

EWRT 1A: English Composition

Fall 2023

Days & Time: Online—Asynchronous (Sections 58Z & 76Z)

Instructor: John Gravener

Office & Office Hours: Online via Zoom (within Canvas) Fridays 3-4 p.m.

Phone Messages: (415) 310-6677 (this is my cell phone)

E-mail: via Canvas or john@gravener.com (the best way to get me)

Texts/Required Class Materials

- *Rereading America: Cultural Contexts for Critical Thinking and Writing, 11th Edition*, Gary Colombo, Robert Cullen, and Bonnie Lisle
- Other texts—you will choose only one based on the group you are in:
 - *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* by Michelle Alexander; Publisher: The New Press (January 16, 2012) ISBN: 1595586431
- Some kind of writing handbook, but you can also use the following web site if you are short on funds: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/> Either way, you are going to have to refer to something in order to help you with your essays and your research paper. You will be held responsible for this info.
- Notebook, dictionary (in general, items that will prepare you for class)
- An email account that you check regularly

Prerequisites: English Writing 211 & Reading 211; or Language Arts 211; or placement based on the English Placement Test

Course Description and Objectives

In English 1A, I emphasize the important connection between critical reading, thinking, and writing. Your textbook (see above) takes an intensive look at cross-cultural issues and themes affecting the lives of Americans today as well as those in the past. The essays presented in the text offer a broad perspective of selected topics, providing an opportunity to evaluate and reevaluate biases and preconceived notions about subjects. Most importantly, the selections present good writings that are valuable tools in generating material for writing journals, collaborative activities, and for individual writing assignments.

The ultimate aim in this class is to emphasize writing as an effective tool and an important necessity, closely allied with the other aspects of communication: thinking, listening, and speaking. Thus, in addition to our involvement with the techniques of writing, this course will also concentrate on readings and careful observations as obligatory companions leading to the critical written response, such as essays. Readings from *Rereading America*, for instance, will address topics and issues common to the human experience (i.e., the environment, family, education) as found in the form of an essay. Moreover, these essays will serve as stimuli (that's plural for *stimulus*) for rhetorical discussions, formal and informal evaluations, analysis, argumentation, and research.

After review of the composition process, we will begin to explore and examine our readings through reader response exercises (Think Papers), class lectures, discussions, and collaborative activities.

These, in sum, will lead to prewriting activities and essays. I won't lie; we will do a great deal of writing in this class (see below, under "Required Work"). The objective here is for you to become a writer who can critically read, think, react, and respond in writing to almost any topic or issue, in any given situation.

As a student in this class, the following are the expected student outcomes (of course, these outcomes just do not magically happen; you have to make a concerted effort):

You will:

1. Practice writing as a multi-step process including planning and revising with attention to varying purposes, audiences, and rhetorical strategies.
2. Read and analyze rhetorically and culturally diverse narrative and expository texts from a variety of perspectives.

By the end of this quarter, you will know more about expressive, persuasive and analytical writing, and you will probably know more about yourself. You will be better equipped to understand, if not agree with, ways of looking at the world that are not in accordance with your own.

Required Work:

- Complete all reading and writing assignments on time. For reading, this means having it done before the class session in which they will be discussed. For writing, this means having it done by the day specified. The out-of-class writings are to be submitted via Canvas. **In order to submit the essays via Canvas, you must use Microsoft Word (not WordPad or MS Works) or PDF. Google Docs will allow you to save your work in either format. You also have access to Office 365 as a student at De Anza.**
- Take unannounced quizzes on readings. No make-up quizzes or final exam will be permitted.
- Write approximately 6-7,000 words: 4 essays and a final exam.
- There are ten (10) think papers required, and these are to be at least a single page in length. These papers will be based on your readings from the texts. In other words, each of your papers will deal with an aspect contained in each grouping. **These are not to be critiques of the readings!** Instead, they are to be your examination, evaluation, and argumentation (for or against) of/about the author's position and ideas and how those ideas relate to the world outside of the text, the real world in which we live now, being sure to include solid reasons for what you say. You will have to seriously **THINK** about what you are reading.
- The enhancement projects are designed to enhance your success in this course. The enhancement projects, of which there will be 3, consist of work in the areas of research and critical thinking. You may do this work at home or in one of the computer labs on campus (or even the library!). Deadlines are noted on the assignment schedule.
- Complete other miscellaneous assignments such as viewing a film, participating in group activities, writing short in-class essays, participating in class or small group discussions and peer critiques, doing library research, attending a guest speaker lecture, and pretty much anything else that I might be able to come up with.

Evaluation:

This is a letter grade course. The last day to drop with a **W** is November 17th. If you do not want a **W**, then drop by October 8th. **It is ultimately your responsibility to drop from the course; do not depend on me doing it for you!**

Your grade will be determined by the following formula:

Out-of-class Essays #1-4 50%	A=90%-100%
Participation: 15%	B=80%-89%
Quizzes, Think Papers: 10%	C=70%-79%
Final Exam: 15%	D=60%-69%
Group presentations: 10%	F=59%-below

Course Policies:

- Attendance is mandatory. I will only allow 2 absences (excused or unexcused) during the quarter. If you miss more than 3, you may be dropped from the class. Absences will also be reflected in your overall participation grade (10 pts. deduction per/day) since you can't participate if you are not here.
- Late work (out-of-class essays, Think Papers, or Enhancement Modules) will not be accepted. Period.
- Revisions are possible for one of the four main essays (not the final exam, obviously). Revisions will be due 1 week after I have returned the original to you. Any changes made to the original must be highlighted in your revision.
- Disruptive Behavior (consistent tardiness, rudeness to classmates and instructor, use of electronic equipment such as cellular phones & pagers, doing homework for other classes, etc.) will not be tolerated in the classroom, and may result in you being dismissed from the classroom.

Final Exam: Thursday, December 14th (online, you will be able to access at any time)

This is a college level course and materials of an adult nature will not be censored due to their relevance to issues discussed in class. No student is ever penalized for their opinion, whether stated in class or in their writing. Just be able to back up any claim/assertion made.

Essays Written Outside of Class: As stated above, all essays that are written outside of class will be submitted via email unless you have a compelling reason as to why you cannot do so. The format for each of the essays will be as follows:

Margins:	1" all the way around
Font size:	No larger than 12, and must be in Times New Roman
Justify:	Align text to the left margin, turning off full document justification

Citation:	All of your essays will require citation, and you are required to use MLA formatting. See the sample paper for examples.
Line spacing:	Double-space entire paper. There should be NO MORE THAN one blank line between each line, <u>including paragraphs</u> .

Believe me when I say that I know all of the tricks to make a printed page look fuller or a completed essay look longer; I was once a student, too. There is absolutely no reason why each of you should not be able to write an adequate to exceptional paper based on the material we will be discussing in class. As long as you do not wait until the last minute to start your papers, you will have no problem in filling at least four pages completely.

If your paper does not meet the basic MLA format, it will be returned unread to you.

Upon entering the course, students are expected to understand basic English skills (including but not limited to the following: an understanding of sound grammatical principles, the ability to make and support a claim/thesis, the ability to develop a multi-paragraphed essay, and the proper use of MLA format and documentation) and are expected to acquire more sophisticated reading and composition skills throughout the term. The writing assignments serve to illustrate that the student has read and contemplated each text in more than a cursory fashion and should further develop your college-level academic writing skills.

If you need some help and do not own a writing handbook (which you should), you can go to the best web site out there: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/>

In order to insure software compatibility for essays submitted via email, **all essays are to be submitted in Microsoft Word or PDF**. The computers in the library and computer lab fulfill this requirement.

Quizzes: Quizzes will be based on the reading assignments for that day and will occur randomly. They will be given during the first five minutes or so of the class, so try not to come late. There will be four questions that will be graded as follows: 4 right = A, 3 = B, 2 = C, 1 = D, and 0 = F. Quizzes cannot be made up, so if you are absent or late, you will be assigned an F. The quizzes are not meant as grade breakers, but rather they are a way for me to make sure that you do the reading.

Plagiarism: Submitting work that is not yours is a moral and ethical aberration. If you wish to use somebody else's ideas or words, make sure it is well documented. The minimum penalty for plagiarism is an "F" on the assignment in which the plagiarism occurs.

At De Anza College, dishonesty (such as cheating) is defined as the act of obtaining or attempting to obtain credit for academic work through deceptive means. Academic dishonesty at De Anza includes, but is not limited to:

- copying, in part or in whole, from another person's test;
- submitting work previously presented in another course;
- using or consulting during an examination, sources or material not authorized by instructor;
- altering and interfering with grading or grading instructions;
- sitting in for an examination for another student;
- allowing anyone else to see your paper during an exam, test, or quiz;
- plagiarizing, copying sentences, phrases, or passages from an uncited source while writing a paper.

The above policy and student disciplinary/student grievances procedures can be found in the De Anza catalog. It is suggested that you make yourself familiar with these policies.