

# First-Year Writing: Stretch English II

## ENGL 1AS

Spring 2026 Section 12 In Person 3 Unit(s) 01/22/2026 to 05/11/2026 Modified 01/22/2026

### Contact Information

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**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 12: T/Th 10:30-11:45, Sweeney Hall 444

### Course Information

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"Remember to imagine and craft the worlds you cannot live without, just as you dismantle the ones you cannot live within."

-Dr. Ruha Benjamin

Our Stretch course will be divided into two parts: Stretch I will focus on different kinds of literacy (such as information, media, & digital literacy) and different ways arguments are presented in the media, focusing on why literacy is important in understanding some of the most pressing issues we face in the world today. Some questions we will discuss include: What is literacy and why is it important, especially now? How has literacy been reimagined in the age of social media & A.I.? What are some blocks to literacy and how are different organizations working to overcome those blocks?

Once we have grasped the importance of literacy in Stretch I, then we will focus on the the equally important role of imagination in creating alternative futures in Stretch II. Some questions we will discuss include: What is imagination and why is it important, especially now? How can we use imagination to reimagine our own individual & collective identities? How are we using imagination to reimagine concepts like intelligence and life through new technology like A.I. & synthetic biology? What are the risks & benefits associated with these reimaginings?

We will also apply these questions to our own experience with literacy & imagination more generally, allowing us to reflect on the literacy & imagination we use every day and their impact on our personal, academic, and professional lives.

## Course Description and Requisites

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Stretch II is the second semester of a year-long ENGL 1A that prepares students to join scholarly conversations across the university. Students develop reading skills, rhetorical sophistication, and writing styles that give form and coherence to complex ideas for various audiences, using various genres.

*Satisfies 1A. Written Communication I (Formerly Area A2).*

**Prerequisite(s):** ENGL 1AF Stretch English I

**Grading:** Letter Graded

## \* Classroom Protocols

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### 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% 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 three main writing assignments that include smaller scaffolding assignments: a discourse community analysis (approx. 500 words), a critical analysis (approx. 1000 words for each draft), and a critical synthesis (approx. 1000 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 their due date and time without a late deduction, but no 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 class** and be prepared to provide documentation in order to receive an excused absence.*

## 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](mailto: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 MyJSU: 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

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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 1A: Written Communication I

Written Communication I courses cultivate an understanding of the writing process and the goals, dynamics, and genres of written communication, with special attention to the nature of writing at the university. A grade of C- or better designates that a student has successfully oriented reading and writing practice in English to support college level research and learning and to share learning with others. Area 1A is a prerequisite for Area 1B: Critical Thinking. Completion of Area 1A with a grade of C- or better is a CSU graduation requirement.

### GE Area 1A Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of an Area 1A course, students should be able to:

1. demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the content, context, effectiveness, and forms of written communication;
2. perform essential steps in the writing process (prewriting, organizing, composing, revising, and editing);
3. articulate an awareness of and write according to the rhetorical features of texts, such as purpose, audience, context, and rhetorical appeals;
4. integrate their ideas and those of others by synthesizing, explaining, analyzing, developing, and criticizing ideas effectively in several genres; and
5. demonstrate college-level language use, clarity, and grammatical abilities in writing.

### Writing requirement

Area 1A courses require a minimum of 6000 words, at least 4000 of which must be in revised final draft form.

## ✓ Grading Information

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### 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

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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

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Unit 1: Discourse Analysis	Topic	Assignments
Week 2	Theme: Discourse Communities  Skill: Analyzing Discourse Communities	Interview Questions
Week 3	Theme: Discourse Communities  Skill: Analyzing Genres	Interview Transcript
Week 4	Theme: Discourse Communities  Skill: Writing Discourse Community Analyses	Discourse Community Analysis

Unit 2: Critical Analysis	Topic	Assignments
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Week 5	Theme: What is imagination?  Skill: Writing Summaries	Summary Assignment
Week 6	Theme: What is imagination?  Skill: Analyzing Rhetoric	Rhetorical Analysis
Week 7	Theme: What is imagination?  Skill: Evaluating Rhetoric	Evaluation Assignment
Week 8	Theme: What is imagination?  Skill: Writing Critical Analyses	Critical Analysis (First Draft)
Week 9	Theme: What is imagination?  Skill: Critical Analysis Revision	Peer Review Activity  Critical Analysis (Final Draft)

Unit 3: Critical Synthesis	Topic	Assignments
Week 10	Theme: Imagining the Future  Skill: Synthesizing Research	Synthesis Chart
Week 11	*Spring Break*	
Week 12	Theme: Imagining the Future  Skill: Evaluating Research	Synthesis Assignment
Week 13	Theme: Imagining the Future  Skill: Writing Critical Syntheses	Critical Synthesis (First Draft)
Week 14	Theme: Imagining the Future  Skill: Critical Synthesis Revision	Peer Review Activity  Critical Synthesis (Final Draft)

**Week 15**

Theme: Imagining the Future

Genre Remix Assignment

Skill: Remixing Genres

Final Self-Reflection