**Course Description**

**Prerequisite:** Students should have successfully completed American Literature in the sophomore year and/or British Literature in the junior year with a grade of A or B; received a recommendation from their current English teacher; completed the AP Language and Composition entry assessment, and received an acceptance letter.

**Description:** This course is constructed according to the guidelines given in the AP English Course Description in order to prepare students for the AP Language and Composition Examination. It focuses on developing advanced skills in critical reading of material from a broad range of genres, times and cultures while simultaneously exploring the purpose and use of rhetorical devices and structures. Emphasis is placed on confident and clear writing of related expository, analytical, and argumentative essays at the college level. Students are expected to reflect on their reading through extensive discussion—both small group and teacher led—in order to achieve both comprehension of the content and thorough understanding of rhetorical analysis. Students must understand the author’s use of rhetorical methods and techniques, and the effect accomplished by each on the meaning of the selection. Textual annotations are required for all reading assignments.

**Writing:** During each quarter, students will submit a variety of essays in which they examine the readings covered in class. The essays require that students not only analyze the rhetorical and stylistic techniques employed in the writings studied in class, but also practice those techniques and strategies in their own writing. Students should expect to write three to four formal essays each quarter in addition to numerous in-class writing assessments. Students will be required to write essays that proceed through several stages or drafts with revisions incorporating feedback from both their peers as well as the instructor. Students will receive feedback from their peers during peer-editing sessions and from the instructor during writing conferences that will be scheduled during class as well as at the end of the school day. Students will also have opportunities to revise their writing after formal feedback and grades are assigned to their work; students will have opportunities to re-submit essays that incorporate improvements suggested by the formal feedback, and students’ grades will reflect the improved quality of their work. Additionally, students will have opportunities to work on group writing projects from time to time. During the fourth quarter, students must write a research paper that presents an original argument. Students must choose a topic for the research paper from an area they have been exposed to in the required readings. Lastly, students will have numerous opportunities to practice timed writing in preparation for the Advanced Placement exam in May.

**Instructional Materials**


Other miscellaneous readings will be distributed by the instructor.

**Procedures**

**Materials:** Students need the following materials every day: text, spiral notebook, pens, binder with loose leaf paper, and prepared assignments.

**Attendance:** Students are expected to attend class every day. In the event of an excused absence, students must follow school procedures and are responsible for making up any missed assignments. Being absent does not excuse one from an assignment even if the absence is excused. Arrangements must be made to make up missed exams outside of class time. Students involved in extracurricular activities are
responsible for asking to be signed out in a timely fashion and also for making sure that they stay on top of work missed due to these activities.

**Homework:** Students should expect to complete homework every day of the week. Many assignments will take more than one night to complete and students should use good judgment to pace themselves. All homework—especially reading assignments—must be complete as class activities and discussions depend on it. Students should expect to be quizzed on reading assignments from time to time. Written assignments will either be checked for completion or collected and graded.

**Grades:** All work will be worth a specified amount of points; you should work to obtain the highest amount of points on all assignments. In general, quizzes and homework will be worth 10-25 points and essays, tests and presentations will be worth 100-200 points. Consistent improvement will be taken into consideration. Enthusiastic participation in all classroom discussions and activities is critical as participation will be factored into quarter grades.

Grading Scale: A=100-90, B=89-80, C=79-70, D=69-60, F=59 or below

Grades will be weighted as follows:

- 35% writing assignments: essays, in-class timed writing
- 25% class participation and discussion leading
- 20% homework
- 20% quizzes and tests and other assignments

**Credit:** Students who earn a D or above earn .5 credits per semester (1 credit for the entire year).

**Course Outline**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quarter 1: 9/6/11-11/10/11</th>
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<tr>
<td>RHETORIC, VOICE, AND FINDING AN ARGUMENT</td>
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Readings:
- “Hidden within Technology’s Empire, a Republic of Letters” by Saul Bellow
- “I Have a Dream” by Martin Luther King, Jr.
- “Letter to Horace Greeley” by Abraham Lincoln
- “Have a Cigar” by James Herriot
- “The Waltz” by Dorothy Parker
- “Salvation” by Langston Hughes
- “A Grunt’s Prayer” by Ken Noyle
- “The Grieving Never Ends” by Roxanne Roberts
- “A Good Man is Hard to Find” by Flannery O’Connor
- “Spring” by Edna St. Vincent Millay
- “Write to be Understood” Jim Staylor
- “The Catbird Seat” by James Thurber

Writing Skills:
- Review of essential English grammar including skills for editing and revising written work
- Building vocabulary for analyzing texts by creating term glossary
- Introduction to rhetorical methods and techniques: audience, purpose, writing as a process
- Understanding writer’s voice: vocabulary, syntax, attitude
- Thesis formulation: key words, characteristics of a good thesis, errors to avoid
- Organizational strategies: listing supporting material, using formal outlines

Language/Test Strategies: the basic exam construction, an overview of the multiple-choice questions, an overview
of the essay questions, information on scoring, taking a diagnostic test, reviewing the diagnostic
test, building tone vocabulary

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<th>Quarter 2: 11/14/11-1/27/12</th>
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<td><strong>BUILDING AN ARGUMENT</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Staff Development:</strong> 11/18/11 <strong>Holidays:</strong> 11/24/11-11/25/1, 1/16/11 <strong>Professional Development:</strong> 1/27/12</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Report Card Pick-Up:</strong> 11/17/11 <strong>Winter Break:</strong> 12/26/11-1/6/12</td>
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**Readings:**
- “From the Lessons of the Past” by Edith Hamilton
- “Pain” by Somerset Maugham
- “I Am Tired of Fighting” by Chief Joseph of the Nez Pierce
- “Man against Darkness” by W.T. Stance
- “What is a Poet?” by Mark Van Doren
- “On Disease” by Lewis Thomas, M.D.
- “The Flood” by Robert Frost
- “On Black Fathering” by Cornel West
- “The Libido for the Ugly” by H.L. Mencken
- “Hell” by James Joyce
- “A Worn Path” Eudora Welty
- “Pigeon Woman” by May Swenson
- “Body Image” by Cindy Maynard
- “Stretch Marks” by Anna Quindlen
- “How to Improve Your Personality” by Ann Landers
- “In the Emergency Room” by Willa Carroll
- “In the Name of the Law: How to Win Arguments without Really Trying” by Richard Conniff

**Writing Skills:**
- Crafting paragraphs: paragraph patterns, characteristics of well-designed paragraph
- Description in writing: what does, when to use it, and how to write it
- Process analysis writing: what does, when to use it, and how to write it
- Illustration and exemplification in writing: what does, when to use it, and how to write it

**Language/Test Strategies:**
- In-depth look at the multiple-choice questions including how to prepare, answer, and attack multiple choice questions; recognizing syntactical devices; interpreting footnotes; in-depth look at the synthesis essay questions including the process and interpreting passages or visuals; understanding the scoring rubric; more practice questions (multiple-choice and synthesis essay) followed by review

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<th>Quarter 3: 1/30/12-4/13/12</th>
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<td><strong>EXECUTING AN ARGUMENT</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Staff Development:</strong> 2/3/12 <strong>Holidays:</strong> 2/13/12, 2/20/12, 3/5/12 <strong>Professional Development:</strong> 4/13/12</td>
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<td><strong>Spring Break:</strong> 4/2/12-4/6/12</td>
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**Readings:**
- “Of Altruism, Heroism, and Nature’s Gift’s in the Face of Terror” by Natalie Angier
- “Heaven: Nothing to Write Home About” by Jack Smith
“Hollywood’s Heaven and Hell” by Todd Hertz
“Move Over, Teams” by Paul M. Muchinsky
“Thinking as a Hobby” by William Golding
“Kinds of Discipline” by John Holt
“The Idols” by Francis Bacon
“English 101” by Bart Edelman
“Warriors Don’t Cry” by Melba Patillo Beals
“Incidents with White People” by Sarah L. and A. Elizabeth Delany
“Bricklayer’s Boy” by Alfred Lubrano

Writing Skills: More patterns of organization and the study of what rhetorical mode each does, when to use it, and how to use it:
Definition
Comparison and contrast
Division and classification
Causal analysis

Language/Test Strategies: in-depth look at the rhetorical analysis essay questions including suggestions for what to avoid and for discussing rhetorical devices, in-depth look at the general argument essay, more practice questions (rhetorical analysis essay and general argument essay) followed by review

Quarter 4: 4/16/12-6/15/12
EXECUTING AN ARGUMENT
Teacher Institute: 6/14/12 Holidays: 5/28/12
Report Card Pick-Up: 4/19/12

Readings: “Why Don’t We Complain?” by William F. Buckley, Jr.
“A Nation in Need of Vacation” by Steve Rushin
“No Technology? No Problem” by Eric Brende
“OMG! If LOL, then KMN!” by Mary Kolesnikova

various readings (both primary and secondary sources) for research as students are required to choose an area of interest from those to which they have been exposed in the required readings studied in class. Students are expected to complete investigative research and arrive at an original assertion or thesis statement which they will fully explore and support with the use of these readings.

Writing Skills: Argumentation and persuasion: what they do, when to use them, and how to use them
Combining the rhetorical modes
Research paper process: topic selection, thesis statement proposal, conducting research, organization and use of primary and secondary sources, presenting an argument that includes the synthesis of ideas from both types of sources, drafting, employing MLA and APA style and proper documentation, preparing work cited
Research paper required steps: thesis statement proposal, note taking on explanation and characteristics of argumentation, individual conferencing on thesis proposal and lines of defense, completion of bibliography and research note cards, individual conferencing following feedback on writing process (to be repeated several times), completion of the final draft
Language/Test Strategies: using research material, organizing and taking notes for research, incorporating and using quotations effectively, full practice tests followed by explanations and review

Advanced Placement English Language and Composition

Parent/Guardian Acknowledgement: By signing below, I confirm that I have read and understood the above requirements and expectations for AP Language and Composition class.

Student’s name: ________________________________________________________________

(please print)
Parent/Guardian’s name: _________________________________________________________________
(please print)

Parent/Guardian’s signature:  _____________________________________________________________
(please sign)

In order to encourage communication, please include complete contact information below:

Home phone: ______________________________  Cell phone: ______________________________
Work phone: ______________________________  Email address: ____________________________

Additional contacts (such as family members or friends) and any other additional information you would like me to know: