

**English 1A – Composition**  
**Spring 2007, San José State University**  
**Section 41 : MW 07:30-08:45, SH 239**

**Instructor:** Julie Meloni

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**Office Hours:** T 9am – 12pm & by appt

### **Course Description**

English 1A is the first course in a two-semester, lower division composition sequence. It provides an introduction to college-level composition and fulfills the written communication requirement of the university's core General Education (GE) requirements. In this course, you will improve the reading, writing, and critical thinking skills you will need as you continue university coursework and pursue your career goals.

### **Prerequisite**

You must pass the English Placement Test (EPT) or meet the SJSU requirements for EPT exemption.

### **Required Texts and Materials**

- *Patterns for College Writing*, 10<sup>th</sup> edition – Kirszner and Mandell (ISBN: 0312445865)
- *Simon & Schuster Handbook for Writers*, 8<sup>th</sup> edition – Troyka and Hesse (ISBN: 0131993844)
- a college-level dictionary such as Webster's or the equivalent. Ask me if you are unsure.
- 8 large bluebooks for in-class essays, 2 yellow examination booklets for the final exam

### **Assignments**

Readings: The reading assignments for this course have been selected to provide models for your written assignments. You are responsible for completing the readings prior to the beginning of the class period for which they are assigned, as your in-class responses, quizzes, discussion, and essays will relate to the reading selections. **Unless told otherwise, bring *Patterns for College Writing* to each class meeting.**

Essays: There are eight required essays: four in-class and four out-of-class. **You must complete all eight essays to pass this course.** The first essay, a diagnostic, will be completed during the second class meeting but will not count toward your course grade. All other essays will receive a letter grade based on the Departmental Grading Policy listed in this syllabus.

- In-Class Essays: Bring pens, your dictionary, and two large bluebooks to class. You do not need to bring *Patterns for College Writing* to class on these essay days. **In-class essays cannot be made up unless prior arrangements have been made with me** (only emergency cases will be considered). Plan your schedule accordingly to avoid missing class on essay days.
- Out-of-Class Essays: These 4-5 page (at least 1000 words) essays must be typed in 12-point font, double-spaced with one-inch margins, and must conform to MLA citation and formatting guidelines. You must also provide the rough draft and workshop notes along with your final essay, when applicable. **Essays must be handed to me, in person, at the beginning of class and also must be submitted to TurnItIn.com.** Plan your schedule accordingly to avoid missing class when essays are due.

Workshops: In-class workshops are structured group exercises consisting of peer evaluations of your essays-in-progress. Your peers can provide valuable advice on grammar, organization, and reasoning within your essays. On workshop days, **bring THREE TYPED COPIES** of your completed rough draft. Outlines, partial essays, and handwritten pages are **unacceptable**. **Workshops cannot be made up. If you do not attend a workshop with your paper, your final essay will be marked down one full letter grade.** Plan your schedule accordingly to avoid missing class on workshop days.

Quizzes and Other Assignments: Good writing takes practice, and you will have ample opportunity to practice your skills throughout the semester. Most classes will include at least one of the following types of assignments. **These assignments cannot be made up.** You will not receive a letter grade for these assignments, but the quality of your effort will be recorded as: ✓+, ✓, ✓- and NC (no credit).

- reading responses and quizzes: Most classes will begin with an in-class written response to a question concerning the reading assignment for that day. These responses will be short (100-200 words) but should be thoughtful, as we will use your responses to jumpstart our class discussion.
- grammar exercises and quizzes: Proper grammar is an integral part of good writing. Throughout the semester we will focus on grammatical elements presented in the *Simon & Schuster Handbook for Writers*, and grammar exercises will occasionally be assigned as out-of-class homework. Pop quizzes on grammar are likely at the beginning of some class periods in lieu of reader response exercises.

Final Exam: The **mandatory** final exam for all English 1A students will be administered on **Saturday, May 12<sup>th</sup> from 8:00am to 10:00am**. You must bring to the exam two yellow examination booklets, black or blue pens, and your (non-electronic) dictionary. **This exam cannot be rescheduled, so make arrangements now to be there!**

The final exam is similar to an in-class essay. You will have 30 minutes for prewriting and 60 minutes for writing. We will discuss the final exam further in class, and one of your in-class essays will be in the form of a "practice final."

## Grading

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|---|-----|
| • In-Class Essays (3 x 5%)                      | 15% |
| • Out-of-Class Essays (4 x 10%)                 | 40% |
| • Reading Responses, Grammar Exercises, Quizzes | 15% |
| • Participation                                 | 10% |
| • Final Exam                                    | 20% |

## Extra Credit

You will each have the opportunity to complete three **SUPER** extra credit assignments during the semester. You may elect to do one, two, three, or none of the extra credit assignments. These assignments will be in the form of a 1 1/2 to 2 page (500-600 words) reader response exercise to an essay, short story, or poem of your choice from a predetermined list of works. Due dates for extra credit assignments are listed in the syllabus, and the list of works will be handed out in class and available on the course website. Additionally, you will have the opportunity to do several shorter extra credit assignments at the beginning of the semester. Information on these shorter assignments will be handed out in class and available on the course website.

## Late Policy

- Essays turned in **more than 15 minutes after the start of class** will automatically be marked down one grade step (an A becomes an A-, an A- becomes a B+, etc).
- Essays turned in **after the class in which they are due** will be marked down one full letter grade for each class meeting they are late (an A becomes a B, a B becomes a C, etc). You may hand late papers to me at the start of class, you may turn them in to the English Department in FO 102, or you may hand them to me personally during office hours.
- Essays **will not be accepted more than two weeks after the original due date**. Remember, failure to complete an essay automatically disqualifies you from passing the course.

## Classroom Environment

You are all adults, so please make every effort to act accordingly. Arrive on time to class and do not partake in disruptive behavior during class discussions and workshops. Bring your books to class unless otherwise indicated, and be prepared to complete your in-class assignments and engage in fruitful discussion with your classmates. While in class, turn off your cell phones or put them on silent mode. Additional electronic devices, including laptops, are not permitted.

## Course Website and Instructor E-Mail

You can access the website for this course at: <http://www.academicsandbox.com/1a/>

At the website, you will find this syllabus as well as copies of handouts given in class and many other useful resources. You should never have to track me down to get copies of handouts you may have misplaced or missed, as that information will be available to you 24/7 online.

If you have a question and cannot come to my office hours, e-mail me at: [julie.meloni@sjsu.edu](mailto:julie.meloni@sjsu.edu)

Please remember that an e-mail is a professional communication. Use proper salutation, grammar, complete sentences, and so on. I check my university e-mail account during the weekday daytime hours. Typically, I will respond to your e-mail within 24 hours (weekdays). If you do not receive a reply in that timeframe, send a query to see if I received your original message. Do not expect to reach your instructors 24/7 via e-mail. Plan your work accordingly so that questions and concerns can be addressed in a reasonable timeframe.

## Plagiarism

Plagiarism is taking another person's words or ideas and using them as your own without giving credit to the author. **Plagiarism in any form will not be tolerated.** Turning in plagiarized work may result in immediate failure of the course and **could result in your dismissal from SJSU**. All cases of plagiarism will be submitted to the appropriate university authorities.

In your work, you may quote or paraphrase another work, but you must use quotation marks when necessary and provide the appropriate MLA citation to give credit to the original author. In class, we will discuss MLA citation formats for incorporating outside sources in your work. If you have any questions about using a source, please see me. Always err on the side of citation—incorrectly formatted citations will only get a mark on your paper, but no citation at all could end your academic career.

**All out-of-class essays and extra credit assignments must be submitted to TurnItIn.com, an online plagiarism detection service.** TurnItIn.com scans your document to references to online sources, other papers submitted at this university and others across the country, and essays available for purchase from paper mills. I cannot stress enough how unwise it is to plagiarize.

## Departmental Grading Policy

The Department of English reaffirms its commitment to the differential grading scale as defined in the official SJSU Catalog (“The Grading System”). Grades issued must represent a full range of student performance: A = excellent; B = above average; C = average; D = below average; F = failure. Courses graded according to the A, B, C, No Credit system shall follow the same pattern, except that NC, for No Credit, shall replace D or F. In A, B, C, No Credit courses, NC shall substitute for W (Withdrawal) because neither NC nor W affects students’ grade point averages. **Note: A grade average of C- is not a passing grade in this course. Any grade average falling below a C will be recorded as a NC.**

In English Department courses, instructors will comment on and grade the quality of student writing as well as the quality of ideas being conveyed. All student writing should be distinguished by correct grammar and punctuation, appropriate diction and syntax, and well-organized paragraphs.

Although this is an A, B, C, No Credit course, final drafts of essays will be graded on the A-F scale. Essays in this class will be graded according to the following SJSU academic standards for assessment:

- The “**A**” essay will be well-organized and well-developed, demonstrating a clear understanding and fulfillment of the assignment. It will show the student’s ability to use language effectively and to construct sentences distinguished by syntactic complexity and variety. Such essays will be essentially free from grammatical, mechanical, and usage errors.
- The “**B**” essay will demonstrate competence in the same categories as the “A” essay. The chief difference is that the “B” essay will show some weaknesses in one of those categories. It may neglect one of the assigned tasks, show less facility of expression, or contain some minor grammatical, mechanical, or usage flaws.
- The “**C**” essay will complete all tasks set by the assignment, but show weaknesses in fundamentals, usually development, with barely enough specific information to illustrate the experience described or support generalizations. The sentence construction may be less mature, and the use of language less effective and correct than the “B” essay.
- The “**D**” essay will neglect one of the assigned tasks and be noticeably superficial in its treatment of the assignment—that is, too simplistic or too short. The essay may reveal some problems in development, with insufficient specific information to illustrate the experience or support generalizations. It will contain grammatical, mechanical, and/or usage errors that are serious and/or frequent enough to interfere substantially with the writer’s ability to communicate.
- The “**F**” essay will demonstrate a striking underdevelopment of ideas and insufficient or unfocused organization. It will contain serious grammatical, mechanical, and usage errors that render some sentences incomprehensible.

## Disabled Student Services

Students who require assistance due to a disability should contact the Disability Resource Center as soon as possible: Disability Resource Center, Administration 110, (408) 924-5990. On the web: <http://www.drc.sjsu.edu/>

## The Writing Center

More information on the Writing Center will be distributed in class.

## ENGLISH 1A CLASS SCHEDULE for SPRING 2007

The following pages detail the class schedule. All reading assignments and essay due dates are listed here, but the instructor reserves the right to revise these requirements. If a revision is made, notification will be given to you at least one class meeting in advance. The current syllabus can always be found on the course website: <http://www.academicsandbox.com/1a/>

- The items listed for each day represent items due (in the case of essays) and readings you should complete **before coming to class**, as they form the basis for your quizzes and in-class assignments.
- Count on a quiz or reader response assignment on every class day, but the class meetings listed in **BOLD** represent class days you should make great efforts to attend.
- Your texts are referenced using these abbreviations:  
PCW = *Patterns for College Writing*, HW = *Simon & Schuster Handbook for Writers*

|                 |           |          |  |
|-----------------|-----------|----------|--|
| <b>JANUARY</b>  | <b>24</b> | <b>W</b> | <b>Disbursement of Add Codes</b><br>Try to get your books.   |
|                 | <b>29</b> | <b>M</b> | <b>Welcome!</b><br><b>Introduction and Syllabus Review</b>   |
|                 | <b>31</b> | <b>W</b> | <b>ESSAY #1: In-Class Diagnostic (bring 2 large bluebooks)</b><br><b>DUE: Reading Response / MLA Formatting Exercise</b>                                   |
| <b>FEBRUARY</b> | 5         | M        | PCW 83-93: Introduction to Narration<br>PCW 96-99: Cisneros, "Only Daughter"<br><i>Essay #2 assigned and discussed (narration; out-of-class)</i>           |
|                 | 7         | W        | HW Chapter 2: "Planning, Shaping, Drafting, Revising"<br>PCW 101-107: Angelou, "Finishing School"<br>PCW 134-139: Alexie, "Indian Education"               |
|                 | <b>12</b> | <b>M</b> | <b>ESSAY #2 DUE: Narration (out-of-class)</b><br>PCW 143-150: Introduction to Description<br>PCW 168-172: Berne, "Ground Zero"                             |
|                 | 14        | W        | HW Chapter 3: "Writing Paragraphs"<br>(handout) excerpt from Steinbeck's <u>East of Eden</u> (fiction)   |
|                 | 19        | M        | PCW 168-172: Cohen, "Words Left Unspoken"<br>PCW 186-193: White, "Once More to the Lake"<br><i>Essay #4 assigned and discussed (process; out-of-class)</i> |

**ENGLISH 1A CLASS SCHEDULE for SPRING 2007 (continued)**

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|-----------------|-----------|----------|---|
| <b>FEBRUARY</b> | <b>21</b> | <b>W</b> | <b>ESSAY #3: Description (in-class, bring 2 large bluebooks)</b>  |
|                 | 26        | M        | PCW 267-271: Introduction to Process<br>PCW 285-289: Malcom X, "My First Conk"<br><i>Extra Credit #1 due</i>  |
|                 | 28        | W        | PCW 290-296: Muller, "Creating a Female Sleuth"<br>PCW 297-304: Piven, et al, "How to Escape from a Bad Date"   |
| <b>MARCH</b>    | <b>5</b>  | <b>M</b> | <b>Individual reports on process topics</b><br>PCW 317-324: Jackson, "The Lottery"<br><i>Essay #5 assigned and discussed (compare/contrast; out-of-class)</i>   |
|                 | 7         | W        | <b>ESSAY #4 DUE: Process (out-of-class)</b><br>PCW 387-393: Introduction to Comparison and Contrast<br>PCW 447-448: Brooks, "Sadie & Maude"   |
|                 | 12        | M        | PCW 409-414: Catton, "Grant & Lee"<br>PCW 415-420: Mukherjee, "Two Ways to Belong in America"   |
|                 | 14        | W        | PCW 421-424: Tuan, "Chinese Space, American Space"  |
|                 | 19        | M        | <b>Workshop for Essay #5 (bring 3 copies of your essay draft)</b>   |
|                 | 21        | W        | <b>ESSAY #5 DUE: Compare and Contrast (out-of-class)</b><br>HW Chapter 4: "Thinking, Reading, and Writing Critically"<br>(handout) "What's the Point of a College Education?" (non-fiction)<br><i>Extra Credit #2 due</i> |
|                 | 26        | M        | <b>SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS</b>  |
|                 | 28        | W        | <b>SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS</b>  |
| <b>APRIL</b>    | 2         | M        | HW Chapter 5: "Writing Arguments"<br>PCW 556-573: Intro to Argumentation  |

**ENGLISH 1A CLASS SCHEDULE for SPRING 2007 (continued)**

|              |           |            |  |
|--------------|-----------|------------|--|
| <b>APRIL</b> | 4         | W          | PCW 584-589: Jefferson, "The Declaration of Independence"<br>PCW 590-596: Stanton, "Declaration of Sentiments and Resolutions..."  |
|              | 9         | M          | (handout) excerpt from Thoreau's <u>Civil Disobedience</u> (non-fiction)<br><i>Essay #7 assigned and discussed (argumentation; out-of-class)</i>                                       |
|              | 11        | W          | PCW 597-612: King, "Letter from Birmingham Jail"   |
|              | <b>16</b> | <b>M</b>   | <b>ESSAY #6: Argumentation (in-class, bring 2 large bluebooks)</b>   |
|              | 18        | W          | PCW 650-668: Is Wal-Mart Good for America?   |
|              | 23        | M          | PCW 669-696: Does Media Violence Cause Societal Violence?  |
|              | <b>25</b> | <b>W</b>   | <b>Workshop for Essay #7 (bring 3 copies of your essay draft)</b>  |
|              | <b>30</b> | <b>M</b>   | <b>ESSAY #7 DUE: Argumentation (out-of-class)</b><br>PCW 712-727: Eighner, "On Dumpster Diving"<br><i>Final exam preparation.</i>  |
| <b>MAY</b>   | 2         | W          | PCW 733-742: Swift, "A Modest Proposal"<br><i>Final exam preparation.</i>  |
|              | 7         | M          | <b>ESSAY #8: In-Class Practice for the Final Exam (bring 2 large bluebooks)</b>  |
|              | 9         | W          | <i>Review and prepare for the final exam.</i><br><i>Extra Credit #3 due</i>  |
|              | <b>12</b> | <b>SAT</b> | <b>MANDATORY FINAL EXAM, 8am to 10am (location TBA)</b><br>Bring two large yellow examination booklets, black or blue pens, and your (non-electronic) dictionary to the exam location. |
|              | <b>14</b> | <b>M</b>   | <b>Letter to the Instructor</b><br><b>Course Wrap-up (look forward to 1B!)</b>   |