

*Section 35	T/Th 9:00-10:15 (42428)	Instructor	Cherri Porter
*Section 27	M/W 4:30-5:45 (42420)	Email	cjp23@csus.edu
Office	Calaveras 142	Phone	278-6349 (please don't leave messages)
Office Hours	T/Th 10:30-11:00 & by appt.	Website	http://webpages.csus.edu/%7Ecjp23/06fall.html

*This is a computer intensive course; we will use computers extensively for reading & writing assignments and you will need regular access to a computer with internet to be successful.

ENGL 001A. College Composition. (CSUS Catalog 2004-2006.) Intensive writing that provides students with practice in the kinds of challenging thinking, reading, and writing required in academic discourse. Concentrates on prewriting, drafting, and rewriting processes that address a variety of rhetorical and academic tasks. Special attention given to effective development and support of ideas. Writing requirement: a minimum of 5,000 words. This course also satisfies the General Education Requirement for Area A-2 Written Communication <<http://www.csus.edu/acaf/Portfolios/GE/geareaA2.stm>>.

Welcome to English 1A

The purpose of English 1A is to introduce students to the intellectual work and writerly practices of the university, primarily by engaging them in challenging reading and writing. Through significant practice at writing, of various lengths, types and complexities, students will develop the kinds of scholarly habits essential to university course work. Specifically, the goals for this course are that you:

- develop strategies to critically read and analyze a variety of texts
- understand writing as a dynamic act, as made up of dynamic reading & writing processes
- use writing to explore what you don't yet know or understand: think through writing
- enhance critical thinking practices and processes--hone the critical lens
- engage regularly in writing tasks of varying length and complexity
- gain experience with academic conventions; adapt to specific purposes & audiences
- develop a repertoire of writing strategies to engage as the rhetorical situation demands
- develop strategies to revise your own writing, and collaborate with peers on revision
- reflect on your own writerly practices and articulate those reflections in writing
- evaluate and integrate sources into your work and effectively use a writer's handbook

Required Materials

- A Text, **Write to Learn**, by Donald Murray, 2005, ISBN 1413001734. Please buy used. Don't pay for infotrac; you don't need it. The bookstore is selling it for \$38+; I've seen it online for \$12-\$20. Please have one in hand by September 19.
- A **Handbook** of your choice. Consider The Pocket Wadsworth Handbook, edited by Kirsznner & Mandell, The Pocket Style Manual, edited by Diana Hacker, or Pocket Keys for Writers, edited by Ann Raimés. If you have one from a previous class, feel free to use it. Browse the English 1/1A sections upstairs in the bookstore and pick out one you like. If you're an English major, buy the MLA Handbook. Ask your advisor if your major has a recommend handbook and purchase the one that will have the most long-term benefit for you. Have by October 1.
- Money for printing and/or copying** readings, writings & handouts
- Binder Clips** for turning in assignments; manila envelope for turning in Final Portfolio
- A working **email** you check regularly
- Samlink** account <www.salink.csus.edu/salink> for computer lab access and WebCT
- Access to a computer with word processing and internet services
 - go to <<http://www.csus.edu/uccs/labs/>> for information about campus labs and hours
 - go to <<http://www.csus.edu/salink/dialin/>> for information about free dial up service
- A working **OneCard** with money on it for printing course materials & using the library
 - <http://www.csus.edu/onecard/>
 - <http://www.csus.edu/printsmart/>
- Paper, pens & a storage system for class materials—**Keep Everything!**
- A disk, flash drive or some other method of storing computer files. You can save files to WebCT.

The Time

Although you may have been advised otherwise, in my opinion, 18 units a semester is too many for first year students and too many when enrolled in a 3 unit writing class. Writing is a time intensive activity and this class will require a good amount of your time. You're strongly advised to make room in your schedule this semester so that you can devote sufficient time to this course. There will be some reading and some writing due each week of the semester, though the amount of that reading and writing will vary from week to week. Don't let this work stack up. Academic reading and writing necessitates more time and energy than our casual culture generally requires of us. Plan in advance and give yourself sufficient time to thoroughly complete the assigned work. The adage "you get what you give" is really applicable for writing courses; the more time and energy you put into your work the more you will gain as a thinker and a writer. If you fall behind it will be difficult to catch up; we pick up speed as we move through the semester and there is no time to slack off.

The Writing

Writing does not happen in a void; there is something at stake, a reason, a need, an impulse—even if that impulse happens to be a class deadline in a university-wide course requirement. The most important reason to write in this class, besides the grade, is to explore what you think, to explore what you do not yet know, to think through writing. Most of our work will be to that effect.

We'll write every day in class. You'll have short homework assignments of various types throughout the semester. Often you will respond to something you've read; sometimes you will practice a certain type of writing or to do preparation for one of your papers. Sometimes you'll write to peers about their writing. You'll also have formal projects that will be explained as we go. Each project will focus on different types of writing situations, styles, and techniques. **All will require you to work through many stages and many drafts. Revision is the bread and butter of all good writing, and all good writers write and revise early drafts on the road to better and "done" written works. It's called "the writing process," except it's not really *one process* so much as it is *a series of varying, dynamic processes* that each writer does in her/his own unique ways.**

When you write in college, you are also joining a conversation already in progress. Your voice and your ideas are important contributions to the collective conversation, as well as essential contributions to this class and your learning. In a sense, Academia isn't a location, nor is it many specific locations. Academia, which you are now a part of, is a *Conversation*, both written and oral, that evolves as each new student enters each university, each new semester, everywhere in the world. For all of your courses, and especially for this course, you must show up and participate in this ever-evolving conversation or your grade—and more importantly—your learning, will suffer. **Learning is a messy and unpredictable endeavor; your learning isn't so much dependent upon my teaching as it is dependent upon your own engagement with the work of this course. How much you learn is directly connected to your willingness to work and your efforts to write a lot and to revise even more.**

Our overarching theme for the semester is "American Identity." As you'll quickly come to see, this theme is extremely relevant not only because of the historical moment in which we live, but because of the nature of what it has meant to be American since day one. The ideas we will be working with are not only relevant to your own lives, but will hopefully be interesting as well.

The writing you will do in this class is a mixture of formal and informal, rough and polished, brief and medium-length. All the writing you do will require your engagement in rigorous problematizing, thinking and rethinking. The forms of the writing for this class may at times be unfamiliar to you, but what is important is that you are engaging in the quality of thinking required of successful academic writers for effective communication in particular rhetorical contexts. One of the things you'll learn as we move through the semester is that each writing moment requires its own specific writerly processes, rhetorical strategies, and refined content; you'll gain experience with which writerly card to play for which particular writerly moment as you practice and revise your work this semester.

Course Requirements

Points	Percent	Category
(300 points)	30%	Informal work (15%); Attendance & Presence (15%) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Regular freewrites, in-class guided writing, and process memos <input type="checkbox"/> Regular reading responses to course readings and classmate writing <input type="checkbox"/> Other short writing and revision assignments given as homework and/or completed in class (such as development exercises, revision exercises, memory draft, radical revisions, quote analyses, reverse outline, study questions, song analysis, reading quizzes, blogs, etc.)
(600 points)	60%	Formal Work—through many drafts and revisions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Exploratory essays <input type="checkbox"/> 4 Critical Inquiry Exercises <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Multi-Genre Project <input type="checkbox"/> Revisions-Revisions-Revisions
(100 points)	10%	Final Assignment and Collected Works Portfolio <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Final Portfolio Letter, Revisions and Materials <input type="checkbox"/> Final Portfolio "Take Home" Essay (Problematizing American Identity)
(1000 points)	100%	Total

Conferences

You're expected to schedule a conference with me outside of our regular class **at least once** during the semester; you may schedule more as needed. At this conference we will discuss your writing and your work in this class. You must attend a conference to fulfill the course requirements. If time permits, the schedule may be adjusted to accommodate the conference. All extra afterdraft revisions require a conference as well.

Course Policies

Attendance Policy

Because this class is dependent on your engagement in writing and reading tasks, regular attendance is essential to your success and is required. Plan to attend every class session, arrive on time and be alert. More than three absences or excessive tardies or excessive disinterest will lower your final grade. You begin the semester with two *free* absences—which you should use wisely; 10 points will be subtracted from your grade for each absence, 5 for each tardy. If you miss more than four classes, you will have great difficulty passing this class. You cannot make up informal daily work. You should ask your peers if you need notes from missed classes. And no whining! I get that life happens, and that sometimes you can't make it to class for valid reasons. Do your best to plan ahead, to turn your work in on time, to come to every class and to work hard. I hope you do not have any emergencies this semester. Please talk to me if you do.

Class Preparation and Late Assignments

Assignments are due at the beginning of class time on the day they appear on the syllabus. **Late informal work is not accepted.** All drafts of formal writing assignments are due on the class days assigned or **your grade will decrease by one letter grade** for every day late. This means if a "B" paper is turned in one class period late, it becomes a "C" paper. See the class web site for evaluation details. Turn all work in on time to receive full credit.

The Portfolio Process

Each formal assignment will be worked through many revisions. Eventually, you'll turn in a "final" draft to be graded. You may choose to keep the grade you receive or you may revise again. The final portfolio will not require you to revise the work you've already revised and turned in for a grade, but will ask you to organize and reflect on your work. All revisions will be complete before the final portfolio process begins.

Extra Revisions—The Afterdraft

After each formal assignment is graded and returned, you can choose to revise again for a chance to earn more points. These afterdraft revisions are voluntary and the responsibility for the afterdraft revision process falls on your shoulders. If you would like to revise a formal assignment after it is graded, you must: 1) make a conference with me within one week of your work being returned, 2) develop a revision plan (one-page typed) and determine a deadline, 3) make an appointment at the writing center if one is available, and 4) complete the revision and turn it in by the above deadline. Through this process you may earn points up to 90% of the total assignment points you did not receive the first time. For example, if you earned 80 points on the assignment the first time, you did not earn 20 points. Therefore, you can earn up to 90% of 20 points, or 18 points, through the afterdraft revision process.

Presence: Respect, Integrity, Contribution and Attention

Be respectful of the thoughts and contributions of your classmates. Horseplay, disrespect and insults have no place in any classroom and will not be tolerated. We will be discussing many topics and some of you may have strong opinions about any number of these. I don't ask that you agree with each other, but that you respect your peers' and your teacher's right to different opinions. By respect, I mean no talking over, no cutting off, no talking down, no eye rolling, no passive-aggressive muttering under your breath, and no whining, etc. Backbiting has no place here.

A constant negative attitude or lack of participation will compromise your attendance & presence points as will other inappropriate behaviors; you may be asked to leave if your attitude or actions become disruptive or distracting to others. **No text messaging ever—you text message, you leave for the day. No emailing or surfing the web is ever allowed during class.**

Academic Honesty and the Challenge of Citing Sources

Ask questions, share your writing with others, and collaborate. These behaviors are all parts of doing your own work. But, don't steal/borrow/buy other people's work. If you're willing to turn in someone else's work as your own, what then, is the point of college for you? If someone has a good idea or a good phrase, and you want to use it, use it—but cite the origin of it. Please read the CSUS policy on cheating and plagiarism and the sanctions thereof. Each student is responsible for knowing and playing by the rules <<http://aaweb.csus.edu/catalog/0406/IntroductoryPages/Academic%20Policies.pdf>>.

I recognize that learning to use and cite sources correctly in your own writing is annoying at best and skull-numbingly annoying at worst. We'll work on this throughout the semester so you won't be at risk of involuntarily plagiarizing. I get that it's tough. I'm constantly looking stuff up in the MLA guide—**all writers look stuff up and ask other people when they have questions. That's what writers do. Writing is often an exercise in problem solving.** In fact, source citing is often one of the biggest and most annoying problems writers solve, but it's also one of the most necessary, in academia at least. My best advice is: when in doubt, cite. Look it up in your handbook. When you're not sure how to cite something, use parentheses to say where it's from and indicate that you don't know how to cite it. And, as always, ask someone for help when you need it.

Collaboration

During the semester we will work collaboratively on a regular basis to help each other learn, understand, and improve. We'll utilize a practice you may already be familiar with as "peer workshops." I also sometimes refer to these collaborations as sharing and responding as those terms reflect what it is you are asked to do with your peers. You are expected to be prepared with copies of your drafts or homework on these days, and to participate in the process of collaborating with your peers as a necessary part of this course. For each collaborative class you miss, or fail to bring complete drafts to, 15 points will be deducted from the overall assignment points. **(This is significant. Students who fail this class often do so because they don't keep up with the daily work load and so don't complete drafts on time and don't participate in peer workshops.)** You will also respond to the writing and ideas of your peers on WebCT. We'll do this formally a few times during the semester, but you are always welcome to respond, respectfully and appropriately, any time you like. Again, your participation in this process is essential.

All of the writing you do in this class is “public” writing, and as such, you should not submit work that you wish to keep private or that is sensitive material for you.

➡ Assignment Logistics Ⓒ

Keep Track of Your Stuff

Write your name on and keep everything! There is no required organization system for this class--just write and keep your writing somewhere you can access it. Be sure to save backups of computer work.

Formatting

All formal and informal writing should have one-inch margins, double spacing (feel free to triple spacing early drafts for making changes), and be typed in a standard 12 point font (Times, Palatino) unless otherwise specified. Avoid fonts that are hard to read. Assignments should be printed from a good quality printer in black ink. The body of the text should be left aligned. On multiple page documents, please use a header (under the “view” menu in Word) that includes your last name and page number in the right-hand corner. One staple in the left hand corner is enough binding. Invest in a stapler—it’s worth the money for my sanity (and you want me sane). Also, **you’ll need some binder clips** for keeping stacks of drafts together as these can become bulky with multiple revisions. **See the class web site** to download a word file that is correctly formatted—you simply fill in your own specifics. See your handbook for more details about paper formatting if needed.

Titles

Paper titles should be centered, and original! “Essay” is not a title; it’s lazy. Well-titled papers cue the reader for what’s ahead and get them interested in reading your work. They also help you, me and your peers know what assignment it is we are reading. We’ll work on creating good titles.

➡ Assignment Evaluation and Grading Ⓒ

Mothers are wont to say, “I’m not talking to hear myself talk,” and I think a similar expression applies to writing teachers: “I don’t write comments on your papers so I can read what I wrote.” I write them to you for your own thoughtful reflection. I’ve thoughtfully read and reflected on your writing; please thoughtfully read my comments and reflect on them in terms of your writing. If you don’t understand them, ask me, or consult a peer. If the comments frustrate you, sit with them. Wait a day, read your paper again, read my comments again and then come talk to me.

I will let you know what works, what’s good, what you do well. I will offer recommendations for revision, and I may suggest sections you need to develop more or expand on. And, I often ask questions to get you to think about your purpose, audience, execution, argument, assumptions, logical errors, etc. Commenting on your work at various stages in your writing processes is the main way I have for directly encouraging and supporting your developing revision practices. A writing class is largely a class of **many writings and re-writings**. Ninety percent of the work you do in this class will be beginning and revising. Finishing a piece of writing, although crucial to your success in college, in a relatively small part of the writing process.

I will read much of the work you do in this class, but I will not read everything. I will respond to a lot of stuff you write, but not to everything. I will grade some of the stuff you write, but not everything. You are writing to improve your ability to write, to learn, to express what you’ve learned. My reading and responding to your writing, although significant, is only a part of this process.

I will consider at what stage in the writing process you are at when I respond to and evaluate your work. On early drafts, I’m concerned about ideas—what are you writing and what are you saying about it? On middle drafts I begin to consider organization, flow, focus and support. Later drafts are for fine-tuning, for working out the kinks and pulling in all the loose threads. I’ll almost never respond to grammar and usage issues in early and middle drafts, largely because these are issues of copy editing to be done on final drafts, and not issues of writing and revision. But, I will consider usage in later drafts,

or in drafts that are close to done. We'll talk as a class about these issues as needed. I'm not grading your work based on mistakes, but your papers should be as grammatically clean as you can make them. If the grammar/usage is clunky and problematic, it will distract your reader, and your teacher, from what you're really trying to say.

Often on early drafts, I'll read the work of all students, but respond holistically. Many times students need work on the same areas or need to improve in similar ways. When this happens I usually develop a handout specific to the need of the class and respond to the class as a whole.

General Evaluation Considerations

Each formal assignment has assignment-specific evaluation guidelines and you'll know what these looks like before you start writing. Your feedback through process memos and at other points along the way will inform these guidelines.

Although each assignment is different, below is series of questions that generally apply to everything we write in this class. This list is an overview of things I consider as I evaluate a large variety of writing projects. It is not a fixed checklist but rather a general lens for evaluation. You might want to ask yourself these questions as you work at revising your writings toward final drafts.

- **Process:** Did the writer engage in a healthy, involved writing process, carrying the project through multiple revisions?
- **Intellectual engagement and vigor:** What is the strength and genuineness of the writer's ideas, and how well does the writer contextualize, problematize, and analyze those ideas? In other words, how and how well does the writer think through writing?
- **Assignment:** How did the writer respond to the assignment criteria and/or the writing prompt? Did the writer meet the challenges posed and/or fulfill the specific problems of the assignment?
- **Controlling idea and focus:** Does each paragraph, each sentence even, focus the reader on the writer's main points? Does each paragraph, each sentence matter?
- **Support, development and analysis:** Does the writer explain and support her/his points in sufficient depth, with information relevant and appropriate for the intended reader?
- **Organization, form, order:** Is the essay well organized? Is the form/genre/approach of the essay appropriate to the purpose? Does it follow from a clear beginning to well-developed middle through a clear, appropriate end? Is the content (the paragraphs) of the essay in the best order?
- **Presentation:** To what extent is the essay uncluttered, "grammatically" clean, and free from distracting errors?
- **Effort, gains, growth, progress:** How has the writer engaged in the tasks and improved/gained/progressed in her/his practices as a college writer? Is there evidence of (re)thinking, revision, reflection on the part of the writer?
- **Self evaluation:** What does the writer think she or he accomplished with this work?

Other Information

My Research

I consider myself a teacher-learner-scholar, and am very concerned with reflecting on and revising my own teaching practices. This semester I continue to work on an ongoing research project regarding my own teaching. You will be informed of this project on the first day of class and will be asked to participate through anonymous feedback and evaluations in this course. I will also ask you for permission to use your writing in my future research. I'll provide handouts and permission forms regarding this project early in the semester. Feel free at any time to ask me questions about it.

Where to seek help

This is only one semester to prepare for four years of college writing. Since succeeding in college is largely about effective problem-solving, consider these resources as starting places.

Your Teacher Don't call me; EMAIL!	Email me quick questions. Visit me during office hours or make an appointment. I hold office hours for your benefit. Use them. Bring your writing so we can reference it.
Your Peers	Email or chat through WebCT or get together for writing groups. Ask your peers what they think, what they are working on, how their writing is going. You just might make friends and you'll most probably be a better writer for it.
CSUS Writing Center Calaveras 128 278-6356	It's a great service and it's free. Use it and use it early. Your emergency is not their emergency and their appointment slots fill up fast. Try it, you might like it. If you don't, call them and politely cancel your next session.
Class Website	Check out the ever-evolving class website for links to writer resources, tutorials and more. Suggest content if you have ideas.
The University Library	http://library.csus.edu/ Reference librarians are paid to and (most) love to help!
Services to Students with Disabilities	http://www.csus.edu/sswd/ If you have a documented disability and verification from SSWD, and wish to discuss academic accommodations, please contact me asap.

Notes on Reading

Part of learning to think critically and learning to write well is learning to read critically and read well. College reading requires more than skimming the words on the page for general facts and main points. You may start a difficult reading assignment by skimming it, by considering the title, the sub headings, and the main points, but previewing the texts is just the start of what good readers do. Good readers interact with the texts they read. They underline words and phrases, circle and look up important terms, and write questions and comments in the margins. Good readers re-read things they like or things they don't understand. Good readers ask questions of the text and they don't assume the writer is always accurate or truthful or writing in their best interest. Good readers consider how each text they read speaks to other texts and connects to other knowledges.

A Reader Questions

Below are questions all readers should ask of the texts they read. Use these questions as a critical tool for good reading throughout the semester and beyond.

1. What is the text's purpose? What textual evidence can you find that supports this purpose?
2. Who is the author? What is their perspective, background, tone, bias, etc?
3. Who is the (intended/unintended) audience/reader?
4. What is the primary content/message/subject of the text?
5. What is the context of this text? (Consider: time, place, circumstances, historical moment, publication source, corporate ties, political climate, etc. as elements of context.)
6. What form does this text take? What is the genre/format/medium and is that genre/format/medium appropriate and effective? Or, how does that genre/format/medium shape the text and its message?