

# Critical Thinking and Writing Section 23

## ENGL 2

Spring 2023 3 Unit(s) 01/25/2023 to 05/15/2023 Modified 01/24/2023

### Contact Information

- Instructor: Dr. Kristian O'Hare
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- Office Location: [Faculty Office Building \(FOB\) 215](#)
- Office Hours: MW 12-1pm (In-person) and Tuesdays 1-2pm (Zoom)
- Class Meeting Time/Location: MoWe 3-4:15PM / Clark Building 225A

### Course Description and Requisites

English 2 is a course that focuses on the relationship between language and logic in composing arguments. Students learn various methods of effective reasoning and appropriate rhetorical strategies to help them invent, demonstrate, and express arguments clearly, logically, and persuasively.

GE Area(s): A3. Critical Thinking and Writing

Prerequisite(s): Completion of GE Areas A1 and A2 each with grades of C- or better.

Note(s): ENGL 2 is not open to students who successfully completed ENGL 1B.

Letter Graded

### \* Classroom Protocols

#### ENGL 2

This course is open to all students needing to fulfill GE Area A3 (Critical Thinking). It is not open to students who have successfully completed ENGL 1B. Prerequisite: ENGL 1A or Stretch English (with a grade of C- or better)

##### Course-Specific Theme

This course will focus on social justice and the concept of advocacy. Social justice issues result from unequal access to resources; unfair treatment of individuals and communities based on race, gender identity, sexual orientation, ability, class; and laws and policies that support exclusion, segregation, and inequality. Using different modes of rhetorical communication and argumentation, you will create texts that raise awareness, participate in classroom discussions, and advocate for your selected issue. Through this work, you will learn how to use writing as a powerful tool for change.

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##### Attendance

Attendance is mandatory. I understand that sicknesses and emergencies happen in everyone's life, but this class is designed to be interactive and participatory. You can't participate if you aren't here. An absence may be excused with proper documentation. Please see [University Policy F69-24 \(https://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F15-12.pdf\)](https://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F15-12.pdf), "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 benefits for all members of the class.”

### **Tardiness**

It is also very important that you arrive to class on time. When you are late you miss important information, and walking in late disrupts another person’s learning. If you arrive more than 15 minutes late, you will be marked absent. If you do arrive late, enter the room quietly, take a seat near the door, and do not disrupt the work we are doing.

### **Late Work**

Your paper is due **ON or BEFORE** the due date. You can turn it in any time until the due date. After that, **the grade drops 10 points per day.**

## **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 equality) that generate meaningful public debate. Readings for the course will include writers of different ethnicities, genders, and socio-economic classes.

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 6000 words, at least 4000 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.

Oral: You will be presenting your arguments orally to class both as an individual and as part of a group.

## **Faculty Web Page and MYSJSU Messaging**

Course materials such as syllabus, handouts, notes, assignment instructions, etc. can be found on the Canvas Learning Management System course login website. You’re responsible for regularly checking with the messaging system through MySJSU to learn of any updates. For help with using Canvas see Canvas Student Resources page.

## **Time Commitment**

Success in ENGL 2 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.

### **Final Examination or Evaluation**

In ENGL 2, our learning culminates in a digital Reflection and Portfolio Assignment. In this assignment, we will gather samples of our writing that demonstrate our learning; we will write a reflection essay that explains what we have learned, how we learned it, and how we will use it in future learning; and we will submit our portfolio for consideration to other people in the first-year writing program. This is our chance to identify and articulate what we’ve learned and what we’ll take forward with us into future learning/writing experiences.

## **Program Policies**

First-Year Writing policies are listed at the following website: <https://www.sjsu.edu/english/frosh/program-policies.php> (<https://www.sjsu.edu/english/frosh/program-policies.php>).

## Program Information

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Welcome to this General Education course.

SJSU's General Education Program establishes a strong foundation of versatile skills, fosters curiosity about the world, promotes ethical judgment, and prepares students to engage and contribute responsibly and cooperatively in a multicultural, information-rich society. General education classes integrate areas of study and encourage progressively more complex and creative analysis, expression, and problem solving.

The General Education Program has three goals:

**Goal 1:** To develop students' core competencies for academic, personal, creative, and professional pursuits.

**Goal 2:** To enact the university's commitment to diversity, inclusion, and justice by ensuring that students have the knowledge and skills to serve and contribute to the well-being of local and global communities and the environment.

**Goal 3:** To offer students integrated, multidisciplinary, and innovative study in which they pose challenging questions, address complex issues, and develop cooperative and creative responses.

More information about the General Education Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) can be found on the [GE website](https://sjsu.edu/general-education/ge-requirements/overview/learning-outcomes.php) (<https://sjsu.edu/general-education/ge-requirements/overview/learning-outcomes.php>).

## Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs)

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### GE Area A3: Critical Thinking and Writing

Area A3 courses develop students' understanding of the relationship of language to logic. By engaging students in complex issues requiring critical thinking and effective argumentation, A3 courses develop students' abilities to research and analyze important topics and to construct their own arguments on issues that generate meaningful public debate and deliberation. Courses include explicit instruction and practice in inductive and deductive reasoning as well as identification of formal and informal fallacies of language and thought. Completion of Area A2 (Written Communication I) with a minimum grade of C- is a prerequisite for enrollment in Area A3. Completion of Area A3 with a grade of C- or better is a CSU graduation requirement.

### GE Area A3 Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of an Area A3 course, students should be able to:

1. locate, interpret, evaluate, and synthesize evidence in a comprehensive way, including through library research; and integrate research findings into oral and written arguments through appropriate citation and quotation;
2. use a range of rhetorical and logical strategies to articulate and explain their positions on complex issues in dialogue with other points of view;
3. identify and critically evaluate the assumptions in and the contexts of arguments; and
4. use inductive and deductive logic to construct valid, evidence-supported arguments and draw valid conclusions.

**Writing Practice:** Students will write a minimum of 6000 words, at least 4000 of which must be in revised final draft form.

## Course Materials

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- There is **no required** textbook for this course; instead, I have uploaded all assigned readings onto Canvas in Modules. You must have these readings in class, for I will be asking you specific questions and pointing out key passages from these texts. In addition, I will include lectures on grammar and mechanics, so you are responsible in reviewing these lectures; you should consider these slideshows as you would a grammar textbook, for they will help improve your writing in this course.
- A journal (either paper or digital) for class notes, writing exercises, daily observations, workshop responses, etc.
- Dictionary and Thesaurus. Being writers, it is important to know what words mean and to vary your word choice. There are free apps available.
- Access to a desktop, laptop, or tablet.

# ☰ Course Requirements and Assignments

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## :: Essays

Throughout the semester, you will be required to write three (3) essays. The topic(s) and guidelines for each of the assigned essays will be posted in the course schedule (Modules) and in Assignments. All essays must be submitted into Canvas for credit on the specified due date. The set of instructions outlines my expectations and the purpose behind the assignment. I will also include a rubric that will break down the specific parameters for failing, passing, or exceeding in terms of performance.

## :: Reading

Reading will be assigned for every class. You are responsible for doing the reading before we meet each week. Not only must you read a lot of material, but also you must read deeply, beyond the surface, and understand the material. Failure to keep up with the reading will cause you to fall behind and seriously dent our ability to hold meaningful discussions in class.

## :: Response Papers

Response papers in this class are informal reader responses to the assigned readings. You will submit a 250-300 word response paper (typed, double-spaced, 1' margins, 12 pt. font) on the due dates indicated on the course calendar. These are meant to be an opportunity for you to explore your ideas and articulate your opinion and responses to the assigned readings, so that we all come to class prepared for a rousing discussion.

## :: Presentations

This assignment is considered part of your final writing assignment; you will use your topic for the presentation. In a 3-5 minute presentation, you will share a piece of your research. For example, if you are analyzing horror films and race, you can define the genre and examine (briefly) how black storytellers are turning to the horror genre to unpack the traumas of racism. Or, if you are writing an analysis of misogyny in rap music and what it means for women in society; you can examine the rise of strong female voices in hip hop, such as Megan Thee Stallion and Cardi B. The presentation is a snapshot of the research done for your paper; it's an opportunity to work with a visual aid.

## :: Peer-Review Workshops

Workshops are an important part of the writing process; they give you the opportunity to get valuable feedback from your peers. You will share rough drafts of your writing in class on each workshop date as listed on the class schedule. If you miss a workshop, your essay will be graded down one full letter grade.

## :: Class Participation

This is a discussion-based course, not a lecture-based one. This means participation is important to the success of the class. You add value to the class by participating in discussions, writing insightful critiques, and carefully listening. It is my fervent wish that everyone participate actively in our conversations. Participating in a discussion is a skill that can, and should, be learned.

## :: 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.

## :: Assignment Word Count and Learning Goals

ASSIGNMENTS	WORD COUNT	GELO
Essay #1*: Rhetorical Analysis	750-1000	2-5
Essay #2*: Critical Analysis	1250-1500	2-5
Essay #3*: Argumentative/Research	2000-2500	1-5

Reading Responses X 5	250+ Words Each/1250+ Words Total	1-5
In-Class Writings, Prewriting Activities, Group Discussion Questions, Peer Review Workshops	2000 Words	2-5
Final Oral Presentation/Multimodal	Varies	1-5
Portfolio Self-Reflection and Bibliography	500	1-5

\* - *assignment requires rough draft and final draft*

## ✓ Grading Information

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 is broken down into three major areas: content (this includes maturity and sophistication of thought), organization, and expression.

An "A" range 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" range 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" range 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" range 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.

A+ (100-98); A (97-94); A- (93-90); B+ (89-87); B (86-83); B- (82-80); C+ (79-77); C (76-73); C- (72-70); D+ (69-67); D (66-63); D- (62-61); F (<60)

*Please keep in mind: the final grade percentage listed in Canvas is not the Final Grade. I factor in overall performance (participation, attendance, etc.). No grade haggling. I do not negotiate grades. If you are concerned with your grade (especially by midterm) and want to know how to do better in the future, I welcome appointments to discuss possible strategies for improvement.*

## Breakdown

Unless I make changes and announce otherwise, the overall breakdown of graded assignments will be calculated as followed:

- Debunk a False Claim Activity: 5 points
- Reading Responses (5): 10 points each/50 points total
- Essay #1: Rhetorical Analysis: 50 points
- Essay #2: Critical Analysis: 100 points
- Research Paper Topic and Library Session: 5 points
- Essay #3: Argumentative Research: 100 points
  - Oral Presentation/Multimodal: 50 points
- Self-Reflection/Assessment Portfolio Submission: 20 points

- Participation: 100 points
  - Discussion, In-Class Writings, and Group Work

## University Policies

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Per [University Policy S16-9 \(http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf\)](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf), 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 \(https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php\)](https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php) (<https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php>). Make sure to visit this page to review and be aware of these university policies and resources.

## Course Schedule

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Please consult our Canvas course site for the most up-to-date calendar of assignments.