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# Critical Thinking and Writing Section 22h 2 or

## Course Information

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English 2 is a thematic course that focuses on the relationship between language and logic when composing arguments. Drawing on systems of analysis from rhetorical theorists and logicians (for instance, Aristotle, Rogers, Burke, and Toulmin, among others), students learn to reason effectively and think rhetorically to invent, demonstrate, and express arguments clearly, logically, and persuasively.

Reading a variety of texts, students study conventions of formal writing as well as textual cues that control the development of logical inferences.

Course-specific information:

Our course theme will be "Current Events and Cultural Memory." In the 21st Century it is easy to feel disconnected from the events unfolding locally, nationally, and globally. How do we really know if the world is getting warmer or that the climate is changing? Why does it matter that there is a trade war between the US and China? Who knows why so many migrants from Central America are fleeing their homes? What effects do events from 50 or even 150 years ago have on our lives today? Through our course readings we will begin to think and write about our connections to these events, and speculate as to how we might influence the future.

In my own work, I am inspired by the philosopher Walter Benjamin who writes:

Historicism contents itself with establishing a causal connection between various moments in history. But no fact that is a cause is for that very reason historical. It became historical posthumously, as it were, though events that may be separated from it by thousands of years. A historian who takes this as his point of departure stops telling the sequence of events like the beads of a rosary. Instead, he grasps the constellation which his own era has formed with a definite earlier one. Thus, he establishes a conception of the present as the 'time of the now' which is shot through with chips of Messianic time. —*Theses on the Philosophy of History*, 1940.

Additionally, students will be expected to have writing materials (paper, pen/pencil, etc.) and reference materials such as a dictionary and thesaurus. It is also recommended that



# 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)

Each student is expected to come to class prepared to engage in discussions of the week's readings and to participate in individual and group writing assignments (drafting, peer review, editing, etc.). It is imperative that you keep up with the reading schedule. Discussions and in-class assignments will help each of you develop your ideas for essays. Students are expected to complete a total of three hours of coursework per unit, per week, which for this four unit course amounts to 12 hours per week.

Your participation in class discussions and peer review assignments is important and worth up to 10% of your grade (see the rubric for each assignment). It is crucial that you keep up with the reading and discussion schedule, that you submit your essay drafts on time, and that you participate meaningfully in the peer review process (see peer review guidelines on Canvas). If you miss these assignments, you can expect to lose participation points on your essays as well. Except for documented medical emergencies and COVID-related absences

As your instructor, my goal is to help you successfully navigate all aspects of our course, as well as academics in general. To that end, I hold weekly office hours during which you are free to come in and discuss anything relevant to your education. This is a time for you to ask clarifying questions, seek guidance, and express your interests or concerns. Over the years, I have found that it is crucial for students to communicate with instructors early and often. I do not require that students come to office hours, but have noticed that in the majority of cases, those who do tend to be more successful in the course. I am also available via email (see [Email Guidelines](#)).

You are allowed two absences. Absences are defined as any absence from class without prior approval from the instructor; your two allowed absences are yours to take or leave as you want or need to, and you don't need to explain the reason to me. Absences that last more than one week of classes, tardiness, or early departure without prior approval from the instructor and greatly diminish your chances of passing the course. Should you have to miss all or part of



"Describe the symbolism of the green light in the book *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald" prompt  
*ChatGPT*, 13 Feb. version, OpenAI, 8 Mar. 2023, [chat.openai.com/chat](https://chat.openai.com/chat).

As a former community college student, I understand that life outside of school can pose many challenges to our academic pursuits. I want this course to be a place where you can escape those distractions to focus on sharpening your writing skills and learning new ones. When you are participating in this course, I ask that you:

- - Trust the value of your own intellect
  - Demonstrate your own achievement and abilities.
  - Do original work for each class.
  - Undertake research honestly and credit others for their work.

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course will include writers of different ethnicities, genders, and socio-economic classes.

# 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](https://www.sjsu.edu/english/frosh/program-policies.php).

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## 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.