

San José State University
Department of Political Science
POLS 100W: Writing Workshop, Section 1, Fall 2022

Instructor: Dr. Sara Benson

Office Location: Clark 406G

Email: sara.benson@sjsu.edu

Office Hours: 9:30–10:30 MW in person or on Zoom: <https://sjsu.zoom.us/j/91088094738>

Class Days/Time: Mondays/Wednesdays, 10:30–11:45 am

Classroom: Clark 303A

GE/SJSU Studies Category: Written Communication II (Z)/“Writing in the Disciplines”

Course Description

Writing skills for majors in political science. Basic materials; research; memos and research reports, press releases, analyses of political/electoral behavior, political speeches.

This workshop is designed for political science majors. It guides students in developing a writing practice focused on organization, analysis, sentence fluency, voice, and word choice. Course assignments allow students to craft useable pieces of writing, including a scholarship application and a short research report. This work will prepare students for professional writing in political science-related careers and require that students become familiar with the basic aspects of academic research and writing. Each assignment will be resubmitted after deep revision. Course readings will introduce students to the stages of revision and to various theories of composition. As background materials to guide the writing process, the readings can help jumpstart writing sessions and guide students through moments of potential frustration. Student success in this course will be based on consistency and improvement in composition over the course of the term.

Course Format

This course meets in person. All of your work will be submitted for feedback via Canvas.

Course Goals and Learning Outcomes

This course fulfills the “Writing in the Disciplines” General Education requirement (formerly known as Area Z: Written Communication II). Student success in this course is dependent on an active engagement with the research and writing process. The primary goal of the course is for students to develop their own critical writing process. By the end of the course, students will be able to craft short pieces of writing (a scholarship application and a literature review) as well as a longer research paper that incorporates revised elements of the shorter assignments. Students will learn tools for deep revision and to properly cite primary and secondary sources.

General Education/Course Learning Outcomes:

GELO 1: Students shall be able to explain, analyze, develop, and critique ideas effectively, including ideas encountered in multiple readings and expressed in different forms of discourse.

GELO 2: Students shall be able to organize and develop complete discipline-specific texts and other documents for both professional and general audiences, using appropriate editorial and citation standards.

GELO 3: Students shall be able to locate, organize, and synthesize information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose, and to communicate that purpose in writing.

GELO 4: Students shall be able to produce discipline-specific written work that demonstrates upper-division proficiency in language use, grammar, and clarity of expression.

Department/Program Learning Outcomes:

The Department of Political Science has the following goals in mind for this course:

Breadth Students should possess a broad knowledge of the theory and methods of the various branches of the discipline.

Application and Disciplinary Methods Students should be able to formulate research questions, engage in systematic literature searches using primary and secondary sources, evaluate research studies, and critically analyze and interpret influential political texts. Students should be able to apply these techniques to identify, understand, and analyze domestic and international political issues and organizations.

Communication Skills Students should master basic competencies in oral and written communication skills and be able to apply these skills in the context of political science. This means communicating effectively about politics and/or public administration, public policy, and law.

Citizenship Students should acquire an understanding of the role of the citizen in local, state, national, and global contexts and appreciate the importance of lifelong participation in political processes.

Required Texts/Readings

William Zinsser, *On Writing Well (30th Anniversary Edition)* ISBN 0060891548

All other required readings are posted on Canvas.

We will also find sources for certain assignment by conducting library research. The political science librarian at SJSU is Esse Barosso-Ramirez (esse.barosso-ramirez@sjsu.edu).

Course Requirements, Assignments, Grading Policy

****This course requires that students write a minimum of 8,000 words per semester.*

Written Responses and Discussion Posts (~2000 words) (GELO 1)	10% of course grade
Personal Statement (~1000 words) (GELO 2)	20% of course grade
Research Proposal (~1500 words) (GELO 3)	30% of course grade
Research Paper (~5000 words) (GELO 4)	30% of course grade

Written Responses and Discussion Posts

Written Responses: Grades on written responses are based on the quality of your writing with regard to sentence fluency and paragraph structure and the extent to which you are citing sources correctly including reading responses and reflections.

Discussion Posts: Students will post responses to discussion questions and respond respectfully to other students. This is a brave place for us to think critically about our own writing and to learn from our peers. These assignments are Credit/No Credit tasks designed to get you thinking critically about your writing.

Scholarship Application/Personal Statement

This project begins with the “what is political science” essay and resume workshop, but will also require students to research scholarships and grants for which they may be eligible, and to craft an application using a personal statement. Most of these applications will require that the student outline their relationship to the field. Students should use this assignment to draft a useable piece of writing with which they might secure scholarships and grants. Potentially helpful websites include: <http://www.sjsu.edu/polisci/scholarships/> and <http://www.sjsu.edu/faso/Scholarships/>.

Research Proposal

This assignment is comprised of three parts: a research proposal, a literature review, and a bibliography. Each aspect of the assignment will build on the previously submitted assignments and should reflect deep revision. The research proposal should outline the student’s interest in the subject, its significance for the study of politics, and situate the work in relation to relevant scholarly literature. This assignment will eventually be incorporated into the introduction of the research paper.

Research Paper

This assignment should be approximately 15 pages and take the form of a traditional research paper. Students will submit multiple drafts for feedback over the course of the semester. The final assignment will be graded on an adherence to the conventions of writing.

Grading Information and Policies

Grading and Late Policy

In this course, deadlines are important because they keep us on track and provide structure and continuity in the class. All deadlines are listed on Canvas. If you fall behind, you can submit late work and do not need to provide documentation. However, once you submit an assignment, it will be graded once (unless it is part of a scaffolded or sequenced assignment involving rough drafts and final drafts).

No extra credit is available.

This course must be passed with a C or better as a CSU graduation requirement.

Grading Scale

93 to 100	A
90 to 92	A minus
87 to 89	B plus
83 to 86	B
80 to 82	B minus
77 to 79	C plus
73 to 76	C
70 to 72	C minus
63 to 69	D
60 to 62	D minus
less than 60	F

University Policies

Per University Policy S16-9, university-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, etc. will be available on Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs' [Syllabus Information web page](http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/>.

Please review the information about university policies on plagiarism contained above. Plagiarism may result in a failing grade. Faculty members are required to report all infractions to the office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development.

Success in this course 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 3 hours per unit per week with 1 of the hours used for lecture) for instruction or preparation/studying or course related activities including but not limited to internships, labs, clinical practica. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus.

Classroom Protocol

Students should attend all class meetings and participate in class exercises. Please be respectful of your colleagues in class discussions and during peer review exercises. Discussion board discourse should always be professional, respectful, and even generous in this writing community.

Political Science Departmental Writing Policy and SJSU Writing Center

Students of political science should develop the ability to write in clear, grammatical English. Spelling and grammar count. Students must take care that appropriate citations are used. Direct quotations must be so indicated with quotation marks and a specific reference to the page in the source from which it was taken. Failure to cite your sources constitutes academic misconduct which carries with it serious sanctions. A tutorial on citations is available at the library website at http://www.sjlibrary.org/services/literacy/info_comp/citing.htm.

For assistance with writing, please see me or visit the SJSU Writing Center located in Clark Hall, Suite 126. In addition to one-on-one tutoring services, the Writing Center also offers workshops every semester on a variety of writing topics. To make an appointment, visit the Writing Center website at <http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter>.

Political Science 100W: Writing Workshop, Fall 2022

The schedule is subject to change with fair notice.

Date	<u>Topics, Readings, Assignments</u>
Week 0	<u>Course Introductions</u>

Date	<u>Topics, Readings, Assignments</u>
Week 1	<u>Good Writing</u> Film Screening of <i>Bad Writing</i>
Week 2	<u>On Habits and Voice</u> Read John Steinbeck, selections from <i>Journal of a Novel</i> and Audre Lorde, “The Transformation of Silence...” (both posted on Canvas) Written Response Due: Goal Setting
Week 3	<u>Decluttering</u> Read William Zinsser, <i>On Writing Well</i> , 1–91 Written Response Due
Week 4	<u>Resumes</u> Resume Workshop—please bring a draft resume Timed Writing Exercise on Personal Statements Due
Week 5	<u>Personal Statement Workshop</u> Personal Statement Workshop Draft of Personal Statement Due
Week 6	<u>Research and Information Literacy: Working Backwards</u> Library Research Workshop Read Judy Hunter, “The Importance of Citation” (on Canvas) Read Thomas Cronin, “The Write Stuff” (on Canvas) Article Summaries Due
Week 7	<u>Crafting the Research Proposal</u> Workshop on 3 Requirements of the Research Proposal Read Jennifer Hochschild’s “Writing Introductions” (Canvas) Read Knopf and McMenamin, “How to Write a Lit Review” (Canvas)
Week 8	<u>Roadmap Sentences</u> Workshop on Roadmap Sentences Post your roadmap sentence to the discussion board. Watch Speed Revision Video for Personal Statements Final Draft of Personal Statements Due
Week 9	<u>Titles, Quotes, and Paragraph Structure</u> Workshop on PIE Paragraphs, Quotes, and Shifting the Proposal into an Introduction to the Paper Watch Title Workshop Video in Canvas Post your title to the discussion board.
Week 10	<u>Mapping the Sections of the Paper</u> Workshop: Bring a 5-page draft to class for peer review Submit Mapping Workshop on Canvas

Date	<u>Topics, Readings, Assignments</u>
Week 11	<u>Reverse Outlining: Paragraph Sequence and Topic Sentences</u> Workshop on Reverse Outlining and Topic Sentences Submit Reverse Outline
Week 12	<u>Paragraph Structure</u> Workshop on Paragraph Sequence and Structure
Week 13	<u>Mobilizing Quotes Effectively</u> Workshop: Using Sources
Week 14	<u>Building Strong Transitions</u> Workshop on Transitions (See Guide on Canvas)
Week 15	<u>Crafting Conclusions</u> Workshop on Conclusions
Week 16	<u>Course Conclusion</u> Review Final Paper Checklist on Canvas

***Final paper due on Canvas by Monday, December 12th at noon.**