

Dr. Mostafa Jalal  
San José State University  
Class: English 1A-38  
Course Number: 30998  
Spring Semester 2022  
Clark Building 234  
TR 3:00-4:15pm

Department of English and Comparative  
Literature  
Office: Faculty Office Building 224  
Office Hours: T 11:00am-1:00pm, and by  
appointment  
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## English 1A American Literary Renaissances

### Course Description:

This course of first-year writing is an introduction to academic rhetorical analysis and writing skills through an exploration of unique and varying perspectives on American literary renaissances. “Renaissance” means a rebirth—a reawakening. How do we define and understand this in context to American literary culture? How can we ascertain and determine periods of American Renaissance? Moreover, what can we learn from studying them? This class explores the intellectual and cultural revolutions that have occurred in American literature since its foundation. By voyaging through canonical and non-canonical texts by notable authors such as Emerson, Thoreau, Poe, Whitman, Dickinson, Frost, Stevens, Eliot, Roethke, Sexton, and Plath, students will gain a comprehensive understanding of the inception and evolution of high art and philosophy that has shaped the creation and definition of American identity.



Alfred Bierstadt, “Looking Down Yosemite Valley, California”

Through an active practice of writing modes, students will develop the critical thinking and writing skills designed for English 1A and will become proficient in effectively writing and revising original work. This course will largely focus on critical readings, discourse, and clear, cohesive writing. We will learn how to encounter and enter these critical texts, discuss how and why they are written, and write effective, logical, and well-composed essays that respond to the theses presented by these authors. We will discover the fundamentals of writing, the rhetorical situation, and the mechanics of forming organized and thorough essays. Thinking critically and writing are cornerstones of academic knowledge, and we will learn the skills of rhetorical analysis and the writing process, including revision, as we practice reading critically and thinking comprehensively about our place and purpose by understanding elegant literature. We will learn the fundamentals of writing in an elevated setting—and, perhaps most importantly, we will deliberately aim to discover how to write beautifully.



At the end of this course, students will have gained a further understanding of American Literary Renaissances, its influences on, and places in, English texts, and its role in providing varying perspectives to those who seek larger answers. We will aim to consider these elements as we sharpen our analytical and authorial skills in our own expedition of becoming better academic readers and writers.

**Course Catalog Description:**

ENGL 1A 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.



**Faculty Web Page and Canvas Messaging:**

Course materials such as syllabus, handouts, notes, and assignment instructions can be found on the Canvas learning management system course website. You are responsible for checking the messaging system through MySJSU to learn of any updates.

**GE Learning Outcomes (GELO):**

ENGL 1A Learning Outcomes (GELO)

Upon successful completion of the course, you will be able to

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

**Course Requirements and Assignments:**

SJSU classes are designed such that in order to be successful, it is expected that students will 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 at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-3.pdf>.

**Reading:**

English 1A is a reading intensive course, and you will be required to complete reading assignments frequently. Reading is a crucial component of the class, as one must read effective writing to become an effective writer. All reading must be completed by the beginning of each class period. Many of our in-class activities and major assignments will relate to the assigned selections. In addition, you must submit reader responses, which will be turned in periodically throughout the semester (as noted on the schedule).

**Writing:**

This is a composition course—every class period will involve a written component. Writing assignments will give you repeated practice in all phases of the writing process. This class requires a minimum of 8000 words, at least 4000 of which must be in revised final draft form. You must complete all major assignments (all essays and the multimodal project) to pass the class.

**Peer Edit Workshops:**

Workshops are an important part of the writing process; they give you the opportunity to get valuable feedback from your peers. Bring three copies of your essay, in rough draft, on each workshop date as listed on the class schedule. You must turn in all workshop materials with the final copy of the essay. If you miss a workshop, your essay will be graded down one full letter grade.

**Class Participation:**

We will complete daily work in class that goes toward your participation grade; you will not be able to complete these assignments if you do not come to class. I expect you to attend class daily and come on time. Absences and lateness will affect your grade because you will be missing class material and/or in-class activities. In addition, class participation does not simply mean that you are physically present in class. You must have all class materials, contribute to discussions, actively listen to your peers, and take notes as necessary.

**Writing Portfolio:**

At the end of the semester you will compile a portfolio of your writing that documents how you met the learning goals of the course.

**Required Texts and Resources:**

- A. Graff, Gerald and Cathy Birkenstein. *They Say/I Say: The Moves that Matter in Academic Writing*, 4<sup>th</sup> edition (with readings). (ISBN: 978-0393631685).
- B. Levine, Robert S., et al. *The Norton Anthology of American Literature: Shorter Ninth Edition (Volume 1: Beginnings to 1865)*. (ISBN: 978-0393264524)
- C. Levine, Robert S., et al. *The Norton Anthology of American Literature: Shorter Ninth Edition (Volume 2: 1865 to the Present)*. (ISBN: 978-0393264517)
- D. Access to the Purdue OWL: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/>
- E. Printing and viewing resources for course readings, videos, assignments, and other material that are posted on Canvas.



**Course Details:**

This is a reading- and writing-intensive course and we will be learning the foundational rules and mechanisms of composition while actively reading and observing examples of composed texts. We will have weekly readings and in-class activities pertaining to the many lessons of this course. In addition to the reading and writing assignments, students may collaborate on group work that furthers our understanding of the core curriculum. *Students will also have opportunities to revise pre-submitted and submitted drafts and versions of essays which demonstrate the recommended and suggested changes by fellow peers and instructor.*

**Reading Assignments:**

In this class, we will be reading a series of creative, critical and complex texts. *They may often be challenging, so you should be prepared to read them more than once if necessary to fully understand their concepts.* Please be prepared to come to class with questions and comments to contribute to our discussion. Some of these reading assignments may focus on the mechanics, techniques and notions of language, rhetoric, and writing. These will be valuable in our discourse and practice of constructing, drafting, finalizing, and revising essays. Reading assignments are due on the day they appear on the course calendar and schedule. Please be responsible and do the readings beforehand.

### **Writing Assignments:**

*Each of the three essays will be examples of polished, revised versions that have been peer- and instructor-reviewed. Essays should have a clear and concise thesis, a well-organized paragraph structure, and proper formatting.*

- A. Renaissance Narrative (2-3 pages): Please consider the larger theme of this course. What is your understanding of the term “renaissance” and how do you find it fits into the historical context of American literary culture? Which authors or texts highlight these notions for you? Which moments of cultural rebirth do you enjoy?
- B. Rhetorical Analysis (Essay #1, 3-4 pages): Consider one of the texts we have read in class thus far and provide a coherent, meaningful analysis of the text that details the author’s thesis, the text’s rhetorical situation, and Aristotle’s appeals.
- C. Synthesis and Argument (Essay #2, 4-6 pages): Take one or more of the texts we have reviewed in class thus far and formulate a unique argumentative essay that supports or challenges the text(s). This essay should draw upon supporting evidence from the text(s) and relevant scholarly sources.
- D. Final Critical Paper (Essay #3, 5-7 pages): For this final assignment, please compose a thoughtful and thoroughly researched essay that details your views and perspectives on a particular notion or idea about nature. Have we encountered similar views in our class readings? Have we read texts that challenge these views? Find and discuss these concepts in your essay with supporting evidence from scholarly sources.
- E. Writing Portfolio
- F. In-class peer-review and critique of essays for revision.
- G. In-class activities and writing assignments.

### **Attendance:**

*Come to class—you know that.* Roll will be taken at the beginning of class, every class. If you arrive after roll has been called, it’s your responsibility to notify me. It’s a good idea to make friends and exchange contact information with one or more of your classmates to confer about that day’s lessons. You should also contact me to review details of the class lecture. University policy F69-24: “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 ensure maximum benefit for all members of the class.”

### **Participation:**

Participation is key to classroom success. I encourage you to interact, ask questions, provide insightful comments and contribute to the overall classroom discussion. *While attendance is mandatory, just attending doesn’t automatically accrue participation points. A participation grade is unique to your attendance record.* Please be courteous and respectful of others while in the classroom and practice proper classroom etiquette and refrain from using mobile devices and laptops during lectures and discussions. You may use these devices for certain in-class activities when appropriate.

### **Conferences:**

In lieu of regular class meetings on days when individual conferences are scheduled, we will instead prepare to meet one-on-one to discuss your current performance and grades in private. These meetings serve two primary goals: to critique a paper draft and to evaluate your overall progress as a writer. As with your attendance, these conferences are also mandatory. Please schedule a conference when dates and times are announced in class.

### **Canvas and Technology:**

If you have not already done so, please visit SJSU’s Canvas software. Here you will be able to find a special site devoted exclusively to our course. On this site, you will find files containing this syllabus and other class handouts as they become available. Additionally, we will regularly use the Discussion Board. You will also be able to

communicate with fellow classmates, providing insight, answers or compounding questions when necessary. I will keep track of your participation and may use some of the material, including any linked texts, you and your classmates post as a starting place for in-class discussions.

### Class Grades:

A. Renaissance Narrative Reflection (2-3 pages):	10%
B. Rhetorical Analysis Paper (Essay #1, 3-4 pages):	15%
C. Synthesis and Argumentative Paper (Essay #2, 4-6 pages):	20%
D. Final Paper (Essay #3, 5-7 pages):	30%
E. Reading Response Questions:	15%
F. In-class peer-review, activities and assignments:	5%
G. Participation:	5%

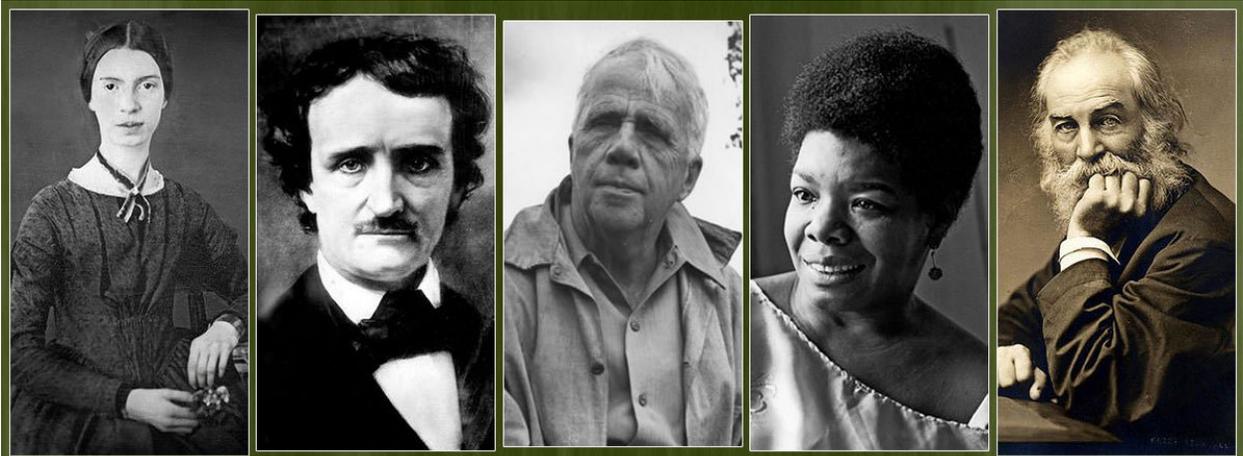
93-100% = A	73-76 = C
90-92 = A-	70-72 = C-
87-89 = B+	67-69 = D+
83-86 = B	63-66 = D
80-82 = B-	60-62 = D-
77-79 = C+	0-59% = F

### Late Policy:

Assignments are due at the beginning of the class for which they are due. NO LATE PAPERS WILL BE ACCEPTED.

### University Policies:

The following link contains university-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, student success resources, etc. <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo>.





**Course Calendar and Schedule:**

This is a tentative schedule for this semester. Reading and writing assignments can and likely will change to better suit the needs of our class discussions. Please be sure to attend class regularly and visit our course information on Canvas to note any changes to the syllabus.

*\*In order to preserve course flexibility, only major assignment dates appear in the calendar below. A more detailed assignment calendar may be provided as the quarter progresses, and these calendar dates may be adjusted. Additionally, if and when schedule permits, we will try to visit the university's Writing Center and the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Library.*

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**Week 1:**

Welcome to class  
Introduction of course & syllabus

**Week 2:**

Introduce Favorite Work of Literature assignment  
What is rhetoric? Review *They Say/I Say* preface & chapter 1  
Entering the conversation and understanding the rhetorical situation & context  
Read and discuss: Native American Oral Literature  
Continue discussion of rhetoric: Aristotelian appeals & rhetorical triangle

**Week 3:**

Review and present on Favorite Work of Literature  
Introduce Renaissance Narrative Reflection  
Discuss Native American Oral Literature  
Discuss sentence clarity, paragraph unity & structure  
Review *They Say/I Say* chapter 2  
Read and discuss: Selections by Christopher Columbus, John Smith, Roger Williams, and Edward Taylor  
Selecting words: language variety & word choice  
Read and discuss: Selections by Jonathan Edwards, Benjamin Franklin, Olaudah Equiano, and Phyllis Wheatley

**Week 4:**

Begin draft work; peer critique of Renaissance Narrative Reflection  
Discuss selections by Jonathan Edwards, Benjamin Franklin, Olaudah Equiano, and Phyllis Wheatley  
Discuss thesis statements & topic sentences  
Review *They Say/I Say* chapters 3 & 4  
**Renaissance Narrative Reflection due**  
Read and discuss: Selections by Ralph Waldo Emerson

**Week 5:**

Introduce Rhetorical Analysis Paper  
Discuss selections by Ralph Waldo Emerson  
Discuss forming & structuring essays  
Discuss organizing paragraphs  
In-class activity  
Begin draft work; peer critique draft of Rhetorical Analysis Paper  
Discuss Synthesizing & mapping arguments  
Read and discuss: Selections by Henry David Thoreau

**Week 6:**

Begin conferences  
Continue draft work; peer critique draft of Rhetorical Analysis Paper  
Discuss selections by Henry David Thoreau  
Exploring evidence and evaluating credibility for supporting arguments  
Review *They Say/I Say* chapter 5  
Read and discuss: Selections by Nathaniel Hawthorne and Edgar Allan Poe

**Week 7:**

Discuss Information Literacy  
Discuss selections by Nathaniel Hawthorne and Edgar Allan Poe  
Draft work; peer critique draft of Synthesis and Argumentative Paper  
Discuss secondary & scholarly sources  
Read and discuss: Selections by Walt Whitman

**Week 8:**

**Rhetorical Analysis Papers due**  
Introduce Synthesis & Argumentation Paper  
Discuss selections by Walt Whitman  
Continue in-class writing assignment  
Review *They Say/I Say* chapter 6

Read and discuss: Selections by Herman Melville and Frederick Douglass

**Week 9:**

Draft work: Synthesis & Argumentation Papers  
Discuss selections by Herman Melville and Frederick Douglass  
Begin draft work; peer critique draft of Literature Review Paper  
Begin conferences  
Review *They Say/I Say* chapter 7  
Read and discuss: Selections by Emily Dickinson

**Week 10:**

**\*Spring Recess—March 28-April 1: Academic Holidays**  
**Cesar Chavez Day, March 31: Academic Holiday**

**Week 11:**

Discuss selections by Emily Dickinson  
Begin draft work; peer critique second draft of Final Critical Paper  
**Synthesis & Argumentation Paper due**  
Review *They Say/I Say* chapter 8

**Week 12:**

In-class research assignment  
Finding, evaluating and comparing scholarly sources  
Introduce Final Critical Paper  
Discuss selections by Emily Dickinson & new selections by Walt Whitman  
Review *They Say/I Say* chapters 9 & 10

**Week 13:**

Review *They Say/I Say* chapters 11 & 12  
Discuss strategies and techniques for revision  
Draft work; peer critique draft of Rhetorical Précis, Annotated Bibliography, and Research Proposal  
Review overall research projects  
Read and discuss: Selections by Henry James, Kate Chopin, and Charlotte Perkins Gilman

**Week 14:**

Draft work: Final Critical Paper  
Discuss strategies for strong research projects  
Review overall research projects  
Begin conferences  
Review *They Say/I Say* chapters 13 & 14  
Discuss strategies and techniques for revision  
Read and discuss: Selections by Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. Du Bois, Stephen Crane, Amy Lowell, and Gertrude Stein

**Week 15:**

Review *They Say/I Say* chapters 15 & 16  
Draft work; peer critique draft of Final Critical Paper  
Discuss strategies and techniques for revision

**Week 16:** Read and discuss: Selections by Robert Frost, Wallace Stevens, and Richard Wilbur  
Review *They Say/I Say* chapter 17  
Draft work; peer critique second draft of Final Critical Paper  
Read and discuss: Selections by Theodore Roethke, Anne Sexton, and Sylvia Plath  
Review Learning Objectives: Now what can we do with what we have learned?  
Wrap-up of course

**Week 17:** Finals Week  
**Final Critical Paper & Final Portfolios due**

***\*Classes for the Spring 2022 semester end on Monday, 16 May 2022.***