

Critical Thinking and Writing Section 09

ENGL 2

Fall 2024 3 Unit(s) 08/21/2024 to 12/09/2024 Modified 08/22/2024

Contact Information

Instructor: Dr. Mark Dowdy

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Meeting days/times: T/Th 12 Noon - 1:15 p.m.

Classroom: Boccardo Business Center 122

Office Hours:

Time: Mondays and Wednesdays, 12 -1 p.m.

Place: Online (Zoom link: <https://sjsu.zoom.us/j/84580572292?pwd=vaNWa77kXGIBaP9xJwc7FE3jb9cdDO.1>)

In the event that my office hours conflict with your schedule, I am also available for **both in-person and online appointments**.

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 Area A2 with a grade of "C-" or better.

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

* 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 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.

Course-Specific Theme: Arguments about Music

This section of English 2 will focus on the conversations people have with one another about music. We will examine both arguments made about music as well as arguments made within music itself or by its producers. The purpose of this inquiry, however, goes beyond simply talking and writing about music. Instead, it concerns itself with how music and musicians often generate and respond to larger debates within our society. When we argue about music, we are not just arguing about whether we like a song or a composition or an artist (though we probably have our opinions in those areas!). We are also making arguments that can extend into the realms of science, history, law, business, politics,

psychology, and culture. All of the coursework for this section of English 2 – essays, readings, homework, and in-class activities – will ask you to think not only about music but about the arguments it makes and the arguments that are made about it.

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>).

Laptop/cell phone/mobile device usage

Cell phones, laptops, and mobile devices should be stowed and kept out of sight during class in *almost all circumstances*. While you will need a computer or mobile device to complete work outside of the classroom, the only time you will need one during class is on scheduled research days. The only exception to this policy are those students who require special accommodations and who have contacted the Accessible Education Center. **Otherwise, use of any electronic device during class will result in a lowering of your current essay's overall grade by one full letter.**

Classroom Etiquette

In order to create a productive and supportive learning community, it is imperative that we treat one another with appropriate respect and consideration. To promote this value, I will create a Discussion thread on Canvas where you will be encouraged to post suggestions on how we can all, students and professor alike, make this the class a welcoming and comfortable learning space. This Discussion thread will be open throughout the semester.

If you have any concerns about the class that you would prefer to share with me privately, please do not hesitate to contact me.

"Ghosting" the Class

The instruction mode for this class is designated as "in person." This means that, despite our use of Canvas, Google, and other online platforms, this is not an "online" or a "hybrid" course. Consequently, classroom activities cannot be made up online at a later time and date.

With each graded essay, I will provide a scoring guide. And with each scoring guide, I will include language that links the essay's final letter grade to the completion of homework and in-class activities that are related to the essay. Missing too many classes will result in lower grades for your major essays.

If you are unable to attend class due to illness, injury, or other circumstances, please contact me as soon as possible.

Homework and Quizzes

Homework and quizzes will be posted on Canvas. These activities will prepare you for the next major essay assignment due.

As I indicated above, for each major essay assignment, I will distribute a scoring guide. And on each scoring guide, I will include language that links the essay's overall grade to the completion of online homework related to that essay.

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 Goals

Goal 1: to conduct academic research using the databases from the MLK Library.

Goal 2: to synthesize and analyze the various arguments made about music and the music industry.

Goal 3: to write in a variety of genres for different audiences.

Goal 4: to become an ethical writer, both for college and beyond.

Goal 5: to identify different types of arguments, rhetorical strategies, artistic and inartistic proofs, and logical fallacies.

Goal 6: to read actively, rhetorically, and independently by cultivating an ethos of informed scrutiny.

Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs)

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

Required Materials

- Amiri Baraka (formerly Leroi Jones). *Blues People: Negro Music in White America*. ISBN 9780688184742
- Open Education Resources (OER) available for free online

Blues People: Negro Music in White America

Author: Leroi Jones

Publisher: Harper Collins

Edition: 63

ISBN: 978-0688184742

Availability: Spartan Bookstore (and online)

Price: \$7.20 (used); \$10.05 (new)

Open Educational Resources

For readings about rhetoric, composition, and argumentation, we will be using open educational resources (OER). These are available online for free. While I may introduce other texts (and will provide you with the necessary access whenever I do), we will primarily use selections from the following:

- [Excelsior Online Writing Lab: Licensed under Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License: \(https://owl.excelsior.edu/\)](https://owl.excelsior.edu/) <https://owl.excelsior.edu/>
 - [Purdue Online Writing Lab: Licensed under Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License: \(https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/purdue_owl.html\)](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/purdue_owl.html) https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/purdue_owl.html
- **Availability:** online
 - **Price:** free

Other reading materials

In addition to the above texts, I will sometimes assign additional readings from online sources such as news sites or academic journals scanned from print sources. When I do so, I will make them available on Canvas.

Course Requirements and Assignments

Course requirements include four essays, three group presentations, and a midterm.

Writing Assignments

As a writing course, you will be expected to produce 6,000 words in this course. Of these, 4,000 must be revised and edited. For each of the writing assignments below, I will provide a scoring guide along with essay guidelines. These will be posted on Canvas.

Essay #1 – Critical Essay: Writing about a Music-Related Controversy

- Required number of drafts: 3
- Estimated word count: 3000-4500 words total; 1,500 words revised and edited
- Assignment type: out-of-class essay
- GE Learning Objective: GELO 1, 2, 3, 4, 5

This research-based essay will require you to identify a music-related controversy and synthesize the arguments of the various stakeholders involved in it. In addition, you will need to evaluate the assumptions, values, beliefs, and rhetorical strategies underlying the various stakeholders' arguments and stake your own position within the debate.

Essay #2 – Persuasive Essay: Proposing a Solution to a Music-Related Problem or Controversy

- Required number of drafts: 3
- Estimated word count: 3000-4500 words total; 1,500 words revised and edited
- Assignment type: out-of-class essay
- GE Learning Objective: GELO 1, 2, 3, 4, 5

This research-based essay will require that you write a proposal (i.e. argument about the future) in which you address a music-related problem or controversy and propose a solution to it. You may find it helpful to write about the same music-related controversy that you wrote about for your Critical Essay, but you are not required to do so.

Essay #3 – The Baraka-Ellison Debate

- Estimated word count: 500 words (revised)
- Assignment type: in-class writing/out-of-class writing
- GE Learning Objective: GELO 1, 2, 3, 4, 5

In addition to reading Amiri Baraka's *Blues People*, we will be reading an essay critical of his book written by one of his literary role models – Ralph Ellison, author of the acclaimed novel *The Invisible Man*. Essay #3 constitutes the written component for the Major Group Presentation, wherein small groups take a position on Baraka-Ellison's debate and present their rebuttal of the opposing side of the argument (see Major Group Presentation). In this essay, you will present your own position in the debate. Keep in mind that your position may – or may not – agree with the consensus of your fellow group members.

Essay #4: Self-Reflection and Writing Portfolio

- Estimated word count: 500-750 (revised)

- Assignment type: in-class writing
- GE Learning Objective: GELO 1, 2, 3, 4, 5

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

Exam: Logic and Argumentation

This major exam (10% of overall course grade) will be conducted during class on Thursday, November 14th, and will focus on types of arguments, rhetorical strategies, and logical fallacies.

Make-up exams should only be scheduled in the event of emergency, illness, religious observation, or scheduled SJSU activity.

5-Minute Group Presentations

Each student will participate in two Five Minute Group Presentations. These multimedia presentations are designed to prepare students for the Critical and Persuasive essays. The first presentation introduces the class to a music-related controversy; the second one proposes a solution to a music-related problem or controversy.

Major Group Presentations: The Baraka-Ellison Debate

During the last week of the semester, the class will share 10-minute presentations in which group members preside as the judges in the Baraka-Ellison debate. Groups will consist of an uneven number of members (3 or 5). This way each group can render a verdict on the debate, whether unanimous or mixed. Like the 5-Minute Presentations, this assignment needs to include a multimedia component. In addition, each group member must submit a 500-word essay in which they share their own personal judgement in the debate (see Essay #3: The Baraka-Ellison Debate).

✓ Grading Information

For each of the major writing assignments, I will post detailed directions and a scoring guide on Canvas. Since in-class activities and online Canvas homework are designed to prepare students for the major writing assignments, completion of them will be factored into the overall scores for the major essays.

Criteria

Your grade for English 2 will be determined by the following writing assignments and activities:

Assignment	Weight
Essay #1: Critical Essay	30% of overall grade

Essay #2: Proposal Essay	30% of overall grade
Major Group Presentation: The Baraka-Ellison Debate	10% of overall grade
5-Minute Group Presentations	10% of overall grade (5% each)
Exam: Logic and Argumentation	10% of overall grade
Self-Reflection and Writing Portfolio	10% of overall grade

Breakdown

Since this is a writing course, you will need to complete and submit ALL of the major essays assigned in this course in order to pass. Along with each of these writing assignments, you will need to complete related in-class activities and homework. Since our goal in English 2 is to establish a productive and supportive learning community, please come to class ready and willing to engage with others in class discussions as well as small group and individual activities.

A	94% - 100%
A-	90% - 93%
B+	87% - 89%
B	84% - 86%
B-	80% - 83%
C+	77% - 79%
C	74% - 76%
C-	70% - 73%
D+	67% - 69%
D	64% - 66%
D-	60% - 63%
F	≤59%

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

Below are the due dates for the major assignments and readings for this semester. This does not include homework due on Canvas, for which you will be notified through the Canvas LMS. This schedule is subject to change with fair notice via the Canvas messaging system.

When	Topic	Notes
Week 1: Thursday, 8/22	Introduction to Course	Overview of syllabus
Week 2: Tuesday, 8/27	ENG 2 Community Building	Essay #1 – Critical Synthesis: Writing about a Music-Related Controversy assigned. Building a Classroom community. During this activity the class will deliberate over the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Determine which of the numerous musical controversies in the news to research, discuss, and analyze• Learn about each other's expectations for, and concerns about, the course• Take the necessary steps to foster a productive classroom community

When	Topic	Notes
Week 2: Thursday, 8/29	ENG 2 Community Building + Toulmin Method	<p>Conclusion: community-building activities</p> <p>Introduction: Toulmin Method:</p> <p>Before class, read the following selections from the Excelsior Online Writing Lab:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Toulmin (https://owl.excelsior.edu/argument-and-critical-thinking/organizing-your-argument/organizing-your-argument-toulmin/) Argument (https://owl.excelsior.edu/argument-and-critical-thinking/organizing-your-argument/organizing-your-argument-toulmin/), (https://owl.excelsior.edu/argument-and-critical-thinking/organizing-your-argument/organizing-your-argument-toulmin/), • Toulmin (https://owl.excelsior.edu/argument-and-critical-thinking/organizing-your-argument/organizing-your-argument-toulmin-infographic/) Infographic (https://owl.excelsior.edu/argument-and-critical-thinking/organizing-your-argument/organizing-your-argument-toulmin-infographic/), (https://owl.excelsior.edu/argument-and-critical-thinking/organizing-your-argument/organizing-your-argument-toulmin-infographic/), and • Sample Toulmin Argument (https://owl.excelsior.edu/argument-and-critical-thinking/organizing-your-argument/organizing-your-argument-sample-toulmin-argument/) (https://owl.excelsior.edu/argument-and-critical-thinking/organizing-your-argument/organizing-your-argument-sample-toulmin-argument/)
Week 3: Tuesday, 9/3	Music-Related Controversies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings to be determined by class consensus during Week 2 of the semester • In-class activities: writing a Critical Essay + identifying logical fallacies
Week 3: Thursday, 9/5	Music-Related Controversies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings to be determined by class consensus during Week 2 of the semester • In-class activities: writing a Synthesis + identifying logical fallacies
Week 4: Tuesday, 9/10	Music-Related Controversies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Five-Minute Group Presentations #1: Music-Related Controversies (posted on Canvas Discussion forums)
Week 4: Thursday, 9/12	Music-Related Controversies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Five-Minute Group Presentations #1: Music-Related Controversies (posted on Canvas Discussion forums) • Due date for first draft of Essay #1 – Critical Essay: Writing about a Music-Related Controversy • Mandatory Peer Review
Week 5: Tuesday, 9/17	Toulmin Method + The Saga of Solomon Linda and "The Lion Sleeps Tonight"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Before class read Rian Malan, "In the Jungle," Introduction (pages 3-4) and Part One: A Story about Music (pages 5-17) (available on Canvas).

When	Topic	Notes
Week 5: Thursday, 3/19	Mandatory Peer Review Session	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due date for second draft of Essay #1 – Critical Essay: Writing about a Music-Related Controversy. BRING HARD COPY TO CLASS.
Week 6: Tuesday, 9/24	The Saga of Solomon Linda and "The Lion Sleeps Tonight"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Before class read Rian Malan, "In the Jungle," Part Two: A Story about Money (pages 18-29), Part Three: A Curious Lawsuit (pages 30-5), Part Four: A Moral Is Considered (pages 36-7), and Postscript (pages 38-9) (available on Canvas).
Week 6: Thursday, 9/26	Writing a Proposal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Essay #2 – Persuasive Essay: Proposal assigned • Return to Toulmin Argument: Claim, Grounds, Warrant, Backing, Qualifier, Rebuttal.
Week 7: Tuesday, 10/1		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Before class read Introduction and Chapter 1 of <i>Blues People</i> (pages vii - 10).
Week 7: Thursday, 10/3		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prof. Dowdy returns hard copies of the second draft of Essay #1 – Critical Essay: Writing about a Music-Related Controversy
Week 8: Tuesday, 10/8		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Before class read chapters 2 and 3 of <i>Blues People</i> (pages 11-31).
Week 8: Thursday, 10/10		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due date for final draft of Essay #1 – Critical Essay: Writing about a Music-Related Controversy
Week 9: Tuesday, 10/15		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Before class read Chapter 4 of <i>Blues People</i> (pages 32-49). • Five-Minute Group Presentations #2: Solutions to Music-Related Problems and Controversies
Week 9: Thursday, 10/17		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Before class read Chapter 5 of <i>Blues People</i> (pages 50-59). • Five-Minute Group Presentations #2: Solutions to Music-Related Problems and Controversies
Week 10: Tuesday, 10/22		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Before class read Chapter 6 of <i>Blues People</i> (pages 60-80).

When	Topic	Notes
Week 10: Thursday, 10/24		<p>Before class read the follow selections from the Excelsior Online Writing Lab:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aristotelian Argument (https://owl.excelsior.edu/argument-and-critical-thinking/%20organizing-your-argument/organizing-your-argument-aristotelian/) (https://owl.excelsior.edu/argument-and-critical-thinking/organizing-your-argument/organizing-your-argument-aristotelian/) • Aristotelian Infographic (https://owl.excelsior.edu/argument-and-critical-thinking/%20organizing-your-argument/organizing-your-argument-aristotelian-infographic/) (https://owl.excelsior.edu/argument-and-critical-thinking/organizing-your-argument/organizing-your-argument-aristotelian-infographic/) • Sample Aristotelian Argument (https://owl.excelsior.edu/%20argument-and-critical-thinking/organizing-your-argument/organizing-your-argumentsample-aristotelian-argument/) (https://owl.excelsior.edu/argument-and-critical-thinking/organizing-your-argument/organizing-your-argumentsample-aristotelian-argument/)
Week 11: Tuesday, 10/29		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Before class read chapters 7 and 8 of <i>Blues People</i> (pages 81-121).
Week 11: Thursday, 10/31		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due date for first draft of Essay #2 – Persuasive Essay: Proposing a Solution to a Music-Related Problem or Controversy. • Mandatory Peer Review
Week 12: Tuesday, 11/5		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Before class read chapters 9 and 10 of <i>Blues People</i> (pages 122-165).
Week 12: Thursday, 11/7		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due date for second draft of Essay #2 – Persuasive Essay: Proposing a Solution to a Music-Related Problem or Controversy. BRING HARD COPY TO CLASS.
Week 13: Tuesday, 11/12		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Before class read Chapter 11 of <i>Blues People</i> (pages 166-74).
Week 13: Thursday, 11/14		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exam: Logic and Argumentation (in-class)
Week 14: Tuesday, 11/19		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Before class read Chapter 12 of <i>Blues People</i> (pages 175-236).

When	Topic	Notes
Week 14: Thursday, 11/21		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Before class, read Ralph Ellison's "Blues People" (book review of Baraka's <i>Blues People</i>, available on Canvas). • Prof. Dowdy returns hard copies of the second draft of Essay #2 – Persuasive Essay: Proposing a Solution to a Music-Related Problem or Controversy.
Week 15: Tuesday, 11/26		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due date for final draft of Essay #2 – Persuasive Essay: Proposing a Solution to a Music-Related Problem or Controversy
Week 15: Thursday, 11/28		<i>Class not held due to Thanksgiving holiday</i>
Week 16: Tuesday, 12/3		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major Group Presentations: The Baraka-Ellison Debate
Week 16: Thursday, 12/5		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major Group Presentations: The Baraka-Ellison Debate • Essay #3 – The Baraka-Ellison Debate due