

**San José State University**  
**Department of English & Comparative Literature**  
**ENGL 1A, Section 11: First-Year Writing Composition**

*Oscar-winning screenwriter, novelist Dalton Trumbo* ↴

**Course and Contact Information**

Instructor: Ryan H. Smith [he/him]  
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Office Hours: M/W 2:00PM-3:00PM (and  
by appointment.)  
Class Day/Time: M/W 3:00PM-4:15PM  
Classroom: Boccardo Business Center 121  
Prerequisites: Reflection on College Writing  
GE/SJSU Studies Category: GE Area A2 Written Communication I



**Course Format**

This course meets on campus, in-person. I will use Canvas, the SJSU Learning Management System, to publish instructional materials, agendas, readings, activities, and assignments. In Canvas, you will submit your drafts, assignments, and reading responses with peer responses. Because of this, you will need regular access to the Internet, a computer, as well as your SJSU email account.

To produce and share your work, you will need software that allows you to save files as .doc, .docx, or .pdf. Canvas gives you access to Google docs for collaborations, as well as presentation software. Canvas includes video and audio recording abilities with Studio. If you need help to access these technologies, please contact the Student Technology Service Desk.

As a student, you are entitled to free access to Microsoft Office, so visit [this link to the Microsoft Office 365 website](#) if that is something you need (you must use your SJSU email, which you can access by visiting [this link to the most popular one.SJSU applications](#) and then by clicking on “My Email G Suite”).

**Course Management Page and MYSJSU Messaging**

Course materials such as syllabus, handouts, notes, assignment instructions, etc. can be found on the Canvas course website, which you can access by clicking on [this link here](#). Log in and look for “SP22: ENGL-1A Sec 11 - First Year Writing” among the courses in your dashboard. I will use Canvas messaging and announcements to update you, so it is your responsibility to check regularly for emails from me via Canvas. They will populate in your sjsu.edu email account (which you will need to set-up access for), in your Canvas inbox, and in any other email you link in Canvas.

## **ENGL 1A - Course Description**

### *ENGL 1A*

First Year Writing is an introductory writing course that will help you understand the writing process and the goals, dynamics, and genres of written communication. Through interpretation and analysis of texts, you will learn to think clearly and write effectively as you give form and coherence to complex ideas. You will explore writing for various audiences and rhetorical situations.

### *Section 11*

But what about those situations? Well, everyday we all have exchanges of ideas and voice, and those interactions can be communicated in a variety of ways. You’ve probably sent a tweet before. Maybe you’ve performed at a cafe for the new EP you just dropped. Perhaps you enjoy discussing the latest athletic event and the merits of the judging system. All fun things. But have you also driven by a billboard? Or watched a political debate? How about painfully struggled through the 30-second ad during your favorite show on [insert streaming service]? Each of those situations uses rhetoric to try and convince someone of something. And it all starts with writing.

In this course, we’re going to examine how different audiences require different writing styles, tonality, verbiage, and how context can morph when multimodal elements are part of the writing experience. By exploring media, professional rhetoric, argumentation, and systems you’ll become familiar with here at SJSU, you’ll begin to have a better understanding of what rhetoric is, as well as what and how writing affects it. The goal of this course is to help you develop your voice, and also to articulate it effectively and persuasively by understanding the rhetorical situation of audience, purpose, and context, and by using the rhetorical strategies you learn and observe from others.

## **Required Readings and Materials**

*On Writing Well: The Classic Guide to Writing Nonfiction*, 30th Anniversary Edition by William Zinsser. ISBN 9780060891541 (Available for purchase online or [free with account sign-up here](#).)

Supplemental articles, readings, etc. (available through Canvas/online, unless otherwise noted.)

A laptop or computer with internet connectivity. (Laptops and iPads may be checked out from the [SJSU Student Computing Service](#) at no cost.)

Writing utensils and college ruled paper.

## GE & Course Learning Outcomes (GELO & CLO)

Upon successful completion of this GE course, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate the ability to read actively and rhetorically.
2. Demonstrate the ability to perform the essential steps in the writing process (prewriting, organizing, composing, revising, and editing) and demonstrate an awareness of said performance.
3. Articulate an awareness of and write according to the rhetorical features of texts, such as purpose, audience, context, and rhetorical appeals.
4. Demonstrate the ability to integrate their ideas and those of others by explaining, analyzing, developing, and criticizing ideas effectively in several genres.
5. Demonstrate college-level language use, clarity, and grammatical proficiency in writing.

## Determination of Grades

### *Grading, Late Policy, and Missed Work*

This course must be passed with a C- or better, as a CSU graduation requirement. This is a course with assignments totaling 100%, following the standard A-F scale. You must submit all work on time. Any unexcused late work will be graded down a full letter grade, after the announced deadline has passed. If there is a reason you cannot make a deadline (because life happens) contact me **BEFORE THE DEADLINE**, so that we may mitigate the situation.

Misuse of these policies by any one student will result in having this option removed for all students. Extra credit may be offered at various points throughout the semester at my discretion, but you should not rely on extra credit or assume it will be offered. (So don't ask!) **All proposed regular assignment deadlines will be Mondays at 2:59 PM PT (unless otherwise indicated) with work uploaded to Canvas.** Deadline dates and times are subject to change, but I will notify the class of any proposed changes in advance.

94-100 % = A	84-86 % = B	74-76 % = C	64-66 % = D	
90-93 % = A-	80-83 % = B-	70-73 % = C-	60-63 % = D-	
87-89 % = B+	77-79 % = C+	67-69 % = D+	59 % or less = F	

## Course Requirements, Time Commitments, & Assignments

Success in this course 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.

ENGL 1A is a 3-unit course. That means we are signing up to do a minimum of 9-hours of study per week just for this class. 2½ hours will be class time. The remaining 7½ hours a week, you will work on your own or with your peers to prepare for class and complete reading and writing assignments. This class requires a minimum of 8,000 words, at least 4,000 of which must be in revised final draft form. I have designed the work using this math to guide us. I will refer to it often to help you manage this workload over the semester.

**Media Report:** Media of your choosing (possible presentation) - 20% (GELO 2, 4, 5)

Choose an example of a written medium (film, song, poem, novel, autobiography, short story, graphic novel, newspaper column, etc.) and write a 3-page report. What about the writing works for you? How has it influenced works within and outside its medium? How does the work influence your own writing?

**Critical Essay:** Research and Argumentative essay with annotated bibliography (possible presentation) - 25% (GELO 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)

Choose an example of rhetoric and write a 4-page report, plus annotated bibliography (3-source minimum.) Who is the intended audience? Does the source effectively or ineffectively accomplish its goal from an audience perspective? How could the example rhetoric have been improved?

**Persuasive Writing:** Cover letter, CV/Resume, etc. - 15% (GELO 2, 3, 5)

Explore good (and bad!) examples of cover letters and resumes. Organize your experiences, skills, and accomplishments, as you learn how to write about and market yourself in a professional setting - often times, before you even know the audience.

**In-class writings:** Selection of writings from prompts given in class - 10% (GELO 5)

Students will engage in writing activities in response to prompts given in class (no make-ups). You will also participate in peer review activities.

**Course reflection:** Argue that you have developed an understanding of the course's learning goals (specifically GELO 2) and have developed strategies for working toward those goals. Also, how has your understanding changed of writing as fundamentally contextual (ie. different audiences require different writing styles)? Approx. 500-600 words.

**Workshops** - 15% (GELO 2, 4)

Small groups and entire class workshops will provide focused critique and analysis of existing works, mediums, and students' proposed writing projects.

**Reading Responses** - 10% (GELO 1)

Students will summarize weekly readings, reflect on readings as they pertain to their own writing experience, and ask two questions they have about that week's readings (approx. 150-words). Students will then respond to two classmates' posts (approx. 150-words each).

**Class participation** - 5%

Discussions, peer reviews of presentations, attendance.

**SJSU Resources**

The University provides all students several resources to help you successfully learn in this course. The services provided include counseling and psychological care, mentoring and tutoring, access to food and housing, to technology, and writing support. Please visit the links below for more information about these services.

- [Accessible Education Center](#)
- [Counseling and Psychological Services \(CAPS\)](#)
- [Information Technology](#)
- [Peer Connections](#)
- [SJSU Cares](#)
- [Spartan Food Pantry](#)
- [Student Technology Resources](#)
- [Student Wellness Center](#)
- [Writing Center](#)

### **SJSU Library**

Our library liaison is [Peggy Cabrera](#). She is available to help you find resources to do your work in this course. She has set up for students a [library resource page for the Department of English and Comparative Literature](#). The tutorials on this page will help you to understand academic research processes and tools, and they will help you to develop an eye for the most valuable resources for your work.



### **Classroom Protocol**

While engaging with peers and assignments, students are to be respectful of the unique characteristics and qualities that make each of us who we are. In class, discussion is welcome and encouraged, but comments found to be intentionally offensive, disrespectful, or combative are not allowed. Likewise, in-class discussions, texts/readings/viewings, and projects/activities may include materials that can be contentious and even potentially upsetting to you or others. We may encounter materials that differ from and perhaps challenge our ideas, beliefs, and understanding of reality. Students are encouraged to discuss issues about such materials with me. If for any reason such material causes you alarm, I encourage you to speak with me directly at your earliest convenience.

Additionally, any student that needs accommodations or assistive technology due to a disability should work with the [Accessible Education Center \(AEC\)](#), and the instructor. If you have special needs or accommodations requests, see me as soon as possible. Failure to do so may result in interruption or slowing of accommodations process.

### **CSU COVID-19 Vaccine Requirement and Protocol**

On July 27, 2021, the [California State University \(CSU\) announced](#) that students, faculty and staff must be vaccinated by September 30 against COVID-19 if they are accessing campus facilities at any university location across the 23 campuses, regardless of FDA approval of the available vaccines

approved for emergency use. Students may contact the [SJSU Student Health Center](#) at 408-924-6122 with questions.

Additionally, at SJSU, all booster-eligible students who are registered for hybrid or in-person classes are required to update their vaccination status and upload a record of their booster shot by January 31, 2022. To remain in compliance with the CSU COVID-19 Policy, you must upload a record of your booster shot when eligible. Students who are not in compliance will be subject to disciplinary action under the Student Code of Conduct including testing protocols, registration holds, and limited access to campus resources. More information about boosters and required documentation can be found [here](#).

You can submit documentation for a medical or religious exemption. If you are granted a medical or religious exemption, you will be subject to mandatory testing protocols, as well as masking requirements. If there are health-related reasons why a student cannot wear a mask, please contact the Accessible Education Center immediately.

**Please note:** Because of these new campus guidelines, eating will not be permitted inside the classroom at any time. Drinking water will be allowed in the classroom if students have their own personal water bottle with a lid and straw, so as to prevent spilling and contamination. Students are required to wear their mask throughout the entire class period and while inside all university buildings.

### **University Policies**

Per [University Policy S16-9](#), 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 [Syllabus Information web page](#). Make sure to visit this page to review and be aware of these university policies and resources.

Students are prohibited from recording class activities (including class lectures, office hours, advising sessions, etc.), distributing class recordings, or posting class recordings. Materials created by the instructor for the course (syllabi, lectures and lecture notes, presentations, etc.) are copyrighted by the instructor. This university policy (S12-7) is in place to protect the privacy of students in the course, as well as to maintain academic integrity through reducing the instances of cheating. Students who record, distribute, or post these materials will be referred to the Student Conduct and Ethical Development office. Unauthorized recording may violate university and state law. It is the responsibility of students that require special accommodations or assistive technology due to a disability to notify the instructor.

### **What Are Our Classroom Expectations?**

For a class like this one, much of the learning happens in class. Before we dive into our course content, we need clear expectations of our learning community. What are some past classroom norms and/or policies you found productive, supportive, and positive in the past? From these ideas, we can better guide a policy together for our class.

Please see “Introductory Survey” under Assignments tab in Canvas.

### **English 1A, Section 11, Spring 2022, Tentative Course Calendar**

This schedule is subject to change. Advanced notice will be given on Canvas and/or in class. Look to Canvas for the most updated course schedule and information regarding the readings, assignments, etc.

OWW = ON WRITING WELL

WEEK	DATE	Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
1	26	HELLO!

<b>UNIT 1</b>	January	<b>In class:</b> Introductions, syllabus, Canvas - all the fun stuff! <b>For next class, READ:</b> OWW: Introduction, chp. 21; Canvas site
2	31 January ----- 2 February	<b>DUE:</b> Update Canvas account; Introductory survey <b>In class:</b> Discuss reading #1; our writing experiences. ----- <b>In class:</b> Writing exercise; What exactly is Media? <b>For next class, READ:</b> OWW: chps. 1, 2, 3, 7
3	7 February ----- 9 February	<b>DUE:</b> Reading Response #2 <b>In class:</b> Writing exercise; How does media context change over time? ----- <b>In class:</b> Writing exercise; Rhetoric: How to effectively communicate your point and get the audience's attention. <b>For next class, READ:</b> OWW: chp. 10
4	14 February ----- 16 February	<b>DUE:</b> Reading response #3 <b>In class:</b> Writing exercise; Databases and search engines: How and where to source information; MLA format ----- <b>In class:</b> Writing exercise; Brainstorming ideas for Media Report <b>For next class, READ:</b> OWW: chps. 24, 25
5 <b>UNIT 2</b>	21 February ----- 23 February	<b>DUE:</b> Reading response #4 <b>In class:</b> Library Tour??? ----- <b>DUE:</b> Idea draft for Media Report, including 2 resources <b>In class:</b> Writing exercise; Pitch ideas for Media Report <b>For next class, READ:</b> OWW: chps. 11, 23
6	28 February ----- 2 March	<b>DUE:</b> Reading response #5 <b>In class:</b> Writing exercise; Pitch ideas for Media Report ----- <b>In class:</b> Writing exercise; Small group or class workshop <b>For next class, READ:</b> OWW: chp. 17
7	7 March ----- 9 March	<b>DUE:</b> Reading response #6 <b>In class:</b> Writing exercise; Small group or class workshop ----- <b>In class:</b> Writing exercise; Small group or class workshop <b>For next class, READ:</b> OWW: chp. 18
8	14 March ----- 16 March	<b>DUE:</b> Reading response #7; Media Reports <b>In class:</b> Writing exercise; Media Report presentations ----- <b>In class:</b> Writing exercise; Media Report presentations <b>For next class, READ:</b> OWW: chp. 19; Mid-semester survey

9 UNIT 3	21 March	<b>DUE:</b> Reading response #8; Mid-semester survey <b>In class:</b> Writing exercise; What’s an Annotated Bibliography and why is it useful?; Selection of Argumentative idea
	23 March	<b>In class:</b> Writing exercise; Style and What’s the point of arguing? <b>For next class, READ:</b> OWW: chps. 4, 5
10	28 March 30 March	<b>Spring Break</b> - Enjoy the long week off!
11	4 April	<b>DUE:</b> Reading response #9; Idea draft for Argumentative essays: What point are you arguing? <b>In class:</b> Writing exercise; Audience and Context
	6 April	<b>In class:</b> Writing exercise; “Writing is rewriting”: What does that mean? <b>For next class, READ:</b> OWW: chps. 6, 8
12	11 April	<b>DUE:</b> Reading response #10 <b>In class:</b> Writing exercise; Small group or class workshop
	13 April	<b>In class:</b> Writing exercise; Small group or class workshop
13	18 April	<b>DUE:</b> Research & Argumentative essays <b>In class:</b> Writing exercise; Research & Argumentative presentations
	20 April	<b>In class:</b> Writing exercise; Research & Argumentative presentations <b>For next class, READ:</b> OWW: chps. 9, 12
14 UNIT 4	25 April	<b>Due:</b> Reading response #11 <b>In class:</b> Writing exercise; Workplace and professional rhetoric
	27 April	<b>In class:</b> Writing exercise; Examine sample CV/Resumes <b>For next class, READ:</b> OWW: chps. 14, 16
15	2 May	<b>DUE:</b> Reading response #12; Draft of CV/Resume <b>In class:</b> Writing exercise
	4 May	<b>In class:</b> Writing exercise; Bad CV/Resumes, Cover letters <b>For next class, READ:</b> OWW: chps. 20, 22
16	9 May	<b>DUE:</b> Reading response #13 <b>In class:</b> Writing exercise; Guest speaker???
	11	<b>DUE:</b> Draft cover letter and resume

	May	<b>In class:</b> Writing exercise; class workshop
17	16 May	<b>In class:</b> Writing exercise; Mock interviews <b>For next class, READ:</b> End of semester survey
<b>FINAL</b>	24 May	<b>DUE:</b> Final Portfolio, including reflection - upload to Canvas. End of semester survey. Final Exam (12:15PM-2:30PM, technically)



“If you have anything worth saying, say it completely.” -RHS