

Academy Junior English Class
11th Grade English Clairemont High, 2013-14
Course Syllabus - Mrs. Rush

INSTRUCTOR: Mrs. Elizabeth Rush

AOBT WEBSITE: AcademyCHS.org

EMAIL: erush412@gmail.com - preferred method of contact

PHONE: 858-273-0201 x 4208 - Mrs. Rush does not answer the phone during teaching hours

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

The rhetoric—based curriculum in this course was designed by the California State Universities and the California Community Colleges and fulfills the district junior year English graduation requirement. The goal is to develop advanced critical and analytical thinking skills through argumentative reading and writing. Throughout the course, students will engage with texts that deal with controversial contemporary issues. Students will evaluate various authors' claims and writing styles, and then participate in thoughtful, text-based discussions in order to formulate their own opinions. Students will defend their viewpoints in numerous argumentative essays that will require multiple drafts. It is expected that students in this course are ready and willing to engage in a rigorous intellectual challenge. *Note: Students district-wide take this course in senior year; the Academy offers ERWC units in junior year to give students a better chance of passing the Early Assessment Program (EAP) Essay, which can exempt students from college placement tests.

OBJECTIVES:

Students will:

- Analyze an author's use of rhetorical devices, patterns of organization, and word choice
- Analyze an author's explicit and implicit viewpoints
- Critique and/or defend an author's arguments by referring to the text
- Formulate personal viewpoints and make claims based on the text
- Develop multiple academic and analytical essays that are focused and persuasive
- Revise writing to improve argument and organization, and revise the work of peers
- Edit writing for clarity and proper grammar
- Practice strategies for "on-demand" timed essay tests

ORGANIZATION:

The course is designed so that every unit follows the same sequential method of rhetorical reading and writing. Each topic we explore will take 3-5 weeks, depending on the length of the readings, and will follow this sequence:

- **Reading Rhetorically** (strategies & activities for Pre-reading, Reading, and Post-reading)
- **Connecting Reading to Writing** (strategies & activities for Referencing Text, Negotiating Voices)
- **Writing Rhetorically** (strategies & activities for Pre-writing, Writing, Revising, Editing, Evaluating)

TEXTS:

The texts assigned in this course are nonfiction: articles and essays from magazines and newspapers. For this class, readings will be distributed in hard copy at the beginning of each unit in the form of a printed student-reader. For a complete list of readings, please visit "Course Readings" on Mrs. Rush's Page.

MATERIALS:

Students will need to use a class spiral notebook, lined paper, pens, and a three-ring binder every day. Any student without access to these materials should notify the teacher as soon as possible. Most essays will be completed using the computers provided by the school district. Students will be able to access files from home using this website: my.sandi.net. Students will also need a personal e-mail address to receive class updates. Students without computer or internet access at home should plan to stay after school a few days a week to complete assignments in the classroom, AOB computer lab, or library.

WORK LOAD:

Students should expect to work bell-to-bell in class every day and should expect a minimum of 20-30 minutes of homework every night. Most daily class and homework assignments will be kept in the Notebook, a spiral notebook just for this course, which will be collected and graded at the end of each unit. The bulk of the work in the class will consist of writing a major argumentative essay every 2-4 weeks.

GRADE BREAKDOWN:

There are three categories which will be weighted and factored into the overall grade for this course:

(1) Final Draft Writing & Presentation Assignments: 60%

This course will mimic a college class in that the majority of the grade will be based on final draft writing assignments (students may do multiple drafts of certain writing assignments before actually submitting for a grade). All papers will be graded by a rubric that is handed out prior to the due date. Students will turn in the following major papers for the year:

- One Professional Cover Letter & Resume (combined = 100 pts.)
- Two Formal Argument Letters (to Editor and Senator), 500 words each (75 pts. each)
- Two Argumentative Process Essays, 750-1200 words (100 pts. each)
- Three On-Demand (Timed) In-Class Essays (75 pts. each)
- One EAP (Early Assessment Program) Timed Essay - graded by California State University***
- One Mock Job Interview - conducted & assessed by a Business Volunteer (100 pts)
- One Formal MLA Research Paper (Social Entrepreneur Project) (100 pts.)
- One Business Plan (Social Entrepreneur Project) (100 pts.)
- One Personal Business Plan Presentation (100 pts)

*** **Special Note:** If an AOB Jr. student passes the EAP with a score of "Exempt," Mrs. Rush will go back and raise his or her second semester ERWC transcript grade by one letter grade. (EAP Scores are not released until fall of the student's senior year.) Students who already earned an A on the transcript will get treated to a special lunch by Mrs. Rush. ☺

(2) English Notebook (Classwork & Homework): 30%

Daily assignments will not be handed in day-to-day, but rather collected and organized by the student into a spiral notebook. This Notebook will contain all in-class reading and writing activities as well as all homework assignments. Students must keep up with the work and bring the Notebook to class every day. The Notebook will be turned in every several weeks (at the end of a unit) for a larger grade. The number of points possible will reflect the number of assignments for the completed unit. In general, students can expect 15-20 assignments per unit, which translates into 150-200 pts. per check.

(3) Participation: 10%

This portion of the grade will consist of participation in class discussions, peer editing, and material checks.

GRADING POLICIES:

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is not tolerated. All instances of academic dishonesty, including plagiarism or copying, will result in no credit for the assignment and a referral to the vice-principal.

Late Work: Final Process Essays and ERWC Notebook checks will be lowered one letter grade for each day late up to one week past the deadline, *even if student is absent* from school. Students are responsible for planning ahead so that if they are absent on the due date of a major assignment, they can submit their work in an alternate form; they can submit through e-mail, or give it to a dependable friend so it will count as "on time." In class timed essay tests cannot be made up after the due date, but can be done in advance.

Revision for Higher Grade: In this course, students will always have the option of doing an additional revision to their final draft essay, outside of class, in order to raise their final draft grade. Students must conference their paper one-on-one with Mrs. Rush, and then turn in both the graded and revised version of the paper for a re-grade.

CLASS EXPECTATIONS AND RULES:

Attendance, Tardies, Probation: Academy students and parents, please refer to the Academy Three-Strikes Policy on our website.

CLASS ENVIRONMENT:

Academy students and parents, please refer to the Academy Student Handbook on our AOB Website. In addition to those rules, Mrs. Rush's students are expected to:

- **Respect others'** belongings and opinions at all times, especially during group and class discussions.
- **Respect the technology** in the classroom. Using netbooks, etc is a privilege that can be taken away.
- **Come prepared** for class every day with ERWC Notebook, class texts, 3-ring binder, paper and pen or pencil, and a planner or calendar.
- **Put away cell phones, iPods, etc.** If seen or heard, they will be taken away and given to a VP. Students will have to get items back from the VP after class.
- **Put away food and drink** (besides water) and not eat during class. Gum shouldn't be seen or heard.
- **Keep the classroom clean.** Students should clean their and straighten their desks every day before leaving.
- **Take off hats** during class.
- **Remain in assigned seat** during structured activities. It is rude to get up (to use bathroom, sharpen pencil, throw away trash, clean out binder, etc.) when the teacher is leading the class through an activity. Business should be taken care of before or after class is in session.
- **Use Hall Passes Sparingly.** Students will be given three hall passes per semester to use for bathroom or appropriate out-of-class business. Students may opt not to use the passes and redeem for extra credit at the end of semester. However, students who come tardy to class will be asked to forfeit one hall pass per tardy. Students who lose their hall passes because of tardiness will lose the privilege of leaving class for that semester.
- **Take the class seriously and pass with the highest grade possible.**

Mrs. Rush's Syllabus Contract – for Credit (20 pts. participation)

Students (10 points): In order to get credit for reading and understanding the syllabus, you must e-mail Mrs. Rush from a personal email account that you check regularly (if you do not have one, you need to set one up immediately; I recommend Gmail). Follow these directions for 10 pts. credit:

(1) From your email account, create a new message .

In the **TO:** box, type in Mrs. Rush's email address: "erush412@gmail.com "

In the **SUBJECT:** box write: "**Period__ Syllabus Contract for Last Name, First Name**"

(2) In the **MESSAGE/TEXT** of email, type out this statement: (Use proper punctuation and capitalization!)

"I, [name] in Period __ read every word of Mrs. Rush's syllabus. I understand that I need to pass this class to graduate, and that this course, while challenging, will help me become a better reader, writer and critical thinker. I also understand the course outline, expectations, policies, and grading system explained in the syllabus. I agree to be respectful, abide by the rules, and try my best in this class."

-Signed, (your first and last name)

Parent/ Guardian (10 points): Parent or guardian, please type/print out or handwrite the following statement and give it to your student to turn in for 10 points participation credit:

"I, the parent/ guardian of [student first & last name] have read and understood Mrs. Rush's Syllabus including the course outline, expectations, policies, and grading system. I understand that I can contact Mrs. Rush if I have any concerns or questions." –Signed [Parent/ Guardian name & signature.