

# Course Syllabus, English 1A

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Summer 2020



*welcome*

The goal of English 1A, "College Reading and Composition," is the development of college-level literacy skills, including classic reading and writing skills such as analyzing essays, developing opinions and ideas in response to readings, and writing thoughtful, focused, well-developed essays of your own. There are several specific learning outcomes for this course:

- Read, annotate, summarize, and discuss all kinds of academic college-level non-fiction and fiction.
- Identify and analyze argumentative, stylistic, and narrative techniques.
- Explain the conventions of advanced academic discourse, including style, tone, point of view, and the importance of original thought in developing oral and written arguments.
- Write a comprehensive, well-developed, and coherent expository essay with a focused thesis and appropriate support.
- Recognize and correct errors in grammar, punctuation, and spelling.
- Comprehend and use college-level vocabulary.
- Locate, summarize, synthesize, and employ research in a well-developed and documented research essay.
- Employ correct use of MLA format and formal citations.

# Details

## Content

Throughout the course, the focus is on learning and practicing writing (or “rhetorical”) techniques and strategies that you will need in your college career and beyond, and you will have the opportunity to practice these techniques in 4 essays (one essay every two weeks) and the final exam. We begin the course with description and narration techniques to give you a foundation for writing a personal essay (essay 1). Then we focus on how to write evaluations to prepare you to write essay 2, an evaluation of an essay or article. Next, we turn to more advanced techniques, including comparison, division, analysis, and synthesis. We will use these techniques to write a short research paper (essay 3) and a critical essay about a novel, *Winter’s Bone* (essay 4). There will be plenty of guidance along the way on skills such as reading critically, writing a focused thesis, planning an essay, building strong paragraphs, etc. And, we will work on grammar skills as well using an independent-study app called *InQuizitive* (that students generally find to be kind of fun).

## Expectations

- Most assignments are due on Sunday evenings at **11:59 pm**. However, essay drafts are due mid-week for peer editing, so be sure to examine the weekly schedule at the beginning of the week.
- Students are expected to complete all assigned reading *even when there is no reading quiz*. The reading assignments provide important information and examples that prepare students for upcoming writing assignments.
- Students are expected to read all instructor feedback on essays and other assignments and make use of this feedback in future writing assignments and essay revisions.
- If you are having difficulty with assignments or deadlines, it is up to you to contact me for support. I will refer you to resources if I cannot help you myself!
- Be respectful toward the members of this class. If you ever have a problem with another student, let me know immediately.
- If you encounter technical problems that prevent you from completing assignments, you need to let me know in a timely manner. I will do my best to help you trouble-



shoot the problem. **Technical problems are not an acceptable excuse for not submitting essays on time.** If you are unable to post your work through the usual channels, you should submit a copy of your assignment to me as an email or email

## Interaction with classmates

While this course involves a great deal of solitary study, it also emphasizes students' construction of knowledge, skills, and strategies through social interaction. Students in this course will interact with peers on diverse activities such as reading responses, social annotating, and editing workshops. It is expected that students will put as much energy into these collaborative learning activities as they put into individual work. Most interactive assignments are worth 5 points in the "Discussions" category, and you will not receive full credit unless you respond thoughtfully to posts by at least two of your classmates.

## Contact with Instructor

### *Weekly contact*

Each week, I will post announcements about coming activities along with thoughts about the previous week's activities. I will also read and briefly respond to your discussion posts (though some posts may receive only a grade) and grade quizzes and other assignments.

### *Essay feedback*

I give students essay feedback via screencast video or written comments directly on the essay (using my iPad and stylus). On essays 1 and 2, I emphasize grammar and syntax in addition to essay content and organization. By essay 3, I assume that students have a good sense of the surface issues they need to work on, so I shift emphasis to ideas, development, organization, and integration of sources. However, I am always available for a tutorial or conference via email conversation or Zoom.

### *Personal contact*

I encourage you to send me an email if you have a question or a concern. You may use the Canvas email (at the "Inbox" link), or you may use my SRJC email: [jroyal@santarosa.edu](mailto:jroyal@santarosa.edu). I will generally respond within 24 hours, Monday-Friday.

## Grades

### *Grade book*

To view your grades, instructor comments, and essay feedback, click the "Grades" link. Before you submit your first assignment, however, please watch the video tutorial below or visit the "[How do I view my grades](#)" help page to make sure you are able to access all

the information available to you on your Grades page – especially my written feedback and marked essays.

### **Grade calculation**

The cutoff scores for calculating your overall grade in the course are as follows:

- 90% A
- 80% B
- 70% C
- 60% D
- 50% F

If your final grade in the class is within .25% of the next grade up (e.g., 89.75-89.99), and you have been working hard all semester rather than missing a lot of assignments, I will bump your grade up.

For each assignment, you will receive points. Assignments fall into 3 weighted categories:

#### **10% – Discussion Posts**

##### **How credit is awarded for discussion posts**

Our goal in discussion is to build community, to help one another improve as writers and critical thinkers, and to support and acknowledge individual effort and achievements. Posts that earn full credit demonstrate a student's creative, insightful engagement with lessons, and thoughtful, meaningful interaction with classmates.

##### **full credit**

Full credit is awarded for discussion posts that show that you are really engaged with the question—moving beyond first, general thoughts to explore an idea in detail.

AND at least three thoughtful, detailed responses to classmates' posts (no "I agree" or "I like your post"). Explain *why* you like the post, or *what* specifically is most interesting or made you feel a connection to the writer's post.

##### **partial credit**

Partial credit is awarded for posts that could use more intellectual depth and thoroughness

*AND/OR* do not include three responses to classmates, or the responses are not as thoughtful or thorough as they should be.

#### **10% – Assignments**

This category includes short quizzes and writing assignments, an annotated bibliography, and InQuizitive grammar and research activities.

## 80% Essays

- Essay 1, description & narration essay: **100 points** (1000 words)
- Essay 2, evaluation essay: **150 points** (1200 words)
- Essay 3, argument-based research paper: **200 points** (2000–2500 words)
- Essay 4, literature analysis essay: **175 points** (1300-1500 words)
- Final exam (timed, 3 1/2 hours), **100 pts** (1000 words)

## Late essays

I do not accept late assignments with one exception: if you are ill or have an emergency, you can request a short extension on ONE essay.

## Minimum requirements

Essays must meet the assignment requirements to receive a grade (in terms of length, topic, content). If your essay does not meet the terms of the assignment, I will send it back to you without a grade.

## Plagiarism policy

Please note that my policy on plagiarism is VERY strict. I have no tolerance for plagiarism and will give you a "0" on the assignment if any part of your work is plagiarized. To prevent accidental (and intentional) plagiarism, all papers are submitted through the Turnitin.com site. Each essay will receive an "originality report." You can view this report to ensure that your work is clear of plagiarized passages.

## Textbook and Applications

- The main text for this class is *Get It In Writing (GIWW)*. This is a book I wrote (am still working on, so please forgive occasional typos, etc.). The book is separated into chapters (PDF) that will appear in the modules when you are expected to read them. The book is available at no cost to you. You can also access *GIWW* from a link at the bottom of the home page.
- *Winter's Bone*, Daniel Woodrell (2007) ISBN: 9780316066419. This is a powerful novel about an isolated community living in extreme poverty in the Ozark mountains and a young heroine trying to hold her family together. It is also about failed dreams, survival, hope, and how place shapes our identity and experiences.
- You must purchase a registration code to access InQuizitive grammar activities. Online, through this website, the cost is \$15; if you purchase an InQuizitive registration code at the bookstore, you will pay \$30. If you do not have funds at the start of the course, then sign up for the 3-week free trial. In any case, you will need to register for InQuizitive from this site (at the InQuizitive login page located in the module for week 1). NOTE: You do not need to purchase the hard copy of *The Little Seagull Handbook* that is sometimes sold with the registration code.