Senior English Syllabus

Mrs. Ingalls

2015-2016 School Year

**Introduction:**

The goals of a good English class are: 1. To teach you how to think critically, 2. To teach you academic argumentation to defend your critical thoughts, and 3. To use literature and writing as a catalyst for 1 and 2. This class is meant to challenge how you think about what you read and write. By the end of the course, it is my hope that you are able to engage in a sustained, critical argument in conversation with established literary scholars. And, of course, it would be much to my enjoyment if you also learned how to appreciate the aesthetic qualities of the written word--the beauty of language when constructed by artists.

**The basic requirements for success in this course are as follows:**

* Participation/engagement in weekly questions through both the Weebly and in-class discussion. Each week, I will pose a critical question to the class Weebly that asks you to write approximately 200-300 words in response to the readings from the week. You must also respond, substantively, to your peers through the Weebly.
* Completion of all assignments on time.
* Passing grades on all tests and assessments.

**Extra Credit**Extra credit is often available to you in the form of additional (optional) test questions or written reviews of theatrical productions or literary readings. I only allow extra credit for students who complete all assignments. **If you have any missing assignments, you cannot receive extra credit.** All extra credit work must be submitted ten (10) days before the end of each semester.  
  
  
**Texts and Materials**As this class is an exploration of literary genres, I have opted to use individual volumes, plays, novels, and links to sources rather than issuing a textbook. You are responsible for maintaining a portfolio of the printed resources I give you as well as lecture notes you take during class. Further, you must enter class each day prepared. You will always need paper, a pencil, and your portfolio.  
  
**General Expectations**  
My rules are fairly simple inasmuch as they parallel school rules (no electronic devices except when specifically approved, no academic dishonesty, dress code, etc.). Be respectful and respectable, and we shall have a great year. If we get to where we need to have rules posted somewhere in the classroom, we can do that, but I'd prefer you act in a mature manner so that this does not have to occur. 

**Academic Expectations**  
This is a rigorous class with high expectations. I understand that extra-curricular expectations make being a student tough. I've been there myself! However, being a student is your priority, so late practices or other such impositions are not an excuse for late or missing assignments. For the most part, your work is due on the date it is due whether you are at school or not. In other words, if I assign a paper that is due on November 20th (for example), and you happen to be sick that day, your paper is still due that day--meaning you need to email it to me or have someone bring it to school for you. For each day an assignment is late, your grade for the assignment will be docked 10%. So, if you turn in a "C" quality paper a day late, it reverts to a "D" in the gradebook. Exceptions to this MUST be worked out in advance of an absence.

**Course Content**The following is a tentative outline for the class schedule and assignments. This is likely due to change. The units are roughly timed to coincide with the grading quarters of the school year. I will try to keep the calendar on the Weebly up to date as changes are made.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Unit Content** | **Associated Major Assignment** |
| **Unit : The Novel & Neoclassic Historicism**  Although this section of the class will focus on the novel *Pride and Prejudice*, you will also read a good number of foundational texts that include both period-based and contemporary criticism, primary source documents, and poetry. We will use the anchor text to answer the question: What is the awesome power of the novel? | **Neoclassicism to the Sublime Essay**  This essay will ask you to analyze the novel from a particular critical perspective (for example, Feminism). How is the author both critiquing and praising her own culture? |
| **Unit 1: Poetry & Cultural Values**  In this unit, we will read a range of poetry that is representative of world cultures and what cultures value and promote. Although we will look at some European writers, the bulk of our poetry unit will focus on African, Eastern, and South American writers. | **Aesthetics and Culture Essay**  This essay will ask you to analyze a poem or a group of poems and explain how the aesthetic of poetry reflects or influences a culture. How do word choice, structure, meter, and composition interact with the culture itself? |

Continued . . .

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Unit 3: Drama & The Pointing Finger**  What do a bunch of dudes leaping around in masks and tights teach us about our own culture? We will read and/or view several dramas including: *Hamlet*, *A Raisin in the Sun, The Importance of Being Earnest, A Doll’s House,* and *Our Town*. Through these dramas, we will also discuss and explore their modern counterparts: movies and TV. | **Reader Response/Audience Response**  In this essay you will analyze one play in the tradition of Reader Response criticism. |
| **Unit 4: The Essay, the Short Story, & Other Literary Genres**  In this unit, we will read excerpts and full texts from a variety of authors—you might even re-encounter poetry. How does the structure of a text influence our rhetorical analysis of an issue? Does a novel better explain the human condition better simply because it is longer, or can six words tell an equally compelling story? I anticipate readings from ancient philosophers, pissed-off subcultures, as well as sermons, news articles, and other forms of writing that seeks to make a point. | **Critical Essay of Choice**  For our final essay, you may choose any piece or collection we have read and write a Literary Analysis paper using a depth of outside texts (academic articles) to prove a critical thesis. |

**Additional 175 Requirement:**

The most significant different between taking this course for college credit as well as high school credit and taking it only for high school credit is in your submission of a **Final Paper**. In addition to the four core essays due throughout the year, you will have to polish and perfect one of the four for a Final Paper which will be read and graded with intentional and concentrated rigor. That means that papers will need to show that you have made significant and substantial revision from how they appeared when you handed them in at the end of each quarter. You will choose the essay that you liked the best, expand upon it, edit it, add sources, and generally polish it for final submission. **I know you are going to rock this!**

**Final Note:**

I have said before that I have been significantly harder on this class than I have on any other. I have done this because you are an immensely talented group of individuals. Please do not hesitate to ask questions. I’d rather you text me at midnight than you spend hours chatting with each other not really getting what it is I want you to do. I’m ready for another great year with you!