

Contemporary Communications

Academy 12th Grade English Clairemont High, 2013-14
Course Syllabus - Mrs. Rush

INSTRUCTOR: Mrs. Elizabeth Rush

AOB WEBSITE: AcademyCHS.org

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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

The primary focus of this course is to master one of the all-time most important life skills: communication. This course has been approved by San Diego Unified School District and the UC system as a 12th Grade English Graduation Credit - 2 semesters. Contemporary non-fiction and literature texts are the basis for integrating reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills. The readings come from a variety of genres, such as expository writings, short stories, poetry, autobiographies, famous speeches, essays, and selections from current online media. Through these readings, along with numerous written and oral presentation assignments, students will explore how communication plays a major role in every walk of life. Students will get the chance to practice skills necessary to become expert communicators in personal relationships, public speaking, school, and career workplace.

OBJECTIVES:

Students in Communications will:

- Analyze a speaker's use of rhetorical devices, organization patterns, word choice, nonverbal cues
- Analyze an author or speaker's explicit and implicit viewpoints
- Critique and/or defend an author or speaker's arguments by referring to the text
- Develop and organize a wide variety speeches and presentations, tailoring to the audience
- Practice college-level reading, research, critical thinking, and writing skills
- Deliver numerous speeches and oral presentation using appropriate tone, inflection, volume, language, and body language
- Explore workplace SCANS skills useful for future careers

COURSE OUTLINE

The Contemporary Communications course is designed so that every unit centers around one part of life where communication skills are essential. See attached course outline for units and timeline.

TEXTS:

The texts assigned in this course are

- ***The Essentials of Speech Communication* by Sharon Franklin & Deborah Clark:** orange hardback textbook checked out to you for this course; This text will be referred to as "Essentials"
- ***The Basics: Speech Communication* by Paul R. Timm:** yellow textbook checked out to you for this course; this text will be referred to as "Basics"
- ***How to Win Friends & Influence People* by Dale Carnegie** (readings in book checked out to you by Mrs. Rush, and can also be found online, this text will be referred to as "Carnegie")
- Selected readings on online; referred to by the titles of the short stories and poetry pieces

MATERIALS:

Students will need access to paper, pens, and a three-ring binder every day, but will be doing the majority of their work on the class **netbooks**. 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 will be using a spiral notebook for this course. Students will also need to register on Dropitto.me, as most major assignments will be tuned into Mrs. Rush's electronic dropbox. 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 Communications Electronic Notebook, a OneNote Notebook, which will be “collected” (saved to PDF and submitted electronically) and graded at the end of each unit.

GRADE BREAKDOWN:

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

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

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

- One Autobiographical Narrative Speech
- One Biographical Speech or Role Play
- Multiple One-and-a-Half Minute Mini Speeches
- Two Formal MLA Research Paper with Works Cited Page (Real Estate Project, Career Research)
- One Informative Speech
- One PowerPoint Presentation – Financial Planning Project
- One Professional Resume & Cover Letter
- One Persuasive Speech
- One Reflective Speech

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

Daily assignments will not be handed in day-to-day, but rather collected and organized by the student into a Class Notebook. This will contain all in-class activities as well as all homework assignments. Students must keep up with the work and keep organized to ensure all work is put into the Notebook. It 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 speech assessments, 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 speeches are *code red* and the oral delivery portion of the grade (1/2 of overall speech grade) cannot be made up if missed. Final Writing assignments (including written portion of speech assignments) and Comm E-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.”

Revision for Higher Grade: In this course, students will always have the option of doing an additional revision to their final draft written essay or speech, outside of class, in order to raise their final draft grade. Students must conference their speech or 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 Comm. 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 ERWC 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 ERWC 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.