

Argument and Analysis

ENGL 1B

Spring 2026 Sections 16, 17 In Person 3 Unit(s) 01/22/2026 to 05/11/2026 Modified 01/09/2026

Contact Information

Instructor: Dr. Raina Levesque

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Office Hours: Fridays 3:00-5:00pm (or by appointment) in our Zoom classroom

Class Schedule & Location:

Section 16: T/Th 12:00-1:15pm, Sweeney Hall 444

Section 17: T/Th 3:00-4:15pm, Clark Building 243

Course Information

"Learn, by my example, how much happier that man is who believes his native town to be the world than he who aspires to become greater than his nature will allow." -Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein* (1818)

Our English 1B course will center around readings and writing assignments that discuss the impact of recent advances in science and technology on contemporary culture. Through an analysis of readings on this topic from a variety of different genres, some questions we will consider include: What is the difference between biology and technology? How are rapidly-developing advances in science and technology impacting various domains of society today, such as medicine, school, work, and social relationships? Should we be concerned or hopeful about these advancements and their future impact on society? We will also apply these questions to our own experience with technology, allowing us to reflect on the technology we use every day and its impact on our personal, academic, and professional lives.

Course Description and Requisites

English 1B is a writing course that focuses on argumentation and analysis. Through the study of literary, rhetorical, and professional texts, students will develop the habits of mind required to write argumentative and critical essays. Particular emphasis is placed on writing and reading processes. Students will have

repeated practice in prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing, and repeated practice in reading closely in a variety of forms, styles, structures, and modes.

Satisfies 3B. Humanities (Formerly Area C2).

Prerequisite(s): ENGL 1A or ENGL 1AS with a C- or better.

Grading: Letter Graded

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

* Classroom Protocols

Assessment:

You must receive at least 70% (a letter grade of C-) as a final grade to pass this course, distributed as follows:

- 20% In-class activities (including warm-ups!)
- 20% Reading assignments
- 50% Writing assignments
- 10% Final self-reflection (*Note: This assignment will count as your final exam*)

Assignments:

- **In-class activities** (GELOs 1, 3): We will be conducting in-class activities, including warm-up activities in the beginning of each class, which will count towards your final grade; if you are late or absent, you will not be allowed to make up these activities.
- **Reading assignments** (GELOs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5): You will be asked to complete weekly reading assignments that ask you to annotate texts & respond to reading reflection questions on Canvas.
- **Writing assignments** (GELOs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5): You will be asked to complete two major writing assignments that include smaller scaffolding assignments: a critical analysis (approx. 2000 words for each draft) and an argument synthesis (approx. 2000 words for each draft).
- **Self-reflection** (GELOs 2, 3, 5). For your final exam, you will be asked to write a final self-reflection (approx. 500 words).

Attendance & Participation Policy:

- We will be conducting **in-class activities**, including **warm-up activities** in the beginning of each class, which will count towards your final grade; if you are late or absent, you will not be allowed to make up these activities.
- Each student will be allowed to **miss up to two classes** without deductions for missing the in-class activities in order to account for unexpected events.
- *Note: If there is a family and/or health emergency, **please inform me within one week of a missed class** and be prepared to provide documentation in order to receive an excused absence.*

Late Assignments Policy:

- Reading assignments must be completed **by the deadline** (no late reading assignments will be accepted). Writing assignments can be submitted **up to 24 hours** past the deadline without a late deduction, but no late writing assignments will be accepted after this final deadline.
- If an assignment is **marked incomplete** due to missing requirements, you have **one chance to redo the assignment within one week** (with a late deduction of 1 point if completed within one week).
- *Note: If there is a family and/or health emergency, **please inform me within one week of a missed assignment** and be prepared to provide documentation in order to receive an extension.*

Plagiarism Policy:

- Plagiarism will result in a **zero grade** for the assignment. This includes any assignments that receive a score of 50% or higher using the Turn it in plagiarism tool in Canvas, as well as any assignments that violate the following **A.I. policy**:
- For the purpose of this policy, we define Artificial Intelligence (AI) as Large Language Models (LLMs) that produce generative, predictive text, such as ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, etc.
- 1) Students cannot submit work written by artificial intelligence as if it were their own ideas or writing. For our class, this means submitting work that contains: a) **inaccurate information** from A.I. writing tools (i.e. "A.I. hallucinations") b) **full sentences copied** from A.I. writing tools.
- 2) If an instructor suspects AI misuse on the part of a student, it is incumbent upon the student to prove they have not used AI. For our class, this means that students can prove they have not used AI by producing a writing sample under the supervision of their instructor or the tutoring center to demonstrate writing style.

Contacting Your Instructor:

- The best way to reach me is via email at raina.levesque@sjsu.edu (I will respond within 48 hours).
- You can also visit me during my office hours on Fridays 3:00-5:00pm (or by appointment) in our Zoom classroom.

Textbook Requirements:

- All reading materials for this course are provided for free on Canvas.

Technology Requirements:

- You will need access to the following technology: a laptop/tablet, Microsoft Word or a compatible word processing program, & reliable internet access.
- To prepare for the course: 1) Visit [SJSU IT Software Installation Page](#) and download Microsoft Word (for PC and Mac); 2) Download the free Grammarly grammar checker app found here: [Grammarly.com](https://www.grammarly.com)

Important Dates:

- First day of instruction: Thursday, 1/22/26
- Last day to add & drop a class via MySJSU: Tuesday, 2/17/26
- Spring break: 3/30/26-4/3/26

- Last day to petition for withdrawal without an “F” (Failing grade) on transcript: Monday, 4/20/26
- Last day of instruction: Monday, 5/11/26

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

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)

GE Area 3B: Humanities

Across the disciplines in Area 3 coursework, students cultivate and refine their affective, cognitive, and expressive faculties by studying works of the human intellect and imagination. Area 3 courses help students to respond subjectively as well as objectively to aesthetic experiences and to develop an understanding of the integrity of both emotional and intellectual responses. In their intellectual and subjective considerations, students develop a better understanding of the interrelationship between the self and the creative arts and the humanities in a variety of cultures.

3B (Humanities) courses encourage students to analyze and appreciate works of philosophical, historical, literary, aesthetic, and cultural importance. Students may take courses in languages other than English in fulfillment of 3B if the courses do not focus solely on skills acquisition but also contain a substantial cultural component. This may include literature, among other content. Theater and film courses may be approved if they emphasize historical, literary, or cultural considerations. Logic courses may be accepted if the focus is not solely on technique but includes the role of logic in humanities disciplines.

GE Area 3B Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of a 3B course, students should be able to:

1. analyze and understand works of philosophical and humanistic importance, including their temporal and cultural dimensions;
2. explore and articulate their own subjective aesthetic and intellectual responses to such texts;
3. analyze and assess ideas of value, meaning, and knowledge, as produced within the humanistic disciplines; and
4. research and write effective analyses of works of the human intellect and imagination.

Writing requirement

3B classes require a minimum of 1500 words in a language and style appropriate to the discipline.

✓ Grading Information

Grading Policy:

This class uses a labor-based grading model, according to which grades are determined based on the amount of labor (i.e. time and work) involved. As a result, most assignments are graded credit/no credit, and you will only receive numerical point values for the revisions you make on your Final Drafts and your final Self-Reflection. *Note: Please see [Labor-Based Grading \(https://barnard.edu/labor-based-grading#:~:text=Labor-based%20grading%20\(also%20known,course%20and%20the%20course's%20instructor.\)](https://barnard.edu/labor-based-grading#:~:text=Labor-based%20grading%20(also%20known,course%20and%20the%20course's%20instructor.)) to learn more about this grading model.*

Grading Contract:

In this course, you are guaranteed a B if you:

1. attend class regularly, missing no more than two classes;
2. participate in all in-class exercises and activities;
3. meet main criteria and due dates for all major assignments;
4. make substantive revisions when the assignment is to revise;
5. submit your Final Portfolio at the end of the semester.

In this system, you can earn the grade of B entirely on the basis of what you do—on your conscientious effort and participation. The grade of B does not derive from my judgment about the quality of your work with the exception that your work must meet my expectations for the quality of “baseline” engagement.

Grades higher than B, however, do rest on my judgment of quality. To earn higher grades you must complete the assignments at both a higher level of (1) effort and participation and (2) quality.

As an instructor, I commit to:

1. providing clear and reasonable criteria for all main assignments;

2. providing thoughtful, formative feedback for all assignments where revision is required in a timely manner;
3. creating availability for meetings with individual students who want to confer on drafts;
4. providing oral or written feedback to explain judgments of quality as necessary & seriously reconsidering judgements of quality if requested as part of a one-on-one meeting;
5. considering upon request extenuating circumstances to raise (but never lower) grades that do not meet students' expectations based on the above contracts;
6. re-evaluating contract criteria in consultation with class members, if requested.

University Policies

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

Course Schedule

Unit 1: Critical Analysis	Topic	Assignments
Week 2	Theme: Technology & Society Skill: Critical Thinking	Rethinking & Empathy Maps
Week 3	Theme: Technology & Society Skill: Analyzing Rhetoric	Rhetorical Analysis
Week 4	Theme: Technology & Society Skill: Analyzing Reasoning	Reasoning Analysis
Week 5	Theme: Technology & Society Skill: Analyzing Arguments	Argument Analysis
Week 6	Theme: Technology & Society Skill: Writing Critical Analyses	Critical Analysis (First Draft)

Week 7	Theme: Technology & Society Skill: Critical Analysis Revision	Peer Review Activity Critical Analysis (Final Draft)
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Unit 2: Argument Synthesis	Topic	Assignments
Week 8	Theme: Research Topics Skill: Conducting Research	Research Question
Week 9	Theme: Research Topics Skill: Evaluating Sources	Research Sources
Week 10	Theme: Research Topics Skill: Synthesizing Research	Synthesis Chart
Week 11	*Spring Break*	
Week 12	Theme: Research Topics Skill: Formulating Arguments	Synthesis Assignment
Week 13	Theme: Research Topics Skill: Writing Argument Syntheses	Argument Synthesis (First Draft)
Week 14	Theme: Research Topics Skill: Argument Synthesis Revision	Peer Review Activity Argument Synthesis (Final Draft)
Week 15	Theme: Research Topics Skill: Presenting Arguments	Research Presentation Final Self-Reflection