marked on a previous assignment.

**Exams:** There will be three exams for this class. You will receive information in class on what will be covered for each exam with ample time to study. One exam will cover deductive and inductive reasoning. The other two exams will ask you to analyze passages and identify key concepts of critical thinking that have been studied up to that point, including defining key terms in critical thinking and the rhetoric of argument. You will stay in class for the duration of the exam.

There is a 48-hour waiting period to see me about an essay or exam grade.

Keep all of your graded work throughout the semester.

**Workshops:** At least one essay will be workshoped in class prior to the essay due date.

- The workshop protocol will be distributed and discussed in class prior to the first workshop.
- A completed rough draft will be finished prior to the workshop; outlines, incomplete, electronic, and/or handwritten essays are not acceptable.
- Workshops cannot be made up.

**Homework:** There will be homework assigned every week in class or via email.

- All homework must be typed and turned in on time by the due date and will be used for class participation. Handwritten homework will not be accepted.
- Homework cannot be made up without a written medical excuse or other documentation deemed acceptable by me; within one week, there will be no penalty.
- If you miss class, contact another student to get any homework assignments.

**Class Participation:** Your presence in class is necessary for participation. Class participation will be made up of in-class exercises, quizzes, homework assignments, and discussions based on the readings and homework. Class participation is assessed on a point basis. Points are cumulative for the semester, and will be turned into a letter grade by dividing the points earned by the total number of points possible. Points will vary each class period, based on activities. See the scale below for attributes of different grade levels:

- A = Regular, helpful questions and comments; fully engaged; all tasks completed fully, accurately, and demonstrates competent writing;
- B = Occasional, pertinent questions and comments; good listening; all tasks completed, demonstrates competent writing, though may contain a minor error;
- C = Infrequent, tangential questions or comments; attentiveness questionable; most tasks completed, demonstrates fair writing, perhaps including a major error or a few minor errors;
- D = Rare interaction; disengaged from discussion; not prepared for class; tasks incomplete, demonstrates weak writing, including several errors;
- F = Regularly absent, physically or mentally; tasks incomplete or mismanaged, demonstrates weak writing including errors that impede meaning.

In-class activities cannot be made up if you miss a class, regardless of the reason.

There is **no** extra credit for this class.

**Your final grade will be determined as follows:**

Essay #1: Analyzing an argument, 700-800 words	15%
Essay #2: Argument, 1000-1100 words	20%
Exam #1: Deductive and Inductive reasoning, short answers, 100-200 words	5%
Exam #2: Analyzing an argument, defining terms, 400-600 words	20%
Exam #3 (Final): Analyzing and assessing arguments, short answer problems, 600-700 words	30%
Class Participation and homework:	10%

**Grading: A-F**, based on a percent scale: 93-100=A, 90-92=A-, 87-89=B+, 83-86=B, 80-82=B-, 77-79=C+, 73-76=C, 70-72=C-, 67-69=D+, 63-66=D, 60-62=D-, 0=59=F.

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.

**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>. For additional resources and updated information, follow the Writing Center on Twitter and become a fan of the SJSU Writing Center on Facebook.

Because our class focuses on critical thinking in argumentation, clear writing is crucial to your success in this course in all written assignments! Please take advantage of the excellent tutoring available at the Writing Center for all of your writing needs, such as planning, organizing, revising, editing, style, and grammar.

## English 7, Critical Thinking, Spring 2013, Course Schedule

*The instructor reserves the right to modify readings, assignments, and deadlines as necessary. All changes will be communicated in class with ample notice. **Additional readings and all homework will be assigned in class or via email during the course of the semester.***

**Table Course Schedule**

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
1	January 24	Introduction and <u>syllabus quiz</u>
2	January 29	<u>Essay #1 Assignment: Analyzing an Argument, 700-800 words; Analyzing Arguments handout; Writing Logically, Thinking Critically (WLTC): 1-19</u> (thinking and writing) (SLO 1-6)
	January 31	<i>WLTC: 150-56, induction, deduction; Rereading America (RA): 1-15, Introduction</i> (SLO 1-4)
3	February 5	<i>WLTC: 175-87, induction; RA: "Learning Power: The Myth of Education and Empowerment," 109-116, 187-93, Reading Images</i> (SLO 1-4, 6)
	February 7	<i>WLTC: 157-68, class logic</i> (SLO 1-4)
4	February 12	<i>WLTC: 168-73, hypothetical syllogisms</i> (SLO 1-4)
	February 14	Lecture, disjunctive syllogisms (SLO 1-4)
5	February 19	Review Logic; Prepare for Exam (SLO 1-4)
	February 21	<b>Exam #1</b> , Short answers and define terms (SLO 1-4)
6	February 26	<i>WLTC: 20-28, 31-34, 37, inferences, facts, judgments; RA: "From Report of the Massachusetts Board of Education, 1848," 116-26</i> (SLO 1-4, 6-7)
	February 28	<i>WLTC: 51-57, premises, conclusions; RA: "I Just Wanna Be Average," 157-69</i> (SLO 1-4, 6-7)
7	March 5	<i>WLTC: 58-74, ambiguity, assumptions, summaries; RA: "From Social Class and the Hidden Curriculum of Work," 169-86; <u>Workshop Protocol handout</u></i> (SLO 1-8)
	March 7	<i>WLTC: 82-85, 89-91, concession, refutation, sample analysis; RA: "Idiot Nation," 128-47</i> (SLO 1-4, 6-7)
8	March 12	<u>Workshop Essay #1</u> (SLO 1-6, 8); <i>WLTC: 206-08, including sources, avoiding plagiarism</i> (SLO 1-8)
	March 14	<b>Essay #1 DUE</b> ; <u>Essay #2 Assignment: Argument, 1000-1100 words</u> ; <i>WLTC: 75-82, stasis, rhetorical strategy</i> (SLO 1-8)
9	March 18	<i>WLTC: 97-106, 113-115, 117-119, definitions, abstractions, extended definitions; RA: "Still Separate, Still Unequal," 219-37</i> (SLO 1-4, 6-7)
	March 20	<i>WLTC: 106-112, language/meaning; RA: "In the Basement of the Ivory Tower," 238-49</i> (SLO 1-4, 6-8)

<b>Week</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines</b>
10	March 25 March 27	<b>Spring Break—No school all week!</b>
11	April 2  April 4	<i>WLTC</i> : 191-95, language/style; <i>RA</i> : "The Myth of the Melting Pot," 373-78 and "From <i>Notes on the State of Virginia</i> ," 378-84 (SLO 1-4, 6-7)  <b>Exam #2</b> : Argument Analysis, 400-600 words, bring large examination booklets, pens, and a non-electronic dictionary. (SLO 1-8)
12	April 9  April 11	<i>WLTC</i> : 42-50, visual images; <i>RA</i> : "Causes of Prejudice," 384-98 (SLO 1-4, 6-7)  <i>WLTC</i> : 122-31, fallacies; <u>Fallacies handout</u> ; <i>RA</i> : "Loot or Find: Fact or Frame," 422-38 (SLO 1-4, 6-8)
13	April 16  April 18	<i>WLTC</i> : 132-42, fallacies; <i>RA</i> : "The End of White America?," 497-511 (SLO 1-4, 6-8)  <i>WLTC</i> : 142-43, 147-49 analyzing fallacies; <i>RA</i> : "True Women and Real Men: Myths of Gender," 515-20 and "How Americans Understand the Equality of the Sexes," 520-24 (SLO 1-4, 6-8)
14	April 23  April 25	<u>Workshop Essay #2</u> ; <i>WLTC</i> : 86-88, 196-201, coherence, language, grammar, revision (SLO 1-8)  <b>Essay #2 DUE</b> ; <i>RA</i> : "'Two Ways a Woman Can Get Hurt': Advertising and Violence," 575-601 (SLO 1-8)
15	April 30  May 2	<i>RA</i> : "Becoming Members of Society: Learning the Social Meanings of Gender," 527-37 (SLO 1-4, 6-8)  <i>RA</i> : "'Bros Before Hos': The Guy Code," 608-18 (SLO 1-4, 6-8)
16	May 7  May 9	<i>RA</i> : "The Descent of Men," 618-29 (SLO 1-4, 6-8)  Review/Prepare for final (SLO 1-8)
Final Exams:	May 15	<b>Exam #3: Final</b> , Analyze and assess arguments, short answer problems, 600-700 words, bring large examination booklets, pens, and a non-electronic dictionary. (SLO 1-8)  Section 2: Wednesday, May 15, 7:15-9:30  Section 4: Wednesday, May 15, 12:15-14:30