

**San José State University**  
**Department of English and Comparative Literature, English 7:**  
**Critical Thinking, Sections 1, 3, and 5, Fall 2012**

<b>Instructor:</b>	Professor Williams
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<b>Office Hours:</b>	M/W 10:30-11:20
<b>Class Days/Time:</b>	M/W 9:00-10:15AM, 12:00-1:15PM, and 1:30-2:45PM
<b>Classroom:</b>	Sweeney Hall 240, 238, and 411
<b>GE/SJSU Studies Category:</b>	Qualitative Reasoning (A3)

**Departmental Course Description**

English 7 fulfills the General Education requirements in Qualitative Reasoning (A3). This course integrates the study of reasoning with texts that express the concerns of our diverse culture, so that the student can become aware of, and sensitive to, the role of cultural and individual assumptions in reasoning.

Students will be introduced to the basic concepts of critical thinking: definition of terms, statements of assumptions, the process of inductive and deductive reasoning, distinctions between fact and opinion, use of evidence to support premises, recognition of standards of proof, common fallacies, and misleading logical and rhetorical devices. Students should be especially aware of the role that language plays in persuasive aspects of reasoning. Students will learn these skills of critical thinking by analyzing and discussing culturally oriented readings, which will be a substantial part of the course rather than incidental or supplemental to it.

**University Course Goals and Student Learning Objectives (SLO)**

The goal of this course is to enable students to critically analyze assumptions, evidence, and arguments in a multi-cultural context. The student learning objectives for this course as defined by general education guidelines are as follows:

SLO 1: Students should be able to distinguish between reasoning (e.g. explanation, argument) and other types of discourse (e.g. description, assertion).

SLO 2: Students should be able to identify, analyze, and evaluate different types of reasoning.

SLO 3: Students should be able to find and state crucial unstated assumptions in reasoning.

SLO 4: Students should be able to evaluate factual claims or statements used in reasoning, and evaluate the sources of evidence for such claims.

SLO 5: Students should be able to demonstrate an understanding of what constitutes plagiarism.

SLO 6: Students should be able to evaluate information and its sources critically and incorporate

selected information into their own knowledge base and value system.

SLO 7: Students should be able to locate, retrieve, organize, analyze, synthesize, and communicate information of relevance to the subject matter of the course in an effective and efficient manner.

SLO 8: Students should be able to reflect on past successes, failures, and alternative strategies.

### **Required Texts/Materials**

*Writing Logically, Thinking Critically*, Seventh Edition, Sheila Cooper and Rosemary Patton, Pearson, 2012. ISBN 10: 0-205-11912-3 or ISBN 13: 978-0-205-11912-7.

*Rereading America: Cultural Contexts for Critical Thinking and Writing*, Eighth Edition, Gary Colombo, Robert Cullen, and Bonnie Lisle, Bedford/St. Martin's, 2010. ISBN 10: 0-312-54854-0 or ISBN 13: 978-0-312-54854-4.

**Recommended Text:** A current, college-level handbook, such as the *Bedford Handbook*.

### **Course Content**

**Writing:** Substantial writing assignments are to be integrated with critical thinking instruction. Writing will lead to the production of argumentative essays, with a minimum of 3000 words required. Students shall receive frequent evaluations from the instructor, with substantive comments that address the quality and form of writing. All writing (essays, homework assignments, in-class assignments, etc.) will be assessed for grammar, clarity, concision, and coherence.

**Reading:** Reading shall include useful models of arguments or position papers about issues of diversity, such as gender, class, ethnicity, and sexual orientation. Readings will also include information on the validity of deductive reasoning, the strength of inductive reasoning, and a consideration of common fallacies in both. Identification and assessment of deductive and inductive reasoning, including formal validity, and fallacies will be assessed.

**Grading:** A-F. See below for more details.

### **Dropping and Adding**

Students are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures about add/drop, grade forgiveness, etc. Refer to the current semester's Catalog Policies section at: <http://info.sjsu.edu/static/catalog/policies.html>. Add/drop deadlines can be found at: [http://www.sjsu.edu/academic\\_programs/calendars/academic\\_calendar/](http://www.sjsu.edu/academic_programs/calendars/academic_calendar/). The Late Drop Policy is located at: <http://www.sjsu.edu/aars/policies/latedrops/policy/>. Students should be aware of the current deadlines and penalties for dropping classes.

### **Classroom Protocol**

You will be on time to class and stay the entire time. Arriving late or leaving early will result in decreased participation points.

All electronic devices will be turned off and stowed before entering class, unless you have an exception from the DRC. Electronic devices used during class may be confiscated for the class period.

You will bring your book(s) to each class meeting.

You will participate in class discussions, exercises, quizzes, and all other classroom activities.

This class focuses on controversial and challenging readings, and while you may disagree with them or your colleagues' opinions, you will respectfully respond to both the readings and your colleagues. There will be no talking or texting while someone else is speaking.

You will come to class prepared to participate, having read the assigned readings for the day, completed any homework, and prepared questions or comments about the assigned readings.

All homework will be assigned in class.

Quizzes and other class activities may not be made up.

If you miss a class, ask a classmate what you missed, including assignments.

If you miss class due to illness, please contact me via email to let me know, and bring a doctor's note when you return to class with any assignment that was due when you missed.

### **Assignments and Grading Policy**

There will be two essays and two exams for this class. The essays are designed to give you practice in developing your own arguments and responding to the arguments of others. You will follow MLA guidelines for formatting and documentation of your essays, and your writing must demonstrate both an understanding of the principles of critical thinking we are studying and a command of grammar, syntax, paragraphing, and essay form. The exams are designed to assess your understanding of the concepts taught throughout the semester.

**Readings:** All readings must be done prior to coming to class for the day they are assigned. Be prepared to discuss the readings in class, bringing pertinent questions or making helpful comments.

**Essays:** There will be two essays assigned for this class.

- You will receive essay assignments in class, detailing all of the requirements, including due dates and word requirements.
- All essays must be turned in on time, at the beginning of the class on the day they are due. I do not accept emailed or faxed essays.
- Late essays will be accepted only with a written medical excuse or other documentation I deem acceptable; within one week, there will be no penalty.
- The penalty for late essays that are not excused is a 10-point (10%) deduction for each calendar day late.
- Essays will follow MLA guidelines for formatting and citations; failure to follow MLA guidelines will result in point deductions.
- In addition to turning in the hard copy of the essay, essays must be uploaded to [www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com) prior to coming to class on the day they are due. Failure to upload the essay will result in a grade of F.
- Uploading the essay late will result in a 10-point (10%) deduction for each calendar day late.
- Peer-edited essays (when part of the assignment) must be turned in with the final essay or there will be a 10-point (10%) deduction.
- Essays will be graded with a rubric that will be discussed in class prior to the due date. Essays and rubrics will be commented upon and marked to help you improve your writing and thinking. It is your responsibility to understand all comments and show improvement in subsequent assignments.

**Please note:** All written work (essays, reader responses, homework assignments) must demonstrate competency in the grammatical, syntactical, and mechanical conventions of Standard English in order

to receive a passing grade. In this course, a grammatically, syntactically, and mechanically competent piece of writing is one that contains no more than two errors that impede clear transmission of meaning and does not repeat an error marked on a previous assignment.

**Exams:** There will be two exams for this class. You will receive information in class on what will be covered for each exam with ample time to study. Each exam will ask you to analyze passages and identify key concepts of critical thinking that have been studied up to that point, including defining key terms in critical thinking and the rhetoric of argument. You will stay in class for the duration of the exam.

There is a 48-hour waiting period to see me about an essay or exam grade.

Keep all of your graded work throughout the semester.

**Workshops:** At least one essay will be workshopped in class prior to the essay due date.

- The workshop protocol will be distributed and discussed in class prior to the first workshop.
- A completed rough draft will be finished prior to the workshop; outlines, incomplete, and/or handwritten essays are not acceptable.
- Workshops cannot be made up.

**Homework:** There will be homework assigned every week in class.

- All homework must be typed and turned in on time by the due date and will be used for class participation. Handwritten homework will not be accepted.
- Homework cannot be made up without a written medical excuse or other documentation deemed acceptable by me; within one week, there will be no penalty.
- If you miss class, contact another student to get any homework assignments.

**Class Participation:** Your presence in class is necessary for participation. Class participation will be made up of in-class exercises, quizzes, homework assignments, and discussions based on the readings and homework. Class participation is assessed on a point basis. Points are cumulative for the semester, and will be turned into a letter grade by dividing the points earned by the total number of points possible. Points will vary each class period, based on activities. See the scale below for attributes of different grade levels:

- A = Regular, helpful questions and comments; fully engaged; all tasks completed fully, accurately, and demonstrates competent writing;
- B = Occasional, pertinent questions and comments; good listening; all tasks completed, demonstrates competent writing, though may contain a minor error;
- C = Infrequent, tangential questions or comments; attentiveness questionable; most tasks completed, demonstrates fair writing, perhaps including a major error or a few minor errors;
- D = Rare interaction; disengaged from discussion; not prepared for class; tasks incomplete, demonstrates weak writing, including several errors;
- F = Regularly absent, physically or mentally; tasks incomplete or mismanaged, demonstrates weak writing including errors that impede meaning.

In-class activities cannot be made up if you miss a class, regardless of the reason.

There is **no** extra credit for this class.

**Your final grade will be determined as follows:**

Essay #1: Analyzing an argument, 700-800 words	15%
Essay #2: Argument, 1000-1100 words	25%

Exam #1: Analyzing an argument, defining terms, 400-500 words	20%
Exam #2 (Final): Analyzing and assessing arguments, short answer problems, 600-700 words	30%
Class Participation and homework:	10%

**Grading: A-F**, based on a percent scale: 93-100=A, 90-92=A-, 87-89=B+, 83-86=B, 80-82=B-, 77-79=C+, 73-76=C, 70-72=C-, 67-69=D+, 63-66=D, 60-62=D-, 0-59=F.

The Department of English reaffirms its commitment to the differential grading scale as defined in the official SJSU Catalog (“The Grading System”). Grades issued must represent a full range of student performance: A = excellent; B = above average; C = average; D = below average; F = failure.

### **Academic Integrity**

Your commitment as a student to learning is evidenced by your enrollment at San Jose State University. The University's Academic Integrity policy, located at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/S07-2.htm>, requires you to be honest in all of your academic course work. Faculty members are required to report all infractions to the office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development. The Student Conduct and Ethical Development website is at [http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/judicial\\_affairs/index.html](http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/judicial_affairs/index.html). Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Cheating on exams or plagiarism will result in a failing grade of the assignment, at the very least, and may result in further sanctions by the University. You will complete and submit your own work for this class. If you would like to submit work done in this class for another class or work done in another class for this class, you must get approval from both instructors.

### **Campus Policy in Compliance with the American Disabilities Act**

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need to make special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, or see me during office hours. Presidential Directive 97-03 requires that students with disabilities requesting accommodations must register with the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at <http://www.drc.sjsu.edu/> to establish a record of their disability.

### **SJSU Writing Center**

Should you need or desire help with developing your thinking and writing skills, please take advantage of free tutoring at the Writing Center. The SJSU Writing Center is located in room 126 in Clark Hall. It is staffed by professional instructors and upper-division or graduate-level writing specialists from each of the seven SJSU colleges. Our writing specialists have met a rigorous GPA requirement, and they are well trained to assist all students at all levels within all disciplines to become better writers. The Writing Center website: <http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter/about/staff/>.

Because our class focuses on critical thinking in argumentation, clear writing is crucial to your success in this course in all written assignments! So take advantage of the excellent tutoring available at the Writing Center for all of your writing needs, from planning to organizing, revising, editing, style, and grammar.

## English 7, Critical Thinking, Fall 2012, Course Schedule

*The instructor reserves the right to modify readings, assignments, and deadlines as necessary. All changes will be communicated in class with ample notice. Additional readings and all homework will be assigned in class or via email during the course of the semester.*

**Table Course Schedule**

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
1	August 22	Introduction and <u>syllabus quiz</u> ; <b>Homework:</b> Send me a well-written email that includes your full name and the class and section you are in (see pages 12-13 in <i>Writing Logically, Thinking Critically</i> for advice on writing emails).
2	August 27  August 29	<u>Essay #1 Assignment: Analyzing an Argument, 700-800 words</u> (SLO 1-4, 6); <u>Analyzing Arguments Handout</u> ; <i>Writing Logically, Thinking Critically (WLTC)</i> : 1-19 (thinking and writing); <i>Rereading America (RA)</i> : Introduction, 1-15 (SLO 1, 3)  <i>RA</i> : "Learning Power: The Myth of Education and Empowerment," 109-116 (SLO 1-5)
3	September 3  September 5	<b>Labor Day—No class!</b>  <i>WLTC</i> : 21-28, 31-34, 37 (inferences, facts, judgments); <i>RA</i> : "From <i>Report of the Massachusetts Board of Education, 1848</i> ," 116-26 (SLO 1-4, 6)
4	September 10  September 12	<i>WLTC</i> : 42-50 (visual images); <i>RA</i> : "Idiot Nation," 128-47 (SLO 1-4, 6)  <i>WLTC</i> : 51-57 (structure of argument, standard form); <i>RA</i> : "Against School," 148-57 (SLO 1-4, 6)
5	September 17  September 19	<i>WLTC</i> : 58-66 (ambiguity, hidden assumptions); <i>RA</i> : "In the Basement of the Ivory Tower," 238-49 (SLO 1-4, 6)  <i>WLTC</i> : 66-74 (summary, argument, explanation); <i>RA</i> : "From Social Class and the Hidden Curriculum of Work," 169-86; <u>Workshop Protocol Handout</u> (SLO 1-4, 6, 8)
6	September 24  September 26	<u>Workshop Essay #1</u> (SLO 1-6, 8); <i>WLTC</i> : 206-08 (including sources in your writing, avoiding plagiarism)  <b>Essay #1 DUE</b> ; <u>Essay #2 Assignment: Argument, 1000-1100 words</u> (SLO 1-8); <i>WLTC</i> : 75-82 (stasis, rhetorical strategy); <i>RA</i> : "The Myth of the Melting Pot," 373-78 (SLO 1-4, 6)
7	October 1  October 3	<i>WLTC</i> : 82-86 (Rogerian strategy); <i>RA</i> : "From <i>Notes on the State of Virginia</i> ," 378-84 (SLO 1-4, 6)  <i>WLTC</i> : 86-96 (Analyzing rhetoric); <i>RA</i> : "Loot or Find: Fact or Frame," 422-38 (SLO 1-4, 6)
8	October 8  October 10	<i>WLTC</i> : 97-106 (definitions, abstractions); <i>RA</i> : "Causes of Prejudice," 384-98 (SLO 1-4, 6)  <i>WLTC</i> : 106-112 (connotations, appositives); <i>RA</i> : "The End of White America?," 497-511 (SLO 1-4, 6)

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
9	October 15	<i>WLTC</i> : 113-115, 117-119 (extended definitions); <i>RA</i> : "Reading Images of the Melting Pot," 439-48 (SLO 1-4, 6)
	October 17	<b>Exam #1</b> : Analyze argument, define terms, 400-500 words (SLO 1-6)
10	October 22	<i>WLTC</i> : 122-128 (fallacies); <u>Fallacies Handout</u> (SLO 1-4, 6)
	October 24	<i>WLTC</i> : 128-133 (fallacies); <i>RA</i> : "True Women and Real Men: Myths of Gender," 515-20 (SLO 1-4, 6)
11	October 29	<i>WLTC</i> : 133-142 (fallacies); <i>RA</i> : "'Two Ways a Woman Can Get Hurt': Advertising and Violence," 575-601 (SLO 1-4, 6)
	October 31	<i>WLTC</i> : 142-149 (fallacies, analysis); <i>RA</i> : "Reading Images of Gender," 568-74 (SLO 1-4, 6)
12	November 5	<i>WLTC</i> : 191-196 (language); <i>RA</i> : "Becoming Members of Society: Learning the Social Meanings of Gender," 527-37 (SLO 1-4, 6)
	November 7	<i>WLTC</i> : 197-201 (language, grammar, revision); <i>RA</i> : "From Fly Girls to Bitches and Hos," 601-08 (SLO 1-4, 6, 8)
13	November 12	<b>Veteran's Day—No class!</b>
	November 14	<u>Workshop Essay #2</u> (SLO 1-8)
14	November 19	<b>Essay #2 DUE</b> ; <i>WLTC</i> : 150-156 (induction, deduction) (SLO 1-8)
	November 21	<i>WLTC</i> : 157-162 (class logic, syllogisms); <i>RA</i> : "'Bros Before Hos': The Guy Code," 608-18 (SLO 1-4, 6)
15	November 26	<i>WLTC</i> : 163-173 (syllogisms); <i>RA</i> : "The Descent of Men," 618-29 (SLO 1-4, 6)
	November 28	<i>WLTC</i> : 175-180 (induction); <i>RA</i> : "The Death of Macho," 629-38 (SLO 1-4, 6)
16	December 3	<i>WLTC</i> : 180-185 (surveys, statistics, analysis) (SLO 1-4, 6)
	December 5	<i>WLTC</i> : 185-190 (correlation, causation, analysis) (SLO 1-8)
17	December 10	Prepare for final! (SLO 1-8)
	Final Exams: December 17 or 18	<b>Exam #2: Final</b> , Analyze and assess arguments, short answer problems, 600-700 words  Section 1: Monday, December 17, 7:15-9:30AM  Section 3: Tuesday, December 18, 9:45AM-12:00PM  Section 5: Monday, December 17, 12:15-2:30PM