



August 26, 2020

Hey, Hi, Hello!

I am so incredibly excited to begin this new school year with you! I love HTHNC and, specifically, I love teaching the 11th grade. The junior year is both one of the busiest and most transformative years at HTH, and allows me (the teacher) to encourage higher level critical thinking by embracing Deeper Learning Competencies that better support you as not only a student, but as a human being as well. Throughout this year, instruction will serve to support the core content by thinking critically, communicating, collaborating, engaging in self-directed learning, and encouraging an academic mindset across all projects.

Reading and writing are vital components to success not only in college, but also in life. My goal is that each student grows in their confidence as a writer and finds their voice, will be able to find some joy in the editing/revision process, and will also have found at least one text that they find both engaging and meaningful by the end of the year. Additionally, I hope to prepare you in a way that you will feel confident with your skills in a way that supports you in the SAT, your senior year, and future collegiate level courses.

Just as I encourage the students to collaborate with me and their peers, I also encourage the parents to maintain a working relationship with me to better help their students achieve their goals. Please feel free to email me at kochaba@hightechhigh.org if you have any questions about your child's progress. Information will also be available via PowerSchool allowing you to keep track of student grades and assignments moving forward.

Please read the attached policies together at home (we will also go over the syllabus more thoroughly in class) then sign and return the attached acknowledgement noting that you have read and understood the classroom norms. If time permits, I'd love to hear from you about any information you'd like me to know about you/your student. Onward to what is sure to be the best (and weirdest) year yet!

Warmly,
Kelsey Ochaba



11th Grade Humanities: U.S. Literature

2020-2021 Syllabus

Contact information

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Digital Portfolio: KOTeaching.weebly.com

Office Hours: Tuesday-Friday 2:30-3:00pm or by appointment

Humanities (U.S. Literature) [Zoom Class Link](#)

Course Outline & Rhythms

Welcome to your first semester in English 3: U.S. Literature. In this course, we will maintain regular rhythms that support our classroom culture as well as your growth as a learner and active member of the community. We will spend time reading, examining, and discussing both historical and contemporary texts that will support your understanding of how America came to be and where it is going from here. In an effort to help you continue on your path toward senior year and, ultimately, college and career, we will be focusing on sharpening your ability to think critically and analytically about the writing (research and creative based) and reading that you do in and out of the classroom.

This course will be taught in a way that utilizes literature to complement the U.S. history that we will be studying in alignment with our project work. Students will learn to read and analyze text as a commentary on the historical/political time period. All students are encouraged to embrace both the literature and historical texts as they relate to one another throughout our course.

Class Rhythms Include:

- Mondays Asynchronous: SAT Prep/Writing/Reading/Project Work
- Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays: Literature, Discussion

*Please Note: schedule may change depending on classroom flow and semester. In regards to COVID, the schedule will continue to adapt and meet the needs of our students and prioritize their experience before all else.

Overarching Essential Questions

Below are the overarching essential questions that will guide our thinking over the course of the year. These ideas should be considered across all projects and curriculum in addition to project-specific questions.

- What choices do we make about our own identity? How can our choices influence how we understand ourselves?
- What does one need to know/do to be a successful, critical, and involved citizen?
- What does the American Dream look like to each individual?
- How has America transformed across time? How will it continue to transform?
- How has history shaped present day and what (if anything) have we learned from our past?
- How do race, gender, ethnicity, and class play a role in responding to and shaping the United States?

Habits of Mind

At High Tech High, we emphasize five habits of mind that are central to this course:

1. **Significance:** Why is this important? Why should you care?
2. **Perspective:** Who says? How do the author's experiences influence the ideas presented? What prior knowledge am I bringing to the problem?
3. **Evidence:** What argument is being made? What facts are used to support the argument? How do you know whether they are facts or opinions?
4. **Connections:** How does this work connect to the real world? How has it been influenced by the past? How could it affect the future?
5. **Supposition:** How would life be different if this wasn't true or never happened? What would happen if you changed part of the problem?

Assessment & Grades

It is my job, as your teacher, to ensure that you are learning and preparing for your future. In order to do this, assessments will come in the form of projects, class discussion, self-reflection, daily assignments, participation, essays, and exams.

We've got to play the game until we can change it, which means that grades will be on an A-Not Passing scale. Additionally, an A is an A is an A, no really, just ask Ms. Abdullah. Grades will be marked as the following below:

100%-90% A

89%-80% B

79%-70% C
69% and Below Not Passing

Please note that at High Tech High North County, a grade of 69% and below is considered not passing in humanities. Students that do not pass humanities must attend summer school to make up the course.

Grading Scale:

35% Project Work, Tests, & Discussion
30% History & Literature Analysis, Writing
25% Classroom Culture & Respect
10% Notebook checks, Bell Ringers, Exit Slips, & Homework

Course Requirements

1. **SAT Prep:** Students will participate in SAT preparatory style lessons.. Lessons will be designed in conjunction with College Board and Khan Academy to prepare students for the reading and writing portion of the SAT. The status of the SAT is ever changing and based on the current climate. I will keep you updated on any changes made in regards to requirements for you and your collegiate endeavors.
2. **Literature:** Students will be expected to read assigned readings **before** class and to come prepared to participate in discourse each day. All assignments associated with readings should also be completed by their due date in order to keep up with the class discussion. Please note that this course will encourage students to begin reading at a higher volume to better prepare them for the SAT/ACT, senior year, and college. All reading will be done at an accelerated pace to increase student reading speed and volume in preparation for their senior year and beyond..
3. **Project Work:** For the fall of 2020, students will be working to examine their own identity and place in our world. We will do this by examining the Black Experience, the Female Lens, and the Psychology of Horror. Project work will always focus on the following deeper learning competencies: **Core Content, Critical Thinking, Communication, Collaboration, Self-Directed Learning, and Academic Mindsets.**
4. **Writing:** Students will participate in several writing workshops throughout the semester. Here, we will look at specific elements of writing and work toward becoming stronger and more fluent writers. We will look at critical and analytical writing, as well as writing creatively. Writing will take the form of formally written papers, narrative, creative pieces, and, current climate permitting, in-class timed writes throughout the course of the year.
- **Classroom Culture and Respect:** In order to get the most out of this class, students must be willing to be active, kind, and civil participants with their peers. A quarter of the final grade will rely on keeping the classroom culture and respect alive within the

classroom at all times. The expectations for the Classroom Culture and Respect are detailed below.

Classroom Culture and Respect

- **Classroom Culture:** Students will show compassion, respect, and consideration for fellow students, Kelsey, or any guests in the classroom at all times. Any disregard for the above mentioned qualities will not be tolerated.
- **Zoom Norms:**
 - Use your REAL NAME only.
 - MUTE yourself unless speaking to the group--hosts have the power to mute you if needed.
 - Keep your CHAT BOX open for comments or questions ONLY.
 - The CHAT BOX is PUBLIC -**use appropriately**
 - If you have a comment or question you'd like to share then please type "COMMENT" or "QUESTION" into the box and one of the moderators will invite you to speak.
 - **NO PICTURES OR RECORDINGS OF ANY KIND UNLESS APPROVED BY A TEACHER. THIS IS ILLEGAL. PERIOD.**
 - Be present for each session and set aside any distractions during this time.
- **Attendance & Tardiness**
 - Class begins on time everyday. Tardiness will adversely affect a student's Classroom Culture and Respect grade.
 - Daily attendance is mandatory for success in the course. Students must be present and prepared at all times. All students are held responsible for all reading and writing assignments assigned while absent. Students can call or email a classmate and email Kelsey for the assignments missed. Students must be prepared to turn in make-up assignments upon returning to class.
- **Late Work:** Assignments must be completed by the due date. In case of an emergency or illness, accommodations can be made.
- **Academic Integrity** - Citations for sources must be included for every assignment. Any assignment with any form of plagiarism will receive an immediate zero.

Plagiarism as defined by the HTH handbook is as follows:

- Direct duplication by copying (or allowing to be copied) another's work, whether from a book, article, website, another student's assignment, etc.;
- Duplication in any manner of another's work during an exam;
- Paraphrasing of another's work closely, with minor changes but with the essential meaning, form and/or progression of ideas maintained;
- Piecing together sections of the work of others into a new whole;

- Submitting one's own work which has already been submitted for assessment purposes in another subject; and/or,
- Producing assignments in conjunction with other people (e.g. another student, tutor), which would be your own independent work.
- **Dress Code** - HTHNC's dress code will be enforced at all times.

In Person Expectations:

The following expectations are in the event that we return to school in person in a capacity that allows for us to be in a classroom together. These expectations will be upheld **in addition** to the expectations above.

- **Cellphones and Computers**
 - **Cellphones** - **Phones down, eyes up, minds open.** Cell phones must be off during class. There will be an initial warning for any accidental ringing or buzzing. After the initial warning, a student's cell phone will be taken away for the rest of the day and may be picked up at Ms. Aleida's office at the end of the day. Listening to music while working in class is by teacher discretion and permission only.
 - **Computers** - Computers are welcome at school and in class. However, using a computer for a purpose outside of classwork will result in the loss of the privilege of using either a classroom or personal computer.
- **Food, Drink, and Gum**
 - **Food and Drink** - No food is to be eaten in class and water is the only acceptable beverage. Eating food in class will impact your Classroom Culture & Respect grade.
 - **NO GUM.**
- **"But I left it in my car..."** Students will not be allowed to go to their cars during school hours. Students must make sure to bring all needed materials and books to class.

Course Preparation & Organization

Students will need to come to class everyday having done any necessary reading and assignments beforehand. Students should bring a 3-ring binder (designated Humanities: U.S. Literature), loose leaf paper, pen and/or pencil, and highlighter to class.

Optional for the Fall Semester: *Blood Child* by Octavia E. Butler, *On Writing* by Stephen King

NOTE: The Constitution of the State of California requires that we provide a public education to you free of charge. Subject to certain exceptions, your right to a free public education means that we cannot require you or your family to purchase materials, supplies, equipment or uniforms for any school activity.

Many families have been asking what supplies their child may need during this school year. Above is a recommended list of supplies that your child may bring to school. Please note that if your child does not bring the

recommended supplies, the school will provide the supplies for him/her. If you have any questions/comments about this, please contact us, or Shani Leader, the school director.

Honors Credit Option

All students have the option of taking this course for honors credit. The honors credit option is more challenging, and you will receive a weighted GPA (for **both** U.S. History **and** U.S. Literature). The honors syllabus and agreement form will be distributed during the first week of class. Students who do not wish to sign up for honors but would like to engage in more rigorous work are encouraged to partake in selected honors course work and/or project challenge options.

Honors Coursework Requirement

Each semester, students enrolled in honors will be required to complete additional weekly, monthly, and semester long work.

1. Weekly Write Ups: Students in honors must complete a 1-2 page current event write up per week. This assignment will be on an article that supports the student's project for Ms. Nikolova's U.S. History course and is due on Google Classroom by 3:30 pm on Fridays--no exceptions. Weekly Write Ups must be done in third person, double-spaced, MLA format.
2. Additional Analysis: Honors students should expect additional analysis and in context of the work that we will be doing in class. This may take the form of additional readings, questions on assessments, or assignments that are designed to push their understanding of the class.
3. Book Analysis: Each semester students will need to select, read, and complete an analysis on an approved book of their choosing. Book analysis will be a book report style assignment.

Student & Parent Support

Junior year is often the most challenging and stressful year for students and parents. You will have a lot to balance in addition to your regular coursework including internship, SAT preparation, and college searches. My job is to support you so that you have a successful year and learn to balance the responsibilities of being an 11th grader. If you ever feel overwhelmed or need additional help, please do not hesitate to see me in office hours. Parents, please feel free to contact me by email any time to discuss ways to further support your student's learning.

Student & Parent Syllabus Acknowledgment

Have you and your parent/guardian read the syllabus? GREAT! Please complete the attached [acknowledgement form here](#). This is due no later than Friday, September 4th and will be your first graded assignment of the semester.