

Syllabus for English 1A

“Education is not the learning of facts but the training of the mind to think.”
-Albert Einstein

Course Information

Semester & Year: Fall 2021
Course ID & Section #: Engl-1A-D1968
Location & Time: DM 34 M/W 12:30-02:35pm
Textbook: *They Say, I Say* (4th Edition), Gerald Graff and Cathy Birkenstein
ISBN-13: 978-0393631678
Course units: 3

Instructor Contact Information

Instructor’s name: Professor Ruth Rhodes
Office location: E7
Office hours: Monday, 2-3 pm (and by appointment)
Phone number: 707-465-2336 (email is best for a quick response)
Email address: Ruth-Rhodes@redwoods.edu

Catalog Description

This is an introductory course that offers instruction in expository and argumentative writing, close reading, cogent thinking, research strategies, information literacy, appropriate and effective use of language, and documentation.

In other words, this is the place you build up high-performance mental muscles in critical reading, writing, and thinking.

Course Student Learning Outcomes

1. Demonstrate the capacity to read, analyze, and evaluate non-fiction texts in support of academic inquiry and argumentation.
2. Utilize flexible strategies for writing expository and argumentative college-level essays.
3. Incorporate primary and secondary sources into essays using appropriate documentation format.

Accessibility

Students will have access to online course materials that comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and College of the Redwoods policies. Students who discover access issues with this class should contact the instructor.

College of the Redwoods is also committed to making reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. If you have a disability or believe you might benefit from disability-related

services and accommodations, please contact your instructor or [Disability Services and Programs for Students](#) (DSPS). Students may make requests for alternative media by contacting DSPS based on their campus location:

- Eureka: 707-476-4280, student services building, 1st floor
- Del Norte: 707-465-2324, main building near the library
- Klamath-Trinity: 530-625-4821 Ext 103

During COVID19, approved accommodations for distance education classes will be emailed to the instructor by DSPS. In the case of face-to-face instruction, please present your written accommodation request to your instructor at least one week before the first test so that necessary arrangements can be made. Last-minute arrangements or post-test adjustments cannot usually be accommodated.

Prerequisites/Co-requisites/ Recommended Preparation

Placement into English 1A is determined according to the default AB 705 guidelines or the results of the guided self-placement process.

Primary Focus

In this class, we will practice critical reading, writing, and thinking at a high level. We will ask big, debatable questions like “How can I tell the difference between a fact and a falsehood?” “Does it make financial sense to get a 4-year college degree?” and “What are the dangers of social media?”

We will practice an academic approach: we will reach out to see what experts have said in answer to these questions; draw on our own experience, expertise, and ideas; and then struggle to write out our answers in a way that might be of use to others who are raising similar questions.

What Kind of Work Will We Do?

You will be assigned diverse **readings** nearly every week. You will read and take notes on them. In class, we will **discuss** the readings and do some **activities** with them. The texts should be interesting and challenging for you in terms of their complexity and reading difficulty. A certain level of difficulty is good. To build up reading strength, you need a good workout. You need to break a sweat.

Most weeks, you will do a **writing practice** related to the ideas in the reading or connected to an upcoming assignment. The writing practices serve as prewriting activities for the **essays** you will write. In the essays, you will communicate carefully crafted ideas about our course themes to your classmates and to the rest of the world.

Our semester is divided into the exploration of three main themes:

1. How do we know what is true?
2. What is the value of a college education?
3. What are some challenges created by technology?

Evaluation and Grading Policy

These are the grades you can earn in the class. Note that there are no pluses or minuses:

A (100-90%) / B (89-80%) / C (79-70%) / D (69-60%) / F (59-0%)

Grades are updated regularly in Canvas and calculated with these percentages:

- **Discussions** (25% of grade)
- **Writing Practices and Critical Reading Notes** (25% of grade)
- **Essays** (50%) [Essay 1 (15%), Essay 2 (15%), and Essay 3 (20%)]

The Meaning of Grades

We've been trained to believe that grades *accurately* reflect our learning. I am not sure that is true. I have been in the business of teaching for more than 20 years. Students come into composition classes with different skill levels. Should grades be a reflection of what you learn *before* a course? That seems a bit unfair. And yet, rewarding only hard work and engagement and not considering the quality of a student's writing seems unfair, too. Students need to reach a certain level of skill in the course learning outcomes to succeed in college—and so outcomes should count towards a person's grade, too.

To make matters more complicated, I prefer my central focus to be student *learning* at whatever level, not *grades*. I want to provide you with many occasions to practice your growing skills—and to get you to do that without worrying about being penalized by a poor grade. I want to create a culture of hard work and mutual support.

I may seem all-powerful, but I am a tiny cog in the machine that is higher education. I can't change the whole world all at once. But I did come up with a grading system that is the fairest I can make it.

Your grade is based on two factors:

- a) Your robust *completion* of writing practices, notes, reflections, and discussions (credit for trying)
- b) Your *skill* concerning the student learning outcomes as reflected in the essay assignments (credit for quality with opportunities for revision)

Essay Evaluation

I've come to believe that A /B /C/ D and F are not ideal grades for first-year college essays. Instead, I place essays into three categories:

- **Exceeds Expectations** (100%)
- **Meets Expectations** (75%)
- **Does Not Yet Meet Expectations / Revise** (50%)

I comment extensively on your essays to help you improve and to revise if you need to. If you earn "Does Not Yet Meet Expectations" on either Essays 1 or 2, you can (and should) revise your essay. Your essay grade will go up if you address the issues that kept it from passing. With a revision, you can earn up to a Meets Expectations (75%). Your grade will never go down with a revision.

Late Work

I understand that most of you have other classes, work, family responsibilities, and various activities you do to be a healthy, happy person. In an ideal world, you could have all the time you need to complete work. Unfortunately, this class is designed with a start and end date. Many of the assignments require timely back-and-forth between peers. Please keep up with the discussions, reflections, and writing practices so that your group benefits from your input.

I don't accept late discussions, notes, reflections, or writing practices. They are not worth a large percentage of your grade, so if you skip or miss a few, it won't impact your overall score dramatically. I know you may not be able to complete every assignment and that you may need to miss class occasionally.

I do accept late essays. Essays are worth a significant percentage of your grade and demonstrate the skills you have been practicing in class. Not turning in an essay will impact your grade—and you may not pass the class as a result. So aim to submit all the essays on time. But, if you need to, you may turn in Essays 1 and 2 late (see the schedule at the end of this document). Essays 1 and 2 can also be revised for a change in grade if you did not meet expectations the first time.

Essay 3 cannot be turned in late or revised because it is due at the end of the semester.

Respect, Tolerance, and Robust Discussion

My primary goal is to facilitate learning for everyone. That includes monitoring discussions to ensure that we treat each other with respect, following the student Code of Conduct (see below). Respect others by using inclusive language. In English 1A, we will explore what that looks like, especially when persuading an audience. Inclusive language is not just a question of conduct or “correctness”—it's a question of effectiveness.

No one should treat another student with disrespect. But how we define “respect” and “tolerance” raises a fundamental question: If the personal beliefs and prejudices of classmates are upsetting and offensive, does that constitute “disrespect?” Is it a violation of the code of conduct?

Probably not. Learning cannot happen in an environment where controversial ideas cannot be tried out. We all hold beliefs that we haven't thought out carefully, and we all have prejudices that we aren't consciously aware of. I will strive to protect free expression in this class, including speech that students might find ignorant and offensive, as long as it does not violate the Code of Conduct. In other words, it's okay to bungle your works, to have ideas come out awkwardly, or to be dead wrong as long as you are coming from a place of respect.

Part of your task in becoming a better critical thinker is to recognize that your limited experience shapes your values. Other people see the world differently because they experience it differently. They have much to tell us, even when we find their ideas wrongheaded or distasteful at first. Our task is to understand different perspectives and *together* discover what is true and right and just and good. We need to hear people out respectfully.

Tolerance does not mean that “everyone is right in their own way.” But tolerance is the process we use to build community and find common ground. Critical thinking involves holding ideas up to the light of reason through “the checking of each by each.” We build relationships to give us the courage to speak our minds, not hide ideas away. Only then can we determine which of our ideas are based on error, prejudice, and faulty assumptions. We need others to grow our understanding. Every semester I learn from students' ideas and reshape my view of the world.

Expect to be introduced to new ways of seeing things. Understand in advance that your ideas, values, and beliefs may be challenged in this class as part of the learning process.

COVID-19 Sucks

We are in the middle of a global pandemic. It is making our lives difficult in many different ways. And yet, here you are, bravely getting an education in the middle of an event shaping history.

Be good to yourselves. Think of our class as an oasis from stress, a chance to learn new skills, and an opportunity to grow. Reach out to one another. Make friends. Try not to obsess over grades. Focus on building skills. Understand that many parts of life are hard right now, so as the young folks say, “embrace the suck.”

By enrolling, you have earned the right to claim membership in the Class of COVID-19. That’s going to be something to tell the grandkids.

Important Dates

- Classes begin: 08/21/21
- Last day to add a class: 08/27/21
- Last day to drop without a W and receive a refund: 09/03/21
- Labor Day (all-college holiday): 09/06/21
- Census date: 09/07/21
- Last day to petition to file P/NP option: 12/17/21
- Last day to petition to graduate or apply for certificate: 10/28/21
- Last day for student-initiated W (no refund): 10/29/21
- Last day for faculty-initiated W (no refund): 10/29/21
- Veteran’s Day (all-college holiday): 11/11/21
- Fall break (no classes): 11/22/21 – 11/26/21
- Thanksgiving (all-college holiday): 11/24/21 – 11/26/21
- Final examinations: 12/11/21 – 12/17/21
- Semester ends: 12/17/21
- Grades available for transcript release: 01/07/22

Students who have experienced extenuating circumstances can complete & submit the **Excused Withdrawal Petition** to request an Excused Withdrawal (EW) grade instead of the current Withdrawal (W) or non-passing (D, F & NP) grades. The EW Petition is available from the Admissions and Records Forms Webpage. Supporting documentation is required.

Canvas Information

English 1A is a face-to-face class, but participation requires the use of Canvas.

Log in to Canvas at <https://redwoods.instructure.com>

Password is your eight digit birthdate

For tech help, email its@redwoods.edu or call 707-476-4160

Canvas Help for students: <https://www.redwoods.edu/online/Help-Student>

Canvas online orientation workshop: <https://www.redwoods.edu/online/Home/Student-Resources/Canvas-Resources>

Setting Your Preferred Name in Canvas

Students can have an alternate first name and pronouns appear in Canvas. Contact [Admissions & Records](#) to request a change to your preferred first name and pronoun. Your Preferred Name will only be listed in Canvas. It does not change your legal name in our records. See the [Student Information Update Form](#).

Academic Dishonesty

In the academic community, the high value placed on truth implies a corresponding intolerance of scholastic dishonesty. In cases involving academic dishonesty, determination of the grade and of the student's status in the course is left primarily to the discretion of the faculty member. In such cases, where the instructor determines that a student has demonstrated academic dishonesty, the student may receive a failing grade for the assignment and/or exam and may be reported to the Chief Student Services Officer or designee. The Student Code of Conduct ([AP 5500](#)) is available on the College of the Redwoods website. Additional information about the rights and responsibilities of students, Board policies, and administrative procedures is located in the [College Catalog](#) and on the [College of the Redwoods website](#).

Disruptive Behavior

Student behavior or speech that disrupts the instructional setting will not be tolerated. Disruptive conduct may include but is not limited to: unwarranted interruptions; failure to adhere to instructor's directions; vulgar or obscene language; slurs or other forms of intimidation; and physically or verbally abusive behavior. In such cases where the instructor determines that a student has disrupted the educational process, a disruptive student may be temporarily removed from class. In addition, the student may be reported to the Chief Student Services Officer or designee. The Student Code of Conduct ([AP 5500](#)) is available on the College of the Redwoods website. Additional information about the rights and responsibilities of students, Board policies, and administrative procedures is located in the [College Catalog](#) and on the [College of the Redwoods website](#).

Community College Student Health and Wellness

Resources, tools, and training regarding health, mental health, wellness, basic needs, and more designed for California community college students, faculty, and staff are available on the California Community Colleges [Health & Wellness website](#).

[Wellness Central](#) is a free online health and wellness resource that is available 24/7 in your space at your pace.

Students seeking to request a counseling appointment for academic advising or general counseling can email counseling@redwoods.edu.

Emergency procedures / Everbridge

Even though you are an online student, you may visit campus sometime this semester. College of the Redwoods has implemented an emergency alert system called Everbridge. In the event of an emergency on campus, you will receive an alert through your personal email and/or phones. Registration is not necessary in order to receive emergency alerts. Check to make sure your contact information is up-to-date by logging into Web Advisor <https://webadvisor.redwoods.edu> and selecting 'Students' then 'Academic Profile' then 'Current Information Update.'

Please contact Public Safety at 707-476-4112 or security@redwoods.edu if you have any questions. For more information, see the [Redwoods Public Safety Page](#).

In an emergency that requires an evacuation of the building anywhere in the District:

- Be aware of all marked exits from your area and building
- Once outside, move to the nearest evacuation point outside your building
- Keep streets and walkways clear for emergency vehicles and personnel

Do not leave campus unless it has been deemed safe by the campus authorities.

Del Norte Campus Emergency Procedures

Please review the Crescent City campus emergency map for campus evacuation sites, including the closest site to this classroom (posted by the exit of each room). For more information, see the [Redwoods Public Safety Page](#).

Student Support Services

The following online resources are available to support your success as a student:

- [CR-Online](#) (Comprehensive information for online students)
- [Library Articles & Databases](#)
- [Canvas help and tutorials](#)
- [Online Student Handbook](#)

[Counseling](#) offers assistance to students in need of professional counseling services such as crisis counseling.

Learning Resource Center includes the following resources for students

- [Academic Support Center](#) for instructional support, tutoring, learning resources, and proctored exams. Includes the Math Lab & Drop-in Writing Center
- [Library Services](#) to promote information literacy and provide organized information resources.
- [Multicultural & Diversity Center](#)

Special programs are also available for eligible students include

- [Extended Opportunity Programs & Services \(EOPS\)](#) provides financial assistance, support, and encouragement for eligible income disadvantaged students at all CR locations.
- The TRiO Student Success Program provides eligible students with a variety of services, including trips to 4-year universities, career assessments, and peer mentoring. Students can apply for the program in [Eureka](#) or in [Del Norte](#)
- The [Veteran's Resource Center](#) supports and facilitates academic success for Active Duty Military, Veterans, and Dependents attending CR through relational advising, mentorship, transitional assistance, and coordination of military and Veteran-specific resources.
- Klamath-Trinity students can contact the CR KT Office for specific information about student support services at 530-625-4821

This syllabus is subject to change

Week	Lecture Topics & Reading Links
1	<p>Academic Writing / Critical Thinking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The Universal Intellectual Standards” and “Essential Intellectual Traits” by Linda Elder and Richard Paul • “The Other Side is Not Dumb” by Sean Blanda
2	<p>Critical Reading and Notetaking / <i>They Say, I Say</i> Patterns</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They Say, I Say, pp. 1-29 (The introduction + Chapter 1) • “Review: They Say / I Say: The Moves That Matter in Academic Writing” by John Edlund • Review: “Filling in the Blanks: They Say, I Say and the Persistence of Formalism” by Amy Lynch-Binieck (read pages 1-2 only)
3	<p>Essay Structure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They Say, I Say, pp. 30-52 (Chapters 2-3) • Note: Class meets only once this week (Wednesday / Thursday)
4	<p>Using the Ideas of Others / Writing a Review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access the Essay One assignment; read <i>one</i> of the choices • Note: Class meets only once this week (Wednesday / Thursday)
5	<p>Citation Style / Writing Process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They Say, I Say, pp. 53-76 (Chapters 4-5)
6	<p>Writing Workshop</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete Essay One
7	<p>What’s the Value of a College Education?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “What Can You Do With a Liberal Arts Degree?” by Josh Moody • “Are Too Many People Going to College?” by Charles Murray
8	<p>Synthesis, Part I</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Should Everyone Go to College?” by Stephanie Owen and Isabel Sawhill
9	<p>Synthesis, Part II</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read <i>one</i> of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ “College Costs” by Lorna Collier ○ “Student Debt” by Tom Price • Read <i>one</i> of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ “Teaching and Learning in the Time of COVID: The Student Perspective” by Barbara Means and Julie Neisler ○ “The Growing Partisan Divide in Views of Higher Education” by Kim Parker ○ “Putting Student Loan Forgiveness in Perspective” by Adam Looney
	<p>Making a Strong Argument</p>

10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They Say, I Say, pp. 77-90 (Chapter 6) • They Say, I Say, pp. 91-100 (Chapter 7)
11	Writing Workshop <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete Essay Two
12	The Challenges of Technology & Essay Three <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note: Class meets only once this week (Wednesday / Thursday)
13	Finding and Evaluating Sources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They Say, I Say, pp. 101-116 (Chapter 8) • Research relevant to Essay Three
Thanksgiving Break (November 22-28)	
14	Connecting the Parts and Re-Searching <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research relevant to Essay Three
15	Essay Three Workshop <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete Essay 3
16	Finals Week <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete final discussion by Thursday, December 16