



ENGL 2: Belief and Doubt
Spring 2019, San José State University

Course: ENGL 2—Critical Thinking and Writing
Prerequisites: ENGL 1A or 1A-F/S with a grade of C- or better; Satisfies GE Area A3: Critical thinking and writing

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“It is only when men begin to
worship that they begin to grow.”

—*President Calvin Coolidge*

“I don't believe in God,
but I'm very interested in Her.”

—*Arthur C. Clarke*

Course Theme

This semester's ENGL 2 course will examine the human phenomena of spirituality. We will examine various facets of spirituality and faith, including:

- What drives humans to believe in something larger than ourselves?
- How do spirituality and faith both simultaneously divide and unite us?
- What is the difference between being spiritual and being religious?
- Can one be moral without being religious?
- What happens when spiritual and secular interests intersect in society?
- How can religion and science coexist?
- Are all religions viewed equally?
- How are those who believe (and those who don't) portrayed in the media?
- What place, if any, should spirituality have in our politics?
- How does our society regard non-believers?
- Does the existence of God need to be proven?

This semester, we will read a diverse assemblage of texts exploring these issues and others. An open mind, and a willingness to express your thoughts, will serve you well in this venture.

Required Texts

Audio:

- *Letting Go of God* by Julia Sweeney (ASIN: B000MM107I)*

Writing guide:

- *The Everyday Writer with Exercises (5th Edition)*—*Special Edition: San José State University* by Andrea A. Lunsford (ISBN: 9781457667121)**

*Available as a digital download from iTunes, Amazon, Audible, and other retailers.

**A free electronic version *The Everyday Writer* is available to all SJSU students via Canvas.

Course Description

ENGL 2 is an introductory writing course that focuses on the relationship between language and logic when composing arguments. Building on the skills acquired in ENGL 1A, you will learn to reason effectively and think rhetorically to invent, demonstrate, and express arguments clearly, logically, and persuasively.

ENGL 2 Learning Outcomes (GELO)

Upon successful completion of the course, you 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. 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. 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 2 Course Content

- Diversity: SJSU studies include an emphasis on diversity. You will engage in integrated reading, writing, and oral assignments to construct your own arguments on complex issues (such as diversity and ethnicity, class and social equity) that generate meaningful public debate. Readings for the course will include writers from different ethnicities, gender, and class.
- Writing: You will write a series of essays informed by research and articulating fully developed arguments about complex issues. Assignments emphasize those skills and activities in writing and thinking that produce the persuasive argument and the critical essay, each of which demands analysis, interpretation, and evaluation. Writing assignments give you repeated practice in prewriting, organizing, writing, revising, and editing. This class requires a minimum of 6,000 words, at least 4,000 of which must be in revised final draft form.
- Logic: You will learn methods of argument analysis, both rhetorical and logical, that will allow you to identify logical structures (such as warrants, evidence, qualification, rebuttal; enthymemes and syllogisms) and distinguish common logical fallacies.
- Reading: In addition to being writing intensive, ENGL 2 is also a reading course. You will read a variety of critical and argumentative texts to help develop your skills for understanding the logical structure of argumentative writing.
- Multimodal: You will be presenting your arguments orally to class both as an individual and as part of a group.

The SJSU Writing Center

The SJSU Writing Center now has two locations:

- Clark Hall, Suite 126: For drop-in tutoring sessions
- Second floor of MLK Library: For regularly scheduled tutoring sessions

As always, 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 at sjsu.edu/writingcenter.

Department Grading Policy

The department's standard grading scheme consists of the following: Requirements for particular assignments will vary, but in all cases essay grades will reflect the paper's effectiveness, which are broken down into three major areas: content (this includes maturity and sophistication of thought), organization, and expression. All assignments, quizzes, and exams are graded on a traditional A-F scale.

The following are the criteria by which essays are typically evaluated in first-year writing courses:

- An "A" essay is organized and well-developed, demonstrating a clear understanding and fulfillment of the assignment, written in a unique and compelling voice. It will show the student's ability to use language effectively with a solid command of grammar, mechanics, and usage.
- A "B" essay demonstrates competence in the same categories as an "A" essay, but it may show slight weakness in one of these areas. It will respond to the topic suitably and may contain some grammatical, mechanical or usage errors.
- A "C" essay will complete the requirements of the assignment, but it will show weaknesses in fundamentals, such as development. It may show weakness in mastery of grammar, mechanics, usage, or voice.
- A "D" essay will neglect to meet all the requirements of the assignment or may be superficial in its treatment of the topic. It may lack development or fail to stay on topic. It may contain grammatical, mechanical, and/or usage errors that interfere with reader comprehension.
- An "F" essay does not fulfill the requirements of the assignment.

The Eauzone

The EauZone (eauzone.blogspot.com) is a centralized location for all assignments, reminders, documents, important dates, links, and general class information. It also contains an easy-to-reference archive of the course work. In addition, this website will be the location of the course's eReader (eR). These Web articles are required to complete some assignments.

On the homepage, click on "ENGL 2: Belief and Doubt" under "Spring 2019 Courses" to be routed to our page. Feel free to use the "Comments" function in each posting; it is often a helpful way to communicate with classmates.

Standards for Presentation of Work

All typed work must be in MLA Style. Please follow this sample heading for all typed work:

Full Name

ENGL 2: Section number

Assignment

At the end of each typed assignment, include the word count. Example:

| Word Count: 741

Course Policies

General:

- I'm happy to call you by whatever name you like, but consistency is key. For example, if your name is John Wilson, but you go by Jack, then you'd use "John (Jack) Wilson" on all assignments.
- Please upload a clear photo to your Canvas and email accounts for easier reference.

Grades and grading:

- I will sometimes make sentence-level corrections to only one page or paragraph of your essay. This is done in an effort to make you a better editor of your own work. You should assume that the corrections I've made are applicable to your entire essay.
- If extra-credit is offered, it will only be once—and likely modest; please stay up-to-date on your assignments.
- There is a participation component to your grade. It could mean the difference between letter grades. To receive all or most of these points, it is important that you actively engage in the classroom experience (e.g. frequently asking questions and/or commenting). Simply attending class is not sufficient to garner full points, as they are based on active participation, not attendance.
- Look on Canvas for your most updated grades.

Assignments:

- All writing assignments are due on the dates indicated on EauZone, which contains the most up-to-date schedule and information.
- Email late assignments no later than the following class after the due date. They will be lowered one letter grade. No assignments will be accepted beyond this point.
- Assignments submitted via email, will be graded per usual, but no hard copy will be returned to you.
- Without prior notification, missed in-class essays and presentations cannot be made up. If you must miss your presentation date, make prior arrangements with a classmate to switch days.
- You will automatically be docked 5 points on your final draft for coming to class on a writer's workshop day without anything to share.
- Unstapled assignments will not be accepted.

Etiquette:

- It is highly disrespectful to sleep in class. If you sleep in class, you may be asked to leave.
- The use of laptops during class is restricted to note taking only—absolutely no social media during class time.
- If you come to class after the first 15 minutes, please wait for an appropriate moment to enter so as not to disturb the class.

Email:

- Indicate your section number in the subject line, or somewhere in the body. This helps me reply to your email in a timelier manner.
- Google Docs users: PLEASE REMEMBER TO GRANT ME PERMISSION TO EDIT IT BEFORE YOU SHARE. Otherwise, I have to request permission to edit your document, lengthening the process.
- Email me individually rather than as a reply to a group message because I can easily miss these responses.
- Due to the high volume of email I receive daily, it may take me a day (or more) to respond.
- Unless it affects an in-class essay or presentation, there is no need to contact me if you miss class.
- If you are absent, please do not message me to ask what you missed. You should have the contact information of at least two other classmates. They should be able to fill you in on any relevant information. If you still have a question, then feel free to contact me.

Notes on Writing about Religion

Traditionally, Western writers have followed specific rules when writing about religion. Here are some general rules to take note of when writing about religious issues:

- Capitalize “god” when used as a proper noun (e.g. “By his mid-twenties, Zach had fully devoted himself to God.”)
- Do not capitalize “god” or “gods” when writing in general terms: “Ares was the Greeks’ god of war.”
- The names of deities or major spiritual figures are always capitalized (e.g. Allah, Jesus Christ, Isis, Buddha).
- Traditionally, pronouns referencing Christianity’s God are capitalized as a sign of respect (e.g. “God, in His divine wisdom, ordered Moses to ...”). However, MLA does not follow this. Additionally, non-religious writers may object to this practice. For the purposes of this course, adherence to this particular tradition is optional.
- Capitalize the name of Christianity’s most sacred text, the Bible—but it should not be italicized.
- Other sacred religious texts are also always capitalized (e.g. the Torah, the Vedas), but not italicized.
- When “biblical” is used as an adjective (e.g. “in biblical times”), it is written with a lowercase b, except when it is used as the first word in a sentence (e.g. “Biblical cities typically ...”).
- Islam’s most sacred text is properly spelled as the “Qur’an,” but “Koran” and “Quran” are also acceptable.
- Customarily, historical dates in the West were based upon a system in which Jesus’ year of birth was marked as Year One; anything before that was BC (Before Christ) and anything after that was AD (Anno Domini). Having adopted a more multicultural view of history, contemporary writers now use BCE (Before Common Era) and CE (Common Era). Thus, Julius Caesar was assassinated in 44 BCE, while Columbus reached the New World in CE 1492. Use these contemporary designations for the purposes of this class.

Editing Marks Guide

Here is a guide to some of the editing symbols (some standard, some my own) you'll be seeing on your papers this semester.

Symbol	Meaning	Symbol	Meaning	Symbol	Meaning
^	Insert	Ⓚ	Delete	SP	Spelling
↑	Text is likely not properly double-spaced	2x	Double-space	SV	Subject-verb agreement
→	Indent 1x	AWK	Awkward phrasing; reword	T	Tone
→ →	Indent 2x	CS	Comma splice	TC	Title case
+	Good point	FRAG	Fragment	TNR	Times New Roman font
?	Meaning unclear	ITL	Either add or remove italics	TRANS	Transition
#	Add space	HEAD	Issue with page header	UL	Underline
" "	Add quotation marks	PASS	Passive voice	WC	Word choice
//	Faulty parallelism	RO	Run-on sentence		
¶	Start new paragraph	SLANG	Slang		

Course Work

Class sessions will employ a combination of lectures, group discussions, presentations, and writing workshops that will cover a range of activities, including analyzing, interpreting, outlining, revising, and editing.

All out-of-class essays should:

- Be in MLA Style (typed, 12-pt font, etc.)
- Be approximately 750 words*
- Include a works cited page—unless otherwise noted

Additionally, you may be asked to submit a supplemental paragraph illustrating the process by which you completed an assignment.

**One typed page in MLA Style is approximately 250 words; one handwritten page is approximately 200 words.*

Your semester's course work is comprised of:

Assignment	Description	GELO	Word Count	Revised or Workshopped	In-class	Point Value
<i>Diagnostic</i>	This in-class essay will be my first opportunity to evaluate your writing.	2-4	400		✓	N/A

<p><i>The Toulmin Method</i></p>	<p>Using the Toulmin Method, we will investigate whether or not religious institutions should have to pay taxes.</p>	<p>2-5</p>	<p>400</p>		<p>✓</p>	<p>20</p>
<p><i>Burke's Dramatistic Pentad</i></p>	<p>By means of Kenneth Burke's Dramatistic Pentad, you will analyze the rhetoric behind three scenes about people's interactions with spirituality.</p>	<p>2-5</p>	<p>750</p>			<p>20</p>
<p><i>The Rogerian Argument</i></p>	<p>Your Rogerian Argument, will illustrate the current debate over religious freedom in the United States, Specifically, how the issue pertains to which customers a business may choose to serve. This assignment will take the form of an infographic.</p>	<p>1-4</p>	<p>400</p>	<p>✓</p>		<p>20</p>
<p><i>The Aristotelian Appeals</i></p>	<p>Utilizing Aristotle's Modes of Persuasion, you will write a series of short answer responses to Julia Sweeney's <i>Letting Go of God</i>.</p>	<p>2-5</p>	<p>750</p>		<p>✓</p>	<p>20</p>

<i>Final Research Project</i>	You and up to two partners will explore the representation of spirituality in a major television show. Your findings will be summarized in a 15-slide multimedia presentation.	1-5	2,000	✓	40
<i>English Department Assessment</i>	This department-wide assessment will ask you reflect on your growth as a rider in ENGL 2.	2-5	400		20
<i>Reflections</i>	You will write six 2-page reflections on a variety of religion-related topics.	2-4	3,000		60 (6x10)
<i>Flash Multimedia Presentation</i>	You will present a 5-minute multimedia presentation (e.g. PowerPoint, Keynote) based upon a religion-related topic.	1-5	250		20
<i>Participation</i>	Note that points are garnered not by attendance, but by active participation in class.				10
Approximate word count: 8,350		Point total: 230			

Final Grade Calculations:

A+	230-225	B+	205-202	C+	182-179
A	224-213	B	201-190	C	178-167
A-	212-206	B-	189-183	Non-passing	166-0

**You must provide your own laptop. Macs will require an Apple-specific adaptor (Thunderbolt, Lightning, etc.) to connect to the university's projection system. Also, some newer PC models, those with HDMI-only connections, may also require special adaptors.*

***At least 167 points must be earned to receive course credit.*

Course Schedule

This schedule is subject to change. Always consult EauZone for the most up-to-date information and schedule. Consider any hard copy of this syllabus to be only a rough guide and immediately out-of-date.

Key:

DB (Dropbox)

ER (eReader)

LETTING (*Letting Go of God*)

Notes:

- Unless otherwise noted, all assignments, including in-class essays, are due or take place on Thursdays.
- Look for any assignments worth points (in or out of class) to be to be CAPITALIZED and bolded below.

Calendar:

Week 1: Hinduism

Thu 1.24

Class: Syllabus review

Week 2: Shinto

Tue 1.28/Thu 1.31

Class: Introductions; Lecture—"Building a Better Multimedia Presentation: An Annotated Look," "You're in College Now: The New Rules of University Writing," "MLA Style 101"

Due: **REFLECTION 1**

Week 3: Mormonism

Tue 2.4/Thu 2.6

Class: **DIAGNOSTIC ESSAY**; Presentation sign-ups

Week 4: Islam

Tue 2.12/Thu 2.14

Read: eR—"Why Churches are the Gold Standard of Tax-Exempt Organizations" (Forbes), "A Case for Why Churches Shouldn't be Taxed" (Colorado Springs Independent), "Why Don't Churches Pay Taxes?" (Los Angeles Times), "We Should be Taxing Churches" (Slate)

Class: Reading discussion; Lecture—"Inside the Toulmin Method"

Due: **REFLECTION 2**

Week 5: Hellenism

Tue 2.19/Thu 2.21

Class: **TOULMIN METHOD**; Reading discussion; Multimedia presentations; Lecture—"Inside the Narrative: Burke's Dramatistic Pentad"

Week 6: Buddhism

Tue 2.26/Thu 2.28

Read: Online, find two pro-religious freedom and two anti-religious freedom articles—have these ready for class

Class: Reading discussion; Multimedia presentations; Lecture—"Infographics 101"

Due: **DRAMATISTIC PENTAD**

Week 7: Christianity

Tue 3.5/Thu 3.7

Read: eR—"The 100 Best Infographics" (Creative Bloq), "10 Tips for Designing Better Infographics" (DotDash), "12 Warning Signs that Your Infographic Sucks" (Visme)

Class: Reading discussion; Multimedia presentations; Writers workshop

Due: **ROGERIAN ARGUMENT (DRAFT 1; BRING 2 HARD COPIES OR AN ELECTRONIC VERSION)**

Week 8: Kemetism

Tue 3.12/Thu 3.14

Class: Reading discussion; Multimedia presentations; Guest speaker (TBA)

Due: **ROGERIAN ARGUMENT (FINAL DRAFT; EMAIL BY 5 PM)**

Week 9: Atheism

Tue 3.19/Thu 3.21

Class: Reading discussion; Multimedia presentations; Guest speaker (TBA)

Due: **REFLECTION 3 AND 4**

Week 10: New Ageism

Tue 3.26/Thu 3.28

Listen: LETTING—0:00-2:06:30

Class: Reading discussion; Multimedia presentations; Lecture—"Understanding Aristotle's Modes of Persuasion"

Week 11: Catholicism

Tue 4.2/Thu 4.4

NO CLASS: SPRING BREAK

Week 12: Wicca

Tue 4.9/Thu 4.11

Read: EVICT—Ch. 24: Can't Win for Losing - Epilogue: Home and Hope

Class: Multimedia presentations; Library research session (Details TBA)

Due: **ARISTOTELIAN APPEALS**

Week 13: Evangelicalism

Tue 4.16/Thu 4.18

Class: Multimedia presentations; Writers workshop

Due: **RESEARCH PROJECT OUTLINE (BRING 2 HARD COPIES); REFLECTION 5**

Week 14: Scientology

Tue 4.23/Thu 4.25

Class: Multimedia presentations; Writers workshop

Due: **RESEARCH PROJECT (DRAFT 1—BRING ELECTRONIC VERSION); REFLECTION 6**

Week 15: Judaism

Tue 4.30/Thu 5.2

Class: Multimedia presentations; Writers workshop

Due: **RESEARCH PROJECT (DRAFT 2—BRING ELECTRONIC VERSION)**

Week 16: Rastafarianism

Tue 5.7/Thu 5.9*

Class: Multimedia presentations; Writers workshop; Course review

Due: **RESEARCH PROJECT (FINAL DRAFT—EMAIL BY 5 P.M.)**

**Final class meeting of the semester*

Week 17: Zoroastrianism (Finals week 1)

Tue 5.14/Thu 5.16

NO CLASS

Week 18: Indigenous Pacific Islander Religions (Finals week 2)

Final exam meeting time

Tue 5.21: 9:45-12:00 p.m. (Location TBD)

Class: **ENGLISH DEPARTMENT ASSESSMENT (SUBMIT VIA CANVAS BY 5 P.M.)**

