

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

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241-6035

COURSE OFFERINGS

English 1R
English 2R
English 2H
English 3R
English 3H
AP Language & Composition
AP Literature & Composition
Electives

Throughout all of our courses, the English curriculum integrates the study of language, literature, writing, speaking, and listening in accordance with New York State's integration of the Common Core Learning Standards. Also vital to the curriculum is the students' study of and consistent practice with critical thinking, as the students sharpen their analytic and interpretive skills.

LANGUAGE

Students learn about the evolution of English, while also developing an awareness of the living, changing nature of our language. They study vocabulary, grammar, and usage primarily in the real contexts of their reading and writing; however, textbooks, computer-based programs, and worksheets are employed when necessary and helpful. The progressive nature of courses aims to expose students to increasingly sophisticated uses of language.

LITERATURE

Developing the ability to read literature with understanding is the chief aim of our instruction. In 9th grade, students learn the basic techniques of analyzing literature. Each year, more analytical tools are explained, or they are applied in increasingly complex ways, as students study more subtle and complex literature. While familiarity with important literary works is a result of this instruction, our primary goal is to enable students to read with appreciation and enjoyment throughout their lives. Consequently, provision is made for individual interests and abilities.

COMPOSITION

Instruction in writing aims to help students reach important goals: awareness of task; a clear sense of audience; articulation of a thesis or controlling idea; organization and development of the idea in an appropriate form; originality, depth, and soundness of thought; correctness, clarity, and felicity of expression; familiarity with various types of writing; and pride of authorship. Students write frequently. Sometimes they will develop their pieces using a process approach which takes them through multiple drafts and thoughtful revision to a finished product. Sometimes, they will turn in as polished a composition as they can on their own and then revise it in response to their teacher's suggested revisions and corrections. Sometimes, they will write under time pressure, striving to develop a facility for organizing their thoughts and for polishing their prose. Students are encouraged to confer with their teachers regularly about their progress in writing skills.

SPEAKING AND LISTENING

The ability to speak informatively, cogently, entertainingly, and easily to others is an important goal of English instruction. Equally important is the ability to listen with attention, comprehension and appreciation. Class discussions, debates, seminars, group presentations, enacting scenes from plays, and

formal and informal speeches are some of the activities used to develop these interrelated skills.

ENGLISH 1R

(1 unit) In order to help students successfully transition into their high school careers, English 1R is designed to build a foundation of essential literacy skills, while also providing a wide, in-depth exploration of literary themes and concepts. The content area's work is brought together with a wide variety of writing assignments and creative projects aligned with the Common Core Learning Standards. The course aims to allow students to learn, practice and develop skills essential to high school success, including researching, speaking, listening, writing, reading, studying, organizing, and accessing modern technology.

ENGLISH 2R

(1 unit) Students will further develop their basic literacy skills, as sophomore English focuses on contemporary, classic, and multicultural texts depicting the relationship between individuals and the society in which they live. A variety of writing assignments, which are driven by Common Core Learning Standards, will include creative and explanatory pieces, research projects and essays geared towards acclimating students to the English Regents Exam given at the end of junior year. Stemming from the foundations of English 1R, are the expectations that students are able to learn in an incrementally independent manner and interact with both fiction and nonfiction at an analytic and figurative level. A number of methods are used across the year to promote the appropriate use of modern technology.

ENGLISH 2H

(1 unit) While the fundamental goals for this course are the same as those for 2R, there is a distinct and challenging difference with regards to the pacing, complexity and style of the work. In that many of the students will continue into our junior and senior honors and AP courses, 2H students will work on open-ended assignments that require a greater sense of organization, collaboration, independence, and motivation to complete. Lengthy independent reading assignments are a regular part of this course.

Suggested Guidelines: 90+ average in English 1R and a teacher recommendation.

ENGLISH 3R

(1 unit) Primarily an American literature survey course, students will analyze literature from indigenous America through contemporary times and will study the concepts of the American Dream and social change. The course stresses the complexities in the content, structure, and style of American poetry, drama, fiction, and non-fiction. Emphasis is placed on textual analysis. A broad spectrum of writing assignments will be used to develop skills needed for the English Regents exam, which will be administered at the end of the student's junior year.

ENGLISH 3H

(1 unit) Honors English in American Literature was designed to coincide with the American History being taught in social studies of the student's junior year. It will also function as a preparatory course for the senior A.P. literature course. The course will focus on the evolution of American Literature and the complexities of the social, economic, political and moral changes that took place within our country and were reflected in our literature, over time. The course will be taught in a survey style in order to facilitate understanding and provide a contextual view of current literature.

The course is rigorous and demanding. Students will be asked to read, write and analyze at a level going beyond what has been previously expected of them. The goal will be to build upon the foundation they received their freshman and sophomore years; however, students will now be expected not only to analyze a particular text for meaning, but also to place that text and its literary merits within the broader understanding of the culture in which it was written and its place in the pantheon of American Literature. Students will be expected to analyze not just the literature itself but also the literature's reflection of the American human experience. A love of literature and a curiosity about what that literature conveys and how it is constructed is necessary for an honors student. Students should be prepared to write in a variety of forms and think on a variety of levels.

Suggested Guidelines: 90+ average in English 2R or English 2H and a teacher recommendation.

ADVANCED PLACEMENT ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND COMPOSITION

(1 unit) The AP course in English Language and Composition engages students in becoming skilled readers of prose written in a variety of periods, disciplines, and rhetorical contexts, and in becoming skilled writers who compose for a variety of purposes. Students will engage in close reading of texts – both fiction and non-fiction – and write in a variety of modes, including persuasive, expository, and narrative. To support the juniors' study of American History, the majority of the essayists, novelists, and poets studied in this course will be American. Because of the focus on rhetoric (language used to achieve a particular effect), students will analyze authors' use of literary and rhetorical devices such as tone, diction, point of view, syntax, and many more esoteric, specialized devices. Students enrolled in the course are expected to have mastered the basic skills of spelling, grammar, and punctuation and to follow the conventions of standard written English. There will be minimal preparation for the English Regents in this course.

Suggested Guidelines: 95+ average in English 2R or 90+ average in English 2H and a teacher recommendation.

SENIOR ENGLISH

All students are required to take at least one credit of English during their senior year. Except for those students enrolling in *Advanced Placement Literature* or *Society, Literature and Truth*, an interdisciplinary course offered over two periods with the social studies department, students will earn this credit by successfully completing two electives, which are semester courses.

Notes about the senior electives:

- Students are not guaranteed placement in the electives they choose, and an elective will not be scheduled if too few students pre-register for it. As a result, more one-semester electives may be listed here than will actually be scheduled in the upcoming school year.
- In addition to the course content described below, all first semester English electives offer

students the opportunity to meet with their teachers for help with college application essays.

- Regardless of the combination of semester electives that students take, their overall transcript grade for senior English will be an average of the two courses.
- They are open to qualified 10th and 11th graders who have room in their programs to carry an additional English class.

ADVANCED PLACEMENT: ENGLISH LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION

(1 unit) In this course, students will examine complex texts - both classic and contemporary. The curriculum focuses on close reading, textual analysis, and specific literary terms and devices. In preparing for the rigorous AP exam in May, and to increase their facility as astute readers and efficient writers, students will write complete essays in single period, as well as answer multiple choice questions about prose and poetry. The curriculum does not, however, focus primarily on preparation for the AP exam, and students' progress will regularly be assessed based upon preparation for classes, alert reading for details, contributions to discussion, and longer creative and analytical writing assignments. Students who are not enthusiastic readers and skilled writers are not prepared for this challenge.

Suggested Guidelines: A teacher recommendation.

ENGLISH 4H - SOCIETY, LITERATURE AND TRUTH

(2 units) 1 English, 1 Social Studies: fulfills Senior English and Government/Economics (Social Studies) requirements. This year-long interdisciplinary course is a seminar taught by an English teacher and a Social Studies teacher in a two-period block of time. SLT is a course where students and teachers explore, in a collaborative and multidisciplinary way, four themes that influence our humanity: Truth, Freedom, Identity, and Economics. The complexities of these themes will be explored through daily reading, writing, listening and speaking. Our journey will be framed by essential questions which include, but are not limited to:

- What is the truth?
- How are our freedoms protected and limited? What does it mean to be morally right or morally wrong? To what extent do we learn these ideas of right wrong from our environment? To what extent is this morality intrinsic?
- What shapes your identity, and can you change it?
- How do the Fundamental Questions of Economics help us to understand the world of economics?

These themes will be explored through an interaction with some of the great thinkers, past and present, who have pondered these fundamental concerns in their writing and art.

Course Structure:

The structure of SLT will include: reading, writing prompts, individualized work, small group work, and whole class seminars. This structure is designed to promote the development of skills critical for post-secondary success. Additionally, the goals of each seminar period are:

- a) to equip students with the skills to decipher challenging texts independent of teacher guidance, and
- b) to provide a forum for students to exercise and grow their capacity for rational critical judgment.

Effective Socratic seminars, in which students are asked to exercise their capacity to choose amongst “truths” and articulate and defend their choices, are conducted under the assumption that seminar leaders do not possess the answers to the questions and problems upon which the class focuses. In seminar, teachers act as Socratic questioners, coaches, and conversation facilitators, in addition to being genuine participants in the collaborative inquiry into challenging texts.

ENGLISH 12: WRITING FOR COLLEGE

This rigorous course is designed to facilitate the academic writing you will encounter in college. The ability to write well is a key to academic success, and this course was designed with college

readiness in mind. This **full year** English course will help you acquire the effective writing skills you will need to succeed in college and the workplace. Writing will focus on exposition, analysis and interpretation, persuasion, and research. The course is suggested for proficient readers and writers who would benefit from one final year of direct writing instruction before entering college.

SEMESTER COURSES

CREATIVE WRITING

(1/2 unit) The course emphasizes fiction and poetry writing, although students will also produce a personal narrative. Free writing is an integral part of the experience. Students will use it to discover topics and increase fluency. As the course is run like a workshop, students will be expected to share their work with classmates as well as with the teacher. Activities are designed to help students develop characters and voice, control point of view and create gripping introductions and effective conclusions will culminate in a short story assignment. While writing poetry, students will experiment with various poetic devices such as imagery, simile, and metaphor. They will also experiment with different types of poems, including found poems, list poems, haiku, sonnets, and free verse. Reading is an important part of this course. Students will be required to examine numerous essays, short stories, and poems for style, voice, and technique. At the end of the semester, students will present a portfolio of their work.

FILM WRITING AND ANALYSIS

(1/2 unit) Film Writing and Analysis will look at the world of cinema historically, thematically, and critically. Students will learn the vocabulary of film and be taught to discuss it intellectually and structurally, rather than just critically. The course will examine many films from different periods to try to pinpoint the various movements, changes, and messages that have informed American cinema over the past sixty years. Students will be responsible for recognizing not only the characteristics of the films we study, but also the fingerprints of given directors and actors within those films.

The films we will focus on will span from *Citizen Kane* to *American Beauty*, and students will be required to identify what techniques and themes such masterpieces share. In other words, students will understand certain universal truths about what makes a great film. Some films will be screened and discussed in class but students will be responsible for watching others on their own time. Assessments will include reading quizzes, critical essays, comparison essays, as well as a presentation that must show mastery in the dissection of a scene.

Students should expect to produce a piece of analytical writing for each film viewed in class. The length of each assignment will vary, but writing skills will be reviewed, stressed, and assessed. Editing opportunities, writing workshops, and basic grammar review will offer students a chance to earn back credit for engaging in the writing process.

Course texts include: *Understanding Movies* by Gianetti, *Anatomy of Film* by Bernard Dick, *Writing About Film* by Timothy Corrigan **Note to Athletes: This course has not been approved by the NCAA Clearinghouse for students who want to play Division I or II sports in college.**

MODERN LITERATURE

(1/2 unit) If history and literature have taught us anything, it is that despite enormous shifts in technology and culture, there are certain struggles that will forever task the human spirit. Our quest to understand ourselves amidst this turmoil and joy is our universal theme. The nuances of these themes may vary based on culture, religion, history, or socioeconomic status, but the quest for understanding is the same.

Modern Literature will examine the human condition through modern literature. Each piece of literature will deal with a specific aspect of the human condition. The themes we will explore will include: patriotism, war, regret, love, sacrifice, friendship, coming of age/loss of innocence, interconnectedness, family, corruption, and death. There will also be satirical themes in each course that ridicule one or more of the topics we have studied previously.

Students should expect this course to run much like their traditional English classes from years past. They will be dealing with more mature themes and literature, but the emphasis on reading, writing, speaking, and thinking will be the same. Course texts include: *For Whom the Bell Tolls* by Ernest Hemingway, *Rule of the Bone* by Russell Banks, *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* by Ken Kesey and *The Princess Bride* by William Goldman.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE WILD

(1/2 unit) "In wilderness is the salvation of the world," declared Henry David Thoreau. This course examines literary, artistic, and scientific responses to the wilderness and the natural world. Most assignments will be creative and personal responses to texts and explorations through visual art, poetry and prose about nature, wilderness, and place. Seminar-type discussions in class will be open investigations of art, literature, and environmental issues. This course may especially appeal to students taking Environmental Science or Advanced Geology, or those interested in a career in the natural sciences. The course will look at the changing cultural attitudes toward the environment as defined by the concepts of nature and wilderness. Students will survey various definitions of "wilderness" and explore the relationship of the individual and the community to the "wild." Readings will include poetry, fiction, essays, and scientific papers across various periods and cultural contexts. The student's final piece will be an inquiry into a "sense of place" concept, giving each an opportunity to create an artistic and scientific natural history of a particular place. The course will include two day- trips, a hike and a paddle.

PUBLIC SPEAKING AND SPEECH WRITING

(1/2 unit) Students will learn to develop, write, and orate persuasive, informative and demonstrative speeches. Students will also learn to write speeches in a cohesive and organized style through the study of famous speeches. Class members will learn to face an audience with confidence and to organize speeches and presentations that persuade and inform listeners with purpose. This course addresses how to conquer the fear of public speaking and its

negative stresses and encourages students' use of humor, creativity and personality in their presentations. Students should expect to deliver impromptu and prepared speeches and to identify effective technique elements. Students will also be expected to set personal goals and to learn how to select and design appropriate materials and methods of delivery. There is a heavy emphasis on writing and on preparation and practice outside of class. The course will culminate in a final persuasive speech which will be assessed for both oral and written skills.

unique qualities of each culture. Topics will include: creation myths, flood myths, nature myths, the hero quest, metamorphosis and mythological allusions in the modern world. In addition, writing workshops in September will assist students in writing the college essay.

RACE AND GENDER IN LITERATURE

(1/2 unit) In this seminar-style semester course, students will examine issues linked to gender, race, sexual orientation, and class through fictional and non-fictional narratives. Texts and analyses encourage discourse over the history, current events, and societal perceptions that impact these groups. Students will be required to complete daily readings and discussions as well as presentations, projects, and research.

SPORTS LITERATURE

(1/2 Unit) Many superb novels have been written about sports and athletes. Students will read novels such as *The Boys of Summer* by Roger Kahn, *Friday Night Lights* by H.G. Bissinger, and *Seabiscuit* by Laura Hillenbrand. Additionally, students will read related essays, editorials, and news articles. Modern day issues such as team hazing, long term injuries, steroid use, and other topics of importance will be discussed in this semester course. Students will have the opportunity to write for publication through the FLHS newspaper and yearbook in addition to other local news outlets. **Note to Athletes: This course has not been approved by the NCAA Clearinghouse for students who want to play Division I or II sports in college.**

WORLD MYTHOLOGY

(1/2 unit) This course will examine mythology on a global scale. It will begin with classical mythology of Greece and Rome and then branch out to examine the myths of Native Americans, Norse, Egyptians, Babylonians, Celts, Africans, Persians, Aztecs and more. Universal archetypes will be the method of connecting such a vast body of literature, while at the same time noting the