

San José State University
Department of English and Comparative Literature
English 7, Critical Thinking (GE A3), Section 3, Spring 2015

Course Title
**“Local Issues, Global Issues:
Thinking Critically about Our World”**

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Office Hours:	Wednesdays, 12-1 pm and Tuesdays by appointment
Class Days/Time:	M/W 3:00-4:15 pm
Classroom:	BBC 128
Prerequisites:	Passage of English 1A (C or better) or approved equivalent
GE Category:	Written Communication A3

Access to Course Materials on Canvas

Course materials such as syllabus, handouts, assignment instructions, etc., can be found on the Canvas learning management system course website. You are responsible for regularly checking this Canvas messaging system (and your sjsu.edu email account) to learn of any updates or announcements to the Canvas site.

GE A3 Course Description

In critical thinking courses, students will understand logic and its relationship to language. Courses include a series of integrated reading, writing, oral, and research assignments that engage students in complex issues requiring critical thinking and effective argumentation. Students will develop language that distinguishes fact and judgment; articulates elementary inductive and deductive processes; parses fact, assumption and conclusion; integrates rebuttal and qualification as appropriate. Students will develop the ability to analyze, criticize, and advocate complex ideas, reason inductively and deductively, research and rebut information and arguments, and reach well-supported factual conclusions and judgments.

ENGL 1B Course Description

English 7 focuses on the relationship between language and logic in composing arguments. Students develop strategies that incorporate critical reading and thinking skills into the writing process. Drawing on systems of analysis from rhetorical theorists and logicians (for instance, Aristotle, Rogers, and Toulmin, among others), students learn systematic reasoning so that they can lay out premises clearly, provide evidence, and draw valid conclusions. Reading a variety of texts, students study conventions of formal writing as well as textual cues that control the development of logical inferences.

Additional Information Available Online

You are responsible for reading the following information online at <http://www.sjsu.edu/english/comp/policy/index.html>

- Course guidelines
- Academic policies (academic integrity, plagiarism, ADA and AEC policies)
- Estimation of Per-Unit Student Workload
- Recording policies
- Adding and dropping classes

ENGL 7 Section Description

To provide focus and continuity, this class will look at the theme of local issues—social, economic, cultural, and much more—and how they relate to the larger globalized world. Students will read, write, and think critically about local issues that relate to our community at SJSU, the state of California, and America, exploring a variety of perspectives, including personal, cultural, and academic. Learning about the complex infrastructures that link us to others provides ample opportunity for critical thinking, finding connections, and growing as a global citizen—but we must first understand issues close to home, using that knowledge as a lens to understanding issues abroad and how we relate to them. Making such connections is a big part of critical thinking.

Class discussions and homework will explore such questions as “What does it mean to be ‘American’?” “In what ways can I critique my own understanding of the world around me?” “How do the things I see around me relate to other people in other countries?” “In what ways does globalization affect my life and the communities I belong to?” and “What is the future of globalization?” **This course will encourage you to take nothing at face value and question everything to reach your own logical conclusions—that is what critical thinking is. Nothing is ever as simple as it is presented to us; critical thinking requires us to dig deeper and take nothing for granted.**

Topics we cover may include labor, gender issues, human rights, food, capitalism, conflict, and more. In addition to selections from the course texts, we may also look at current news sources and nontraditional narratives, including videos, visual storytelling, and interactive online resources. Perhaps more importantly, group discussions will be an important part of helping you to dig into complex local/global concepts. The world is changing more rapidly than at any point in history, and humans are more connected than ever before. As such, a major goal of this course is to encourage you to consider the world around you from the perspective of a “global citizen”—a resident not only of San Jose, California, or even America, but of an increasingly interconnected world. But don’t forget: this is, first and foremost, a critical thinking class. The global discussions and materials will give you a jumping-off point from which to develop stronger writing and critical thinking skills that you can use in all of your college writing and beyond.

ENGL 7 Learning Outcomes and Course Content

GE A3 Learning Outcomes (GELO): Students will demonstrate, orally and in writing, proficiency in the Area of A3 Learning Objectives. Students will be able to

1. locate and evaluate sources, through library research, and integrate research through appropriate citation and quotation.
2. present effective arguments that use a full range of legitimate rhetorical and logical strategies to articulate and explain their positions on complex issues in dialogue with other points of view.
3. effectively locate, interpret, evaluate, and synthesize evidence in a comprehensive way in support of one's ideas.
4. identify and critically evaluate the assumptions in and the context of an argument.
5. effectively distinguish and convey inductive and deductive patterns as appropriate, sequencing arguments and evidence logically to draw valid conclusions and articulate related outcomes (implications and consequences).

ENGL 7 Course Learning Goals (CLO): Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to

1. discuss complex ideas clearly, logically, persuasively.
2. state a clear position while taking into account other points of view, integrating both qualification and rebuttal as appropriate.
3. identify the different kinds of argument and the kinds of evidence appropriate to each one.
4. integrate research logically and ethically; analyzing, interpreting, synthesizing, and documenting information and ideas gleaned from reliable sources.
5. use appropriate paragraph and essay conventions to organize arguments into clear, readable logical sequences that are both coherent and persuasive.
6. control syntax, grammar, and punctuation to develop prose that is readable, logical, and clear.
7. identify formal argumentative structures (warrants, evidence, qualification, rebuttal, enthymemes and syllogisms) and distinguish common logical fallacies.
8. draw and assess inferences and recognize distinctions among assumptions, facts, inferences, and opinions.

Diversity: SJSU studies include an emphasis on diversity. Students will engage in integrated reading, writing, and oral assignments to construct their own arguments on complex issues (such as diversity and culture, class and social equity) that generate meaningful public debate. Readings for the course will include writers from different ethnicities, gender, and class.

Students will receive frequent evaluations of their writing from the instructor. In keeping with the core goal of A3—understanding the relationship between language and logic—evaluative comments will be substantive, addressing both the logic of the argument and

the quality and form of the writing. Comments will encourage and acknowledge student success as well as note problems and suggest ways to improve.

Logic: Students will learn methods of argument analysis, both rhetorical and logical, that will allow them to

- distinguish denotation from connotation, abstract from concrete, literal from inferential.
- identify logical structures (such as warrants, evidence, qualification, rebuttal; enthymemes and syllogisms) and distinguish common logical fallacies.
- recognize and evaluate assumptions underlying an argument.
- draw and assess inferences and recognize distinctions among assumptions, facts, inferences and opinions.
- distinguish the role of audience, context, and purpose in shaping argumentation strategies.
- evaluate rhetorical appeals to understand the role of emotion and ethos in relation to logic as part of effective argumentation.

Oral: Students will also complete oral communication assignments. These assignments may include individual presentations; group presentations; group, team, or dyadic discussions; debates; and similar speaking events. Evaluative comments for these assignments, addressing issues of both content and presentation, will substantively remark on the logic of the argument as well as the presentation's delivery.

Reading: In addition to being an intensive critical thinking course, ENGL 7 is also a reading course. Readings include useful models of writing for academic, general, and specific audiences; readings are used consistently with the course goal of enhancing ability in written communication and reading. The majority of the reading is devoted to analytical, critical, and argumentative texts. Instructors will help students develop and refine strategies for reading challenging, college-level material.

Research: A3 courses will include a library orientation conducted or approved by a trained librarian to introduce the library and basic research strategies that students will need to complete upper-division coursework, including locating materials, using them effectively (e.g., quoting, paraphrasing, summarizing), and citing them properly. A traditional research paper or a series of short essays informed by library research is required.

Classroom Protocol

Participation: Participation is essential to active learning and to the learning process in general. Participation includes but is not limited to being engaged in small and large group discussions, bringing materials to class, focusing on the task at hand instead of, for example, other classes or your phone, and essentially contributing to the learning process of our discussion-style classroom. Participation will make up a significant portion of your grade. **Any written homework assigned will be counted as part of your overall participation score; if you do not do the homework, it will significantly affect your grade.**

Sensitivity: Because of this course's focus on local and global issues, we will sometimes discuss difficult, polarizing, or controversial issues and concepts. I do not expect you to all have the same perspective on these issues, nor do I expect you to come to the same conclusions I have. What I do expect is that you listen to and respond to differing opinions, from both me and your classmates, with respect and an open mind. Do not disparage other classmates or their ideas; *engage with each other in a productive manner*. This class is a place for open discussion, and we do not have to agree—but we must make an effort to understand each other. Keep an open mind, and you might be surprised how your view of the world changes.

Canvas: You must have access to Canvas to participate in this class. All supplementary readings, videos, etc., that are not in the course textbooks will be posted on Canvas, in addition to copies of assignments, the syllabus, and more. Some weeks, we may not use Canvas at all, but we will rely on it heavily during other weeks. Later in the semester, you may also be expected to post and respond to discussion questions on Canvas. You will need to post materials for your grammar and reading presentations as well. Periodically, I will post important announcements, so please check Canvas frequently. You must print all readings from Canvas and bring them to class the day they are assigned so we can discuss them or have another way to access them in class.

You will turn in all major assignments through Canvas for instructor comments and grading. Canvas will automatically submit assignments to TurnItIn.com to check for plagiarism.

Absences: If you miss a class, contact a classmate to get notes, assignments, etc. It is up to you to show up prepared to the next class session. Please do not ask me to do extra things for you if you miss class. You will not receive participation credit for days you miss unless you inform me before class meets that you are ill or have an extenuating circumstance and make arrangements to complete the class work. You will exchange contact information with other students on the first day of class.

Lateness: If you arrive late to class, you will not receive participation credit for that day. If you leave class early without informing me beforehand, you will also forfeit your participation points. If you must be late or leave early, it is imperative that you let me know beforehand. Do not simply get up and walk out; this is incredibly rude to the instructor and your classmates, and I will call you on it.

Electronic devices: Cell phones, iPods, laptops, tablets, etc. are not allowed in class except to access the required readings. I prefer that you do not use a cell phone, however, unless you have no other means of accessing the material. Otherwise, silence all devices, put them away before class begins, and do not take them out again until class has finished. You will receive no participation credit for the day if you use your devices for anything other than coursework in class.

How to be successful in this course

1. **Completion of all work** is required in order to pass the course.

2. Put effort into your work and **do more than the minimum requirement** for assignments. If you choose to do the absolute minimum amount of work on assignments, do not expect to receive an A. Earning an A on an assignment involves putting additional effort into your work, including close proofreading. If you have difficulty with writing, visit the writing center early and often. The tutors there are amazingly good—Please have your tutor send an email to me outlining what you worked on.
3. **Budget your time.** If you fall behind, the effect on your grade can be dire. Look at the schedule and plan your time so you stay current on the work and know what is expected each week.
4. **Take notes** when you are reading. This will help you with class discussions, in-class activities, and often with your term paper as well.
5. **Ask for help.** Please come by my office hours. I will make appointments with you if my office hours are not workable for you. I am happy to talk to you, and will schedule an alternative time convenient for us both. **I am here to help, I want to help, but I can't help you if you don't ask.**

Course Requirements and Assignments

SJSU classes are designed such that in order to be successful, students are expected to spend a minimum of forty-five hours for each unit of credit (normally three hours per unit per week), including preparing for class, participating in course activities, completing assignments, and so on. More details about student workload can be found in [University Policy S12-3](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-3.pdf) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-3.pdf>.

NOTE: All assignments involving research will use MLA-style citations. All papers will use MLA format, regardless of research content.

In-class Essays: The in-class essay, which will take place later in the semester, will require you to make your own critical assessment of material we have discussed in class. (GELO 2, 3, 4)

Final Cultural Analysis Paper:

This critical paper will involve you choosing an American TV show or film, analyzing its cultural significance, and arguing for the points it makes about what it means to live in America. You will also consider your subject's influence on other parts of the world and pose challenges to the ideas it projects. A peer workshop is part of your grade for this paper—if you do not participate or bring a draft, you will lose 25% of points for this assignment. (GELO 2, 3, 4)

Oral Component:

In addition to the brief, informal presentations and debates that you will participate in throughout the semester, you are also responsible for a formal oral argument that you will present to the class. Each student will have a unique topic, and the presentation will show the same deep level of critical thinking that you will be required to demonstrate in your written work. Along with the oral presentation, you will also submit a formal outline that details your argument. Further details will be provided as the semester progresses.

On the final class meeting, you will have a debate with other classmates in which you are assigned one side of a controversial topic and must argue it persuasively and logically, whether you agree with that side or not. (GELO 2, 4)

Case Analysis: Part of your coursework this semester will include two case analysis papers, where you will make logical assessments, based on critical review of information and arguments available, to “solve” famous mysteries related to the theme of this course. (GELO 2, 3, 4)

In-class Discussion Facilitation: Each class meeting, beginning the third week of the semester, two students will facilitate the discussion for our readings in *Rereading America*. As facilitators, your job is to come up with talking points and follow-up questions that lead the discussion, particularly in regards to critical thinking. Be creative as you try to come up with ways to engage your classmates in a discussion of the readings you are assigned. You will sign up during the second week of class. (GELO 3, 4, 5)

Exams: You will take two comprehensive exams this semester, a midterm and a final exam. Both will require you to be familiar with terms and concepts discussed in class and covered in readings.

Library Liaison for English Courses

Toby Matoush, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Library
(408) 808-2096

Email: Toby.Matoush@sjsu.edu

Website: <http://libguides.sjsu.edu/profile.php?uid=14949>

Required Texts/Readings

Everything's an Argument, Andrea Lunsford, ISBN-10: 145760606; ISBN-13: 9781457606069

Rereading America, Gary Colombo, Robert Cullen, Bonnie Lisle, ISBN: 978-1-4576-0671-7

The New Jim Crow, Michelle Alexander, ISBN: 978-1-59558-643-8

Other Equipment/Materials

Dictionary

Green book for in-class essay

Internet access for Canvas/turnitin.com submissions and class emails

Strongly Suggested

SJSU’s official writer’s handbook, *The Everyday Writer*, by Andrew Lunsford (always available in the Spartan Bookstore). If you are a freshman this year, you received free electronic access to this book in the fall, which does not expire. This book will help with MLA and grammar concerns.

Grading Breakdown

Oral Argument and Formal Outline	10% (100 points)
Case Analysis (x2)	20% (200 points—100 each)
In-class Essay	10% (100 points)
Midterm	10% (100 points)
Final Exam	15% (150 points)
Final Paper	15 % (150 points)
Final Debate	5 % (50 points)
Discussion Facilitation	5% (50 points)
Participation/HW	10 % (100 points)

You can earn up to 1,000 points in this course. Please refer to the point breakdown as outlined below. **The grading breakdown and schedule are subject to change with advance notice.**

930-1,000 points = A (93%-100%)	730-769 points = C (73%-76.9%)
900-929 points = A- (90%-92.9%)	700-729 points = C- (70%-72.9%)
870-899 points = B+ (87%-89.9%)	670-699 points = D+ (67%-69.9%)
830-869 points = B (83%-86.9%)	630-669 points = D (63%-66.9%)
800-829 points = B- (80%-82.9%)	600-629 points = D- (60%-62.9%)
770-799 points = C+ (77%-79.9%)	0-599 points = F (0%-59.9%)

Draft requirement: If you do not turn in a rough draft when specified, or if it is clear that you threw the draft together with little effort, I will automatically deduct 25% from your final draft grade. Treat your first draft as a final paper that you would turn in for a grade.

Late paper grades: With acceptable notice, I will dock one full grade per day that the paper is late, but you will be allowed to turn it in. Otherwise, all papers must be submitted at the beginning of class the day they are due. If you come to class late on a day an essay is due, it will count as late. The same policy counts for late submissions to Canvas/turnitin.com

Note on participation grade: University policy F69-24states that “Students should attend all meetings of their classes, not only because they are responsible for material

discussed therein, but because active participation is frequently essential to insure maximum benefit for all members of the class. Attendance per se shall not be used as a criterion for grading.” However, your grade will suffer if you miss class because you will not be present to complete the participation assignments. I expect you to have done the reading; I expect you to be prepared to contribute at least one comment to the discussion—write down your thoughts beforehand if necessary or refer to your homework.

University Policies

General Expectations, Rights and Responsibilities of the Student

As members of the academic community, students accept both the rights and responsibilities incumbent upon all members of the institution. Students are encouraged to familiarize themselves with SJSU’s policies and practices pertaining to the procedures to follow if and when questions or concerns about a class arises. See University Policy S90–5 at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S90-5.pdf>. More detailed information on a variety of related topics is available in the SJSU catalog, at <http://info.sjsu.edu/web-dbgen/narr/catalog/rec-12234.12506.html>. In general, it is recommended that students begin by seeking clarification or discussing concerns with their instructor. If such conversation is not possible, or if it does not serve to address the issue, it is recommended that the student contact the Department Chair as a next step.

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 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 at http://www.sjsu.edu/provost/services/academic_calendars/. The Late Drop 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 at <http://www.sjsu.edu/advising/>.

Consent for Recording of Class and Public Sharing of Instructor Material

University Policy S12-7, <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-7.pdf>, requires students to obtain instructor’s permission to record the course and the following items to be included in the syllabus:

- “Common courtesy and professional behavior dictate that you notify someone when you are recording him/her. You must obtain the instructor’s permission to make audio or video recordings in this class. Such permission allows the recordings to be used for your private, study purposes only. The recordings are the intellectual property of the instructor; you have not been given any rights to reproduce or distribute the material.”

- It is suggested that the greensheet include the instructor's process for granting permission, whether in writing or orally and whether for the whole semester or on a class by class basis.
- In classes where active participation of students or guests may be on the recording, permission of those students or guests should be obtained as well.
- “Course material developed by the instructor is the intellectual property of the instructor and cannot be shared publicly without his/her approval. You may not publicly share or upload instructor generated material for this course such as exam questions, lecture notes, or homework solutions without instructor consent.”

Academic integrity

Your commitment, as a student, to learning is evidenced by your enrollment at San Jose State University. The [University Academic Integrity Policy S07-2](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S07-2.pdf) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S07-2.pdf> 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/>.

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 requires that students with disabilities requesting accommodations must register with the [Accessible Education Center](http://www.sjsu.edu/aec) (AEC) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/aec> to establish a record of their disability.

Student Resources

Technology Labs

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.



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 <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 on grammar/style assistance: I am also a former senior writing specialist from the SJSU Writing Center and am available during my office hours to offer similar assistance should you find it difficult to get an appointment at the WC. Please be sure to schedule this time with me beforehand so I can prepare any necessary materials.**

SJSU 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. Peer Connections has three locations: SSC, Room 600 (10th Street Garage on the corner of 10th 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 <http://peerconnections.sjsu.edu> for more information.

Accessible Education Center

Effective August 12, 2013, the Disability Resource Center (DRC) will have a new name: the Accessible Education Center. Research of best practices in higher education suggests the removal of the term “disability” from co-curricular programs. The center’s new name incorporates a philosophy of accessible education for students with disabilities without emphasizing their disabilities. The Accessible Education Center or AEC will continue to function as a comprehensive department featuring distinct yet interconnected programs, services, and accommodations aimed at the strategic removal of barriers that inhibit students with disabilities’ full physical and curricular access, co-curricular engagement and learning, and effective communication. The new name reflects the broad scope of attention and support for our students with disabilities and the University’s continued commitment to increasing accessibility and inclusivity on campus. For more information, please contact the office at (408) 924-6000 (voice) or (408) 924-5990 (TTY).

SJSU Counseling Services

The SJSU Counseling Services is located on the corner of 7th Street and San Fernando Street, in Room 201, Administration Building. Professional psychologists, social workers, and counselors are available to provide consultations on issues of student mental health, campus climate or psychological and academic issues on an individual, couple, or group basis. To schedule an appointment or learn more information, visit [Counseling Services website](http://www.sjsu.edu/counseling) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/counseling>.