



San Jose State University
Writing Skills Test

Revised 2017

SJSU Testing Office

Introduction to the WST

- Required of all SJSU students prior to reaching 75 units; strongly recommended for all incoming transfers before end of 1st term at SJSU.
- Fulfills part of the GVAR (Graduate Writing Assessment Requirement), a graduation requirement at all CSUs.
- Prerequisite for SJSU Studies courses (Area R,S,V,Z) and many upper division courses; determines initial placement for upper division writing course.

The GVAR has 2 Parts:

- Complete WST
- Pass 100W Course in Major w/C or better

Prerequisites

- English 1A (Area A2) w/C or better
- English 1B (or Area A3) w/C or better (optional but strongly recommended)

WST Test Format

- 1 timed personal essay
- 70 minutes total
 - 15 minutes planning
 - 45 minutes essay writing
 - 10 minutes proofreading
- Scores released in 3 weeks



How to Register for the WST

Online (w/credit card)

- Visit testing.sjsu.edu/wst for a list of upcoming dates. You can register online w/credit card.
- The WST is offered 6 times/year. Plan ahead and register early. Test capacity = 2000 students.
- Enter your name EXACTLY as it appears on your photo ID (driver's license, passport, etc.)

At Testing Office (cash/check)

- Visit the Testing Office on the SJSU main campus to register in-person before the test registration deadline.
- The office is in room 228 of the Industrial Studies building at 9th & San Fernando. Open Mon-Fri, 8am-5pm.
- Bring \$38 cash (exact change) or a check/money order (payable to SJSU). No debit/credit cards accepted.

After You Register

- Reserve the entire day. You will only be on campus for about 2 hours, but test times and room assignments are given at random and cannot be changed.
- Admission ticket:
 - Will be sent in your MySJSU portal about a week before the test date.
 - Print it out and bring it with you on the day of the test.
 - The ticket will have your room assignment and reporting time.
- Typical times - 8:00am, 10:15am, 12:30pm, and 2:45pm.
- Room assignments can vary due to university events. Visit [sjsu.edu/map](https://www.sjsu.edu/map) for a campus map. Plan to arrive early.

How to Prepare

- The SJSU Writing Center offers several free online resources and tutorial workshops.

Visit their website:
sjsu.edu/writingcenter

- The SJSU Testing Office keeps a list of free online resources on its website.

Visit their website:
testing.sjsu.edu/wst/wstprep/index.html

- Your school also has qualified faculty, and resources that can help you to refine your writing.

Take advantage of any opportunities at your school!

Day of Test: What to Bring

- Printout of admission ticket (it will be collected)
- Federal/state photo ID (original, current, undamaged)
 - Examples include US-issued driver's license, state ID card, valid passport.
 - Can also include current community college student ID.
 - Name on ID must match test registration EXACTLY. Cannot be expired.
 - Electronic IDs/photos/temporary IDs not accepted.
- Pens for the essay section (black or blue)
- Paper dictionary (optional; no thesaurus allowed)
- Arrive 25-35 minutes early to allow time to park and find your room.
 - This is critical – late students will NOT be accepted. No exceptions.

After the Test: Scoring

- Scoring takes about 3 weeks.
 - Your essay will be read by 2 graders, who will each score it on a 1-6 scale. The scores will be added together to create a total score from 2-12.
 - Results will be posted to MySJSU student portal.
 - Notification will be sent in MySJSU messaging once the score is posted, including instructions on how to view your score.
- Total score determines placement in upper division writing courses:

Score of 2-6: ENGL or LLD 100A
Score of 7-10: 100W course in your major
Score of 11-12: Eligible for 100W waiver*
(certain majors only)
- If assigned to 100A: you must pass 100A, then 100W to complete the GWAR.

Scoring Guidelines

Scoring for the WST is based on the following rhetorical and syntactic guidelines:

- Maturity of thought and expression
- Understanding and response to the topic
- Organization, support, and development
- Fluency with language, syntactic variety
- Grammar and sentence structures

The scoring system is holistic and rewards essays that demonstrate competence in all of the above areas; significant deficiencies in one or more areas can impact overall score. Minor errors are not heavily penalized unless they are frequent.

Samples of prompts and student essays can be found at testing.sjsu.edu/wst.

Special Circumstances

- Religious accommodations
 - If you cannot test on Saturday due to religious belief, please send a letter from your religious organization (on official letterhead) to our office, along with a copy of your receipt.
 - Requests must be made 3 or more weeks before the test date.
- Taking the WST off-campus
 - Students who live 50+ miles away from SJSU may be eligible to have their WST proctored at an approved university/college test center.
 - This process incurs additional fees and involves coordinating with SJSU and a test center in your area. Arrangements must be made 3-4 weeks before the test.
 - E-mail testing-office@sjsu.edu for info.

Accessibility

- Students that receive disability-related accommodations can coordinate with SJSU's Accessible Education Center to set up arrangements for their WST (and future testing needs).
- Register for the test online first, then contact AEC via e-mail to set up an appointment. You can reach them at aec-info@sjsu.edu.
- Requests must be made 4+ weeks before the test date. Late requests may postpone your WST to the next test date.

Rescheduling

Before the Registration Deadline

E-mail testing-office@sjsu.edu before the deadline.

Please provide:

1. Your registration receipt
2. Which upcoming test date you want to be moved to

We will move you and send a confirmation e-mail within 3-5 business days.

After the Registration Deadline

After the deadline, we can only reschedule in the event of emergencies, with documentation.

E-mail us up to 2 weeks after the test with:

1. Your registration receipt
2. Documentation of your situation (medical, legal, etc)

Without documentation, you would forfeit your test fee and will need to register again.

For More Information

**General Questions:
Registration, Admission Tickets, etc.**

Please e-mail:
testing-office@sjsu.edu

Or visit us online:
testing.sjsu.edu

**After the Test:
Questions About Your Score**

Please e-mail:
sara.cook@sjsu.edu

Limited appointments available.
Tests will not be rescored.