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www.msfostersclass.com

2019-2020 ENG 1-2 Course Outline

Welcome to Freshman English! This year, we will explore short stories, plays, poetry, and novels from a variety of time periods, honing analytical skills while examining themes of identity, alienation, community, maturation, and exploration. We will also practice the art of descriptive and autobiographical writing, identify and employ sophisticated literary techniques, and learn effective research and nonfiction writing strategies to employ during the Freshman I-Search Writing Project. It is my goal to cultivate personal responsibility and promote empathy in my students as we read, write about, and discuss literature in an intellectually stimulating environment.

Class Expectations

- 1. Be on time.** Class starts when the bell rings. Your school supplies do not count as a physical extension of your being, so dropping off your backpack a minute before the class starts and then immediately leaving for the bathroom or the water fountain counts as a tardy.
- 2. Be present in class.** Much of the work done in class is either difficult or impossible to make up outside of class, so your attendance is crucial to your success. **THIS MEANS THAT NOT ALL OF THE WORK YOU MISS WHILE ABSENT CAN BE MADE UP!** Being present in class also means paying attention.
- 3. Keep up with your reading, homework, and in-class assignments.** Students who feel as though they need extra help are invited to meet with me at tutorial or to make an appointment for an alternate time. Reading schedules, assignment details, and due dates are always available on msfostersclass.com when you need a reminder.
- 4. Come to class prepared.** You should have a binder and a notebook (spiral-bound is fine) for this class. In addition, bring your charged Chromebook, paper, appropriate texts, and something to write with. I ask for many in-class assignments to be written in dark ink (any color but red), so don't be caught without a pen! We will revisit many themes and lessons over the course of the year, so I expect you have access to all the work you have done in the class. Do not throw away any assignments! Once June rolls around, what you do with your work is your concern, but until then, *keep everything*.
- 5. Be respectful to all members of the class.** We all deserve to feel comfortable and safe in the classroom. I know that some of my students have challenging relationships that both predate and extend beyond this class, but those dynamics should be left at the door. Use this opportunity as a fresh start, a chance to get to know your peers all over again! Failure to be appropriate and respectful will result in disciplinary action.
- 6. Abide by the PHS Academic Integrity Policy.** Please be sure you have read and understand the policy, as it is detailed in the PHS Parent and Student Handbook. Plagiarism in any form will not be tolerated. Incidents of cheating or plagiarism can result in a zero grade, the subtraction of the highest possible points for that assignment from your cumulative class points, detention, and a call home. We will review the policy and examples of academic dishonesty in class, but if you still feel unsure of the meaning or specifics of "plagiarism" or the PHS policy, please see me **BEFORE** you submit any questionable work.

7. Stow all distracting toys and electronic devices appropriately--out of sight and inaccessible--during class time. Remember: if I see it, I will take it, and you will have to go to the office to retrieve it after school. Phones/digital devices must be turned off and deposited in the storage pockets behind my desk at the beginning of every class, and smart watches must be in backpacks and out of reach during class. If I make any exceptions to these rules, I will be sure to explicitly tell you! Please abide by the following school-wide classroom technology norms:

PHS / MHS School-Wide Classroom Tech Norms

Chromebook Responsibilities:

- Bring to school fully charged
- Open in class only as directed by teacher
- Bring to library if in need of repair
- Check your school email and Schoology account daily.

Prohibited Items in the Classroom:

- Cellphones and Smartwatches (phones must be OFF and in wall pockets)
- Headphones (all types unless explicitly permitted by teacher)
- Personal laptops (Unless you have official approval from Tech Coordinator/Admin OR are in designated classes with exceptions)

Late Work Policy

Students are responsible for all make-up work after an excused absence. Make-up work will not be discussed during class time, and, in the case of an unexcused absence, will not be accepted. Late work is not accepted for daily assignments and homework. **There is no reason to be unprepared for class, as all reading schedules, assignments and due dates are posted on my website site.** Being responsible and up-to-date with your homework is very important because our day's work is often based upon the reading or other homework assigned during the previous class. Major assignments will be accepted late with a 10% point deduction penalty per day, *whether class meets on that day or not*. **Computer problems are not an acceptable excuse for late work.** You are responsible for arranging *in advance* any work you may miss during a planned absence. If you have IEP or 504 accommodations, I expect you to make necessary arrangements in advance. If you have any questions about this policy, talk to me!

A very important skill you will be building all year *in all of your classes* is time-management. It is time to break the habit of waiting until the night before a homework assignment is due to begin your work. Not all of your assignments *should* be done in one sitting, which is why your teachers sometimes give you several days or weeks to do them. When you wait until the last minute to do any assignment, the added stress brought on by your procrastination can override the act of learning. This year, I will help you learn to organize your time so that you can do your best work while growing as a reader, writer, and thinker. One of the ways I am helping you learn these skills is by creating realistic workload expectations, consistently publishing due dates on my website to eliminate confusion, and not accepting excuses or making exceptions if you have poorly managed your time. Trust me: you will be happy to master time management skills before you go to college, and you will use them throughout your life.

Online Presence

I maintain my own website—msfostersclass.com—and expect you to bookmark it on your Chromebook and visit it regularly. Due dates, reading schedules, notes, grades, extra credit opportunities, and other information are available on the site. If you are out sick, I expect you to check the website and catch up on missing work/reading BEFORE returning to class so that you don't fall behind. "I didn't know we had to do that because I was absent" is not an acceptable excuse for being unprepared.

I am happy to communicate through email when you are unable to speak with me in person, and I will do my best to respond to your messages by the end of each workday; however, I will not be routinely checking my email from home or late at night. Be advised that sending me a question about an assignment the night before it is due may not be seen in time and will not serve as an excuse for missing or poorly done work. If you have sent me an email, please check to see if I have responded before asking me, "Did you get my email?" If you can ask me your question in person, I request that you do so rather than email me, since I have about 125 students and only so many hours a day to devote to digital correspondence.

You will need to submit many written assignments to turnitin.com to earn credit. A link to turnitin.com, as well as the class number and password, are available on my website. Most students at PHS already have a turnitin.com presence, but I will be available at lunch and after school if you need help with creating an account. Any assignments due on Schoology or turnitin.com will be listed on my Due Dates page on msfostersclass.com, so when in doubt, you can ALWAYS look there!

Please do not post photos, videos, or materials from class online without permission. Not everyone in the room wants their classroom experiences to be public, and I want to make sure that we all feel safe to share ideas and intellectually experiment without fear of our work being ridiculed or taken out of context. I know our lives are on display most of the time, but I would like our class to be an exception. This is an issue of trust and respect, and I feel very strongly about it. When I plan to post anything about your class online, I will be sure to tell you in advance so that you can address any concerns or questions.

Grades

Grades will be regularly posted and can be accessed through Schoology. **I do not bump grades, so please do not ask.** I do, however, offer extra credit *throughout the year*, so pay attention and take advantage of the opportunities!

Films/Documentaries

Occasionally, I *may* show films and/or film clips in class to supplement the curriculum. Some of these films may be rated R. I am careful to choose films and film clips that aren't gratuitously violent or sexual. Nevertheless, I understand that some students—or their parents—may feel uncomfortable with such material. If you would prefer to know exactly which R-rated films I am showing (if any at all) rather than sign the all-inclusive waiver (included at the end of this packet), please indicate your preference on the slip and include your email address so I can email you individually as I make my decisions. Be assured that I don't show movies "just for fun"; *any* film I show has been prescreened and is relevant to the curriculum. At this time, I do not anticipate using any R-rated material in my freshman class.

The beginning of a new school year is always so full of promise, and I am excited to begin our journey together. I hope you feel the same way, and are ready to begin!

Please visit my website, www.msfostersclass.com, for an electronic copy of this course outline.

Complete this form and submit it by Monday, August 19th.

PLEASE CHECK ALL THE APPLICABLE BOXES:

- I have read and understand the course guidelines and expectations for English 1-2.
- My son/daughter has access to the Internet at home.
- I am interested in potentially leading an Independent Reading Book Club group.

PLEASE SELECT ONLY ONE FILM OPTION:

- Yes, my son/daughter may view R-rated films and/or film clips in his/her English class. I understand that all such material is selected by the instructor for its curricular value.
- No, my son/daughter may not view R-rated material in his/her English class.
- I would prefer to know exactly which films my son/daughter may see and would like to be alerted as the films are selected.

Student's Name

Guardian's Name

Student's Email

Guardian's Email

Student's Preferred Contact Phone

Guardian's Preferred Contact Phone

Student's Signature and Date

Guardian's Signature and Date

Is there anything I should know about your child that would help make this year socially, emotionally, and academically beneficial for him/her? (If you would rather address this question confidentially, please email me.)

