

Syllabus – Senior English Community

Central High Magnet Career Academy

Course Objective: To develop advanced communication skills needed for the student's post-high school education and professional careers through the completion of the CATS Senior Writing Portfolio and the CHS Reading Portfolio.

Introduction: The senior English class is one of those infamous courses that is surrounded by tales of horror and torture. It is, to say the least, a demanding workload that is not to be taken lightly. Central High School has become famous in educational circles for having a successful curriculum that helps to prepare our students for the world beyond West Chestnut Street. *This is the most important class you will take this year.* You have studied English during each of your twelve years of school – the entire subject may seem a little redundant. Yet, mastery comes from repetitive practice. *Today, more than ever, proficiency in language skills is crucial to become successful in college and the professional job market.* A lack of proficiency in communication usually equates to a lower income in life. This course is designed to assist you in sharpening those competences you need for future achievement.

Requirements: Occasionally I will assign special projects, but for the most part there will be standing requirements that will determine your grade. You are expected to meet these requirements every day.

Writing: You will have a working writing folder kept in the classroom where you will keep your formal written drafts. During this year you will produce a writing portfolio consisting of five polished pieces. You will pick these pieces from a repertoire of assignments this year. Each week a three page paper will be due. The genre of each week will alternate between writing and reading portfolio pieces. I place a heavy emphasis on essay style/literary analysis pieces in this class. Initially, all papers will be handwritten drafts. Later, you will choose your best drafts for finished portfolio pieces. These papers will be taken through the entire writing process (at least three drafts with a reflective summary). The writing portfolio will be graded based on the quality of writing, and recorded on your official high school transcript. All corrections – grammatically, structurally, and aesthetically – will be done by you. Your fellow classmates and I will assist you by reading your pieces closely and holding individual conferences with you. It is crucial that you help each other during drafting and revising. *All students are needed to create a writing community.* Two of the pieces for your portfolio will be created entirely within this classroom. The other two pieces must be generated from a content area other than English; this is not to say that it cannot be modified and revised during this period. All final drafts must be emailed to me so I can screen them for plagiarism.

Reading: You are required to read during the first part of every class, and record this reading on a reading log. The time you spend reading is a component of your overall grade. You will also present three book talks to the class during the course of the year. Seniors must read books from my senior reading list. This list is focused on the classic literature that is expected of college-bound students. You need to read one of these books each six weeks. Reading grades will be given based on meeting goals and reading regularly. Each senior will turn in a reading portfolio that mirrors the writing portfolio in content.

Senior Projects: Your last six weeks grade will be determined by your completion of the Central High School Senior Project, a research based activity that will take you some time to complete. Every senior at Central is required to complete the project. Typically, the final products are approximately thirty pages long. These projects will also be turned into me electronically.

Class Work and Assignments: The final portion of your grade will be based on your daily performance in class. This consists of your participation in daily assignments, class discussions, performance on in-class activities, in-class reading, participation in writing workshop, being prepared for class with all the items listed below, and your general attitude toward individual and group achievement in class. Failure to use class time toward reading or writing, or conducting yourself in a manner that does not allow others in class to engage in these activities will result in a loss of your daily points. Daily point cannot be made up due to absences.

Plagiarism: Copying information off the Internet or taking a paper from someone else and claiming it as an original is considered plagiarism. This is a form of cheating that is taken very seriously by colleges and universities where plagiarism can result in expulsion from all classes. I do an Internet check on each paper turned into me. If I catch you plagiarizing, I will fail your for the assignment and insist that it be put on your permanent record so that your future college can be warned. Plagiarism is stealing, and in many cases cheaters have had to face criminal and civil court cases. Don't do it.

Gilbertsclass.com: I keep a website, www.gilbertsclass.com, for my students and their parents to keep up with the class. I will update the class schedule and handouts on the site. Throughout the year I will direct you to visit the site for various class projects, especially your literary analysis. You will find that many college professors will use the web for teaching. You have to prepare yourself for this.

Course Schedule:

1st Semester

Weeks 1-6: Transactive

Reading: Letters, Editorials, Speeches, Feature Articles

Writing: Transactive piece, and On-demand practice pieces

Weeks 7-15: Personal/ Literary Writing

Reading: Personal Writing models, Literature selections

Writing: Personal/Literary piece, book responses

Weeks 16-18: Reflective Writing and begin Literary Analysis

Reading: Teacher-guided book for analysis

Writing: First Semester Reflection, and begin Reading Portfolio assignments

2nd Semester

Weeks 19-25: Literary Analysis and Reading Portfolio

Reading: Teacher-guided book selection

Writing: Literary Analysis, Reading Portfolio Assignments

Weeks 26-30: Reflective Writing, Transactive review, Revisions

Writing: Writing Portfolios

Weeks 31-36: Senior Projects

Required Materials for Class: Your agenda book and ID are required to use the computer labs. You will also need to bring your selected book to class everyday.

Grading Breakdown:

Writing portfolio assignments – 40%

Reading and reading assignments – 40%

Classwork and Assignments – 20%

JCPS Grading Scale

<u>Letter grade</u>	<u>Percentage</u>	<u>Explanation</u>
A	93 – 100	Exceeds Standards
B	86 – 92	Meets Standards
C	79 – 85	Marginally Meets Standards
D	70 – 78	Below Standards
U	Below 70	Unsatisfactory Performance

How to Reach Me: Both you and your parents can contact me through email. My address is Jim.Gilbert@Jefferson.kyschools.us. I read my mail at least three times per day. You may also visit www.gilbertsclass.com for more information.