Senior Honors English

Ms. Pamela Hennessy

Course Description, Evaluations, Syllabus

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**Policies and Procedures:**

* Only two “**late work** passes” per semester accepted. If you are going to use a late work pass, you must e-mail me, explaining with good reasoning and academic voice, why you need an extension. Granting you an extension is my prerogative.
* **Making up a seminar**: an extra 40 minute essay will be assigned to you.
* In the event of an **excused absence**: you have the number of days equal to the number of days you were absent to turn in anything that you missed. This is per TUSD School Board Policy, and will be strictly enforced. You do not need to use a late work pass for this, unless of course, you want to exceed the time constraints set by the board. **Your parent or legal guardian must excuse your absence within 24 hours in order for you to be allowed to make up work**. Remember too, that **your parent or guardian must call in your absence EVERY DAY THAT YOU ARE ABSENT**. I know this can be inconvenient, but we all must do our part. Please remind your parents of the importance of being timely in their phone calls. **Eighteen and legally an adult?** Remember that in order for you to excuse your own absence, you and your parent/guardian must file paperwork with the attendance office first.
* **In the event of an unexcused absence**: you will not be able to turn in your assignment for credit; however the assignment will be provided to you for your own learning opportunity, per board policy. **“To be early is to be on time; to be on time is to be tardy; to be tardy is inexcusable.”** If you have to be tardy, I expect you will have a proper hall pass. If you don’t, I will mark you tardy, and the THMS tardy policy prevails. EXCEPT ON FIRDAY SCHEDULES!! Since we only have 5 minutes passing periods during those times, I am willing to grant you TWO MINUTES of extra time to get to class. After that, it’s a tardy, same as usual. Please, sign in and take your seat quietly.
* **See me during conference periods if you have questions about make-up work. Please do not take valuable class time for this.**
* **Class Rules: Honesty, Maturity, Respect, Quality Work, and a Quality Working Environment. See me if this confuses you OR you have been treated in a dishonest, immature, or disrespectful way by anyone in our classroom. See me also if someone has disrupted your working environment. Breaking any of these rules simply will not be tolerated, and will be grounds for discipline in accordance with TUSD Student Rights and Responsibilities. BE KIND!**
* **End of Unit Topics: I will give you choices, rubrics, point scales, and due date within the first three days of the given unit.**

**General structure**:   After reading and discussing a work or pairing of works as a class, you prepare for seminars and essays by reflecting individually, in pairs, and/or in small groups on a given seminar or essay question. In this way, you generate ideas. (Seminar and essay assignments include more than one question. we may choose one or all of the questions to explore in the course of the seminar; you should choose one question for the essay.) Seminars will be held before you write essays so that you may explore your ideas thoroughly and refine your thinking before writing. Textual evidence should be used to support all arguments advanced in seminars and in all essays. I will not provide page and word counts for essays here, but as we discuss various pieces of literature, you should consider my suggestions regarding the use of evidence, for example, to determine the likely length of good essays.

**Seminars (25 points possible for each)**: You will be evaluated on your ability to prepare and conduct a literary seminar. The rubric will be provided to you in a separate document, forthcoming, before seminar.

**Forty Minute Essays (50 points possible for each):** These are meant to solidify your ideas on the previous days’ readings and seminars. You will be evaluated using a standard AP rubric, which I will give you prior to writing your essay. These essays are always done in class.

**Senior Research Papers(anywhere from 400 to 600 points possible for each-inclusive of completion of process steps-depending on complexity of assignment)**: Being ready for college requires that you undertake the challenge of exploring a research question in depth and produce sophisticated expository writing in response.

In twelfth grade, we will use the research process as a guide to writing a college-level, thesis-driven research paper of at least 4,000 words. I may ask you to apply this process to any or all of the assignments in any of the six units, or you may suggest another topic for your research at any time throughout the year; you must submit your alternate topic in writing, and receive my written approval before proceeding (really, I’m not a control freak; I need to make sure that your topic is relevant and rigorous…it’s my job☺..\*ahem\* back to formality…).

What I expect that you already know how to do is this: Define and refine research questions; synthesize information gathered from various resources; adjudicate among sources (i.e., carefully select relevant and useful sources, ignore others, and/or discuss why some sources aren’t reliable or useful).

What I expect we will learn this year is to anticipate questions or counterclaims, and address them with confidence.

You are strongly encouraged to consult The Concord Review (http://www.tcr.org/tcr/essays.htm) for excellent examples of research papers written by high school students (yes, I know, literary research essay examples are few and far between for the high school level; but in terms of structure, depth, and sophistication; these essays are extremely helpful).

**End of Unit Seminars/Essays: 400 to 600 points, depending upon complexity.**

**The Research Paper Process and Expectation**

**You must complete at least one research paper per semester.**

When we write a research paper, this is the process and the expectation:

* **Conduct a study/survey** of primary sources and critical secondary sources on a topic area selected or approved by me.

Develop a research question for independent study. The question may be related to our studies or to another content area, such as art, history, or science (e.g., ―How did the Scientific Revolution in sixteenth-century Europe affect the literature and literary nonfiction of seventeenth-century Europe? ―What roles did Ptolemy and Copernicus play in sparking the Scientific Revolution? ―The Scientific Revolution in Art? The Case of Leonardo da Vinci). If the question is related to another content area, you are required to work with both me and a teacher from the other content area to develop the topic.

* **Submit your research question** for my approval.
* **Conduct research, putting a priority on using primary sources**. I will teach you effective methods to mine such sources for information. When secondary sources are needed, I may instruct you- as needed- in the use of academic data sites (an excellent source is: http://www.jstor.org/). I will stress the difference between periodicals and encyclopedic sources that can provide background information and publications and books that are academic in nature. It is important to underscore the importance of analyzing as many primary sources as possible (versus relying uncritically or solely on secondary sources).
* While reading the sources, **you are required to take notes**. (I will determine the appropriate methods for you, such as note cards, etc., dependent upon the assignment and/or topic).
* You are required to **submit notes** (note cards or an annotated bibliography- my choice) for review.
* With my help, **categorize your notes and identify areas where more research is needed**.
* Having refined the research question as necessary**, write a preliminary thesis statement and draft outline.**
* Based on discussions with me**, refine your thesis statement and outline**.
* **Compose the first draft of your paper. The rough draft should include**:
  + a. Title Page
  + b. Abstract
  + c. Table of Contents
  + d. Introduction, including thesis statement
  + e. Body, including details that support the thesis statement
  + f. Conclusion
  + g. Endnotes
  + h. Illustrations (optional)
  + i. Appendices (if necessary)
  + j. Bibliography
* **Revise your work after soliciting feedback from me and/or peers**. You may ask a teacher from a related content area for further input.
* **Edit your final draft**.
* **Submit your final draft.**
* **Develop a speech, PowerPoint, or other kind of presentation in which**
* **Summarize your findings and answer questions from your classmates or other panel members (i.e., parents or community members).**

**European Literature: Middle Ages**

Although the Middle Ages often is characterized as a period of darkness, the literature and art of the time typically suggest a more complex picture. Through a combination of close reading and exposure to an array of texts, we will observe how satire reveals some of the contradictions and divergences within medieval literature and draw connections between literary form and philosophy. In addition, we will consider how certain traits of medieval literature can also be found in the art of the period: for instance, how characters have symbolic meaning both in literature and in iconography. We will write essays in which we analyze a work closely, compare two works, or trace an idea or theme through the works we have read.

**European Literature: Renaissance and Reformation**

Together, we will consider Renaissance writers’ interest in ancient Greek and Latin literature and myth; their preoccupation with human concerns and life on earth; their aesthetic principles of harmony, balance, and divine proportion; and exceptions to all of these. This leads to a discussion of how literary forms themselves reflect religious, philosophical, and aesthetic principles. As we compare the works of the Renaissance with those of the Middle Ages, you will recognize the overlap and continuity of these periods. In addition, we will consider how the outstanding works of the era transcend their time and continue to inspire readers and writers. The English Renaissance of the seventeenth century includes additional works by William Shakespeare. In your essays, you may analyze the ideas, principles, and form of a literary work; discuss how a work bears attributes of both the Middle Ages and the Renaissance; discuss convergences of Renaissance literature and arts; or pursue a related topic of interest.

**European Literature: Seventeenth Century**

We will gain understanding of the early Enlightenment and its conception of reason. We will see another side of the thought and literature of this period: an emphasis on human emotion, irrationality, and paradox. We will consider how certain works express tension or conflict between emotion and reason while others present reason and emotion as complementary and interdependent. We will write a critical essay exploring an aspect of the conflict between reason and emotion. Alternatively, we might choose to culminate the unit with a research paper that answers an essential question.

**European Literature: Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Century**

Observing themes related to nature as well as “natural” forms and language, we will consider whether nature appears as a force of good or a menace. Observing narrative digressions, idiosyncrasies, exaggerations, and biases, we will consider human, unpredictable, and idiosyncratic aspects of storytelling. We will have the opportunity to practice some of these narrative techniques in our own fiction and nonfiction writing. We will also explore some of the philosophical ideas in the literary texts—questions of free will, fate, human conflict, and loss. In seminar discussions, we will consider a philosophical question in relation to a particular text. We will write short essays and also develop an essay or topic from an earlier unit, refining the thesis and consulting additional sources. These essays can be used to inform and inspire longer research papers at the end of the unit that answer an essential question. By the end of this unit, we will have an appreciation for some of the tendencies of early romanticism and will recognize that this era, like all others, is filled with exceptions, contradictions, and subtleties.

**European Literature: Nineteenth Century**

 We will explore both form and meaning in literary works and consider historical context. Through close readings of selected texts, we will examine how subtle narrative and stylistic details contribute to the meaning of the whole. We will consider how certain poems of this time and place can be simultaneously intimate and reflective of a larger civilization. Moral conflicts and subtle psychological portrayals of characters are other areas of focus; we will consider how novels of the nineteenth century develop character and how their conflicts are both universal and bound by culture. In our essays, we will continue to strive for precision and clarity, paying close attention to the nuances of words.

**European Literature: Twentieth Century**

Through the close reading of “dystopian” works such as *Pygmalion*, *1984*, and *Rhinoceros*, we will consider the problems inherent in fashioning a perfect society or perfect individual. At the same time, we will also consider how authors of the twentieth century affirm the possibility of beauty and meaning—for instance, in T. S. Eliot’s *Four Quartets*, Federico García Lorca’s *Poem of the Deep Song*, or Thomas Hardy’s “The Darkling Thrush.” To gain a deeper appreciation of the role of beauty in twentieth-century literature, we will appraise connections between poetry and music: for instance, the relation of Eliot’s *Four Quartets* to a Beethoven quartet, and the relation of Lorca’s poetry to the rhythms of flamenco music. Examining how authors rework classical stories and themes (e.g., in Anouilh’s *Antigone*or Camus’ *Caligula*), we will ponder how historical context affects an enduring story or theme. We will complete research papers in which we consult literary criticism and historical materials. We will engage in discussions resembling college seminars, where we will pursue focused questions in depth over the course of one or two class sessions. At the close of the year, we will have the opportunity to research the literature we have read over the course of the year and the concepts we have studied.

**Readings, seminars, and essays; Semester 1:**

**Sir Gawain and the Green Knight: seminar and 40 min. informative essay**

**Everyman and various medieval icons: 40 min. informative essay**

**Dante’s Inferno: seminar; performance**

**The Canterbury Tales, The Wife of Bath: seminar; 40 min. argumentative essay**

**Early and Late Medieval Art Comparison: seminar**

**St. Augustine’s Confessions, Book XI: seminar; 40 min. argumentative essay**

**The Canterbury Tales, The Pardoner’s Tale: seminar, 40 min. informative essay**

**End of Unit, Student Choice:**

**Pick one of three seminar/paper topics (topics TBA).**

**Pick one of two research topics for a research paper, either informative or argumentative (topics TBA).**

**Selected Renaissance and Reformation poems: Oral Presentation**

**Macbeth: seminar/40 min. informative essay**

**Excerpts from Henry IV, part I: seminar/40 min essay**

**Excerpts from Machiavelli’s The Prince: seminar/40 min argumentative essay**

**Art: Michelangelo’s David, Raphael’s Madonna, and da Vinci’s Mona Lisa and Vitruvian Man: speaking and listening**.

**Art**: **Michelangelo’s Last Judgment, da Vinci’s Virgin and Child, Pontormo’s Deposition, and Bernini’s Ecstasy of Saint Teresa: speaking and listening.**

**End of unit:**

**Pick one of four seminar/paper topics (topics TBA)**

**Choose to do a research paper on a topic TBA.**

**Various Seventeenth Century poems from Europe: Oral Presentation**

**“The Flea”: seminar/40 min. argumentative OR informative essay**

**Various Seventeenth Century European paintings: speaking and listening**

**Leviathan: seminar/40 min. argumentative essay.**

**“To Daffodils,” “To the Virgins, to Make Much of Time,” and “To His Coy Mistress:” seminar/ 40 min. informative essay.**

**The Miser: seminar/ 40 min. informative essay.**

**Donne’s “Holy Sonnet 10:” seminar/40 min. informative essay.**

**Donne’s “Song: Goe, and catche a falling starre:” seminar/ 40 min. argumentative writing.**

**Marvell’s “To His Coy Mistress:” seminar/40 min. informative essay.**

**The Pilgrim’s Progress: seminar/40 min. informative essay.**

**Excerpts from Don Quixote and/or watch the film version of Man of La Mancha: seminar/ 40 min. informative essay.**

**King Lear: seminar/40 min. informative essay.**

**End of Unit:**

**Research Paper**