

Aurora Central High School
English 11
2017-18
Mr. Weber
Rm. 333

Contact Information:

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Course Description:

Good writing is a key element to both academic and professional success regardless of a chosen field, or academic pursuit. It also enhances our lives by providing an effective means for communicating accurately whether it be telling stories to entertain, or mapping out a proposal to employees. The myth about good writing is that some people are just good at it, and others are not. This is not true. Like any other skill, good writing can be achieved by anyone through practice, discipline of craft, taking risks and experimenting, and developing new skills. Just like an auto mechanic, who is more knowledgeable about how a car works because they can take it apart and put it back together, a strong writer becomes a stronger reader by understanding how other writers develop their compositions.

Throughout the year we will develop skills in argumentation, informative writing, research, narrative, drama, poetry, and literary criticism among other types of composition. We will work to develop compositional competency in a variety of types of writing, for different audiences, and for an array of purposes. Our primary goal is growth as a writer, and reader. Do not worry about the skills with which you enter class. No matter where your ability is upon entering class we will elevate your writing, understanding of the writing process, comprehension of complex writing by other authors, and learn how you can use these skills to better understand yourself, your values, ideas, feelings, experiences, and beliefs.

Goals:

- Apply the writing process to a wide variety of compositions for different audiences, and varied purposes
- Better understand complex writing by other authors, both informational and creative, by better understanding the tools those writers are using to communicate complex ideas
- Develop professionalism in communication that can be applied to college, and/or the work place
- Acquire skills that will lead to the ability to use language and communication as a tool for future success
- Gain a better understanding of ourselves, the world around us, the world before us, the world after us, and how we can be a formative and powerful force in those worlds

Classroom Culture:

One of the most challenging experiences of good writing is taking the risk to express your ideas, feelings, interpretations, perceptions, and experiences to others. The single most effective way to rapidly develop writing skills is to share our work with our peers. The workshop environment requires a high degree of open-mindedness, maturity, and above all, respect for others and their work. It is imperative that, as a student, you are present in class both physically and mentally. Your peers need your feedback, and you need theirs. Our workshop environment can only be successful if we come to it with a positive, open-minded, and dedicated attitude focused on the pursuit of success, learning, and acquisition of new skills and ideas.

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Required materials:

For the most part, you will need pens/pencils, paper, and a folder for work-in-progress. It would help to have internet access for the class website resources, but if a student does not have access we can find alternative means.

Participation:

The single best, and most rapid, way to fine tune writing skills is publishing to an audience and gauging feedback. Likewise, our understanding of a reading, regardless of the author, is deepened and expanded by constructing meaning with a range of perspectives and interpretations. The only way these things work is through full participation by each, and every, student. We all come to our classroom with different background experiences and sets of prior knowledge which we use as a lens for understanding and communicating. A classroom where no discussion, collaboration, or communication of ideas is happening will never foster new learning. We must also be respectful of another's opinion, idea, or criticism in an attempt to try to understand where the point of view originates. Our best success as communicators comes from the empathetic approach of trying to imagine one's self in someone else's shoes. This takes energy, maturity, self-discipline, and dedication. We can certainly have a great deal of fun investigating a variety of topics, writing styles, and literature, but it will be you, as a student, who benefits most from a serious approach to our studies.

Assessments:

- Informal and formal presentations
- Drafts, revisions, notes, and peer feedback
- Final drafts of major papers
- Working folders for projects
- Portfolios
- Projects
- Group participation
- Individual participation
- Reflections and self-evaluations

Readings:

We will read a variety of literature and informational texts in conjunction with digital resources such as podcasts, documentary films, discussion threads, videos, and academic databases.

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School Policies:

REQUESTS FOR HOMEWORK Students requiring homework assignments due to extended excused absences (three days or more) should initially contact the attendance office. The attendance office will notify teachers and collect assignments from individual teachers. Assignments should be ready for pick up 24 hours after a request has been made. Please Aurora Central High School Syllabus 2016-17 call the attendance office to check homework status.

MAKE-UP WORK DURING ABSENCES Any time a student misses a class for any reason whatsoever, that student will be expected to contact each teacher and complete the make-up work in order to achieve the learning objective. This includes field trips, school activities, suspensions, group sessions, truancies, and the like. Make-up work is required and students who have been absent from class must request make-up work from the teacher no later than the next class meeting. Teachers will determine a reasonable amount of time for make-up work when students are absent, using a two days for every one day absent guideline. Teachers may provide an "alternative" learning experience for make-up work to any student who requests it upon returning to class. For example, a student may have been absent from a class at which the daily learning objective was achieved by means of a class discussion. At the teacher's sole discretion, students who were absent during that discussion might be assigned a two or three-page written essay due three or four days after the student's return to class as an 'alternative' learning experience for that objective. Teachers will give academic credit to all make-up work that complies with the above guidelines. The only exception is that teachers have the choice whether or not to give academic credit to the make-up work from an unexcused absence. If the absence was unexcused, the teacher should provide feedback but is not required to give credit for the work.

TARDY POLICY After three tardies teachers will conference with the student and contact home. After 5 tardies students can be referred to the Learning Center and additional consequences may be assigned. **PASSES** Students who leave the classroom or are excused from class must have a pass with correct validation by the teacher. School officials may send for a student using an authorized Administrative Pass. Students who are without official passes will be subject to disciplinary action. Passes will not be given in the first 10 minutes or last 10 minutes of class.

NON-ACADEMIC TECHNOLOGICAL DEVICES Aurora Public Schools believes in providing environments that optimize learning and teaching and are safe, secure, and well maintained. As such, all personal electronic devices* shall not be seen nor heard during the school day in academic areas of the building from 7:30 A.M. to 3:45 P.M. *Cell phones, iPods, headphones, portable speakers, MP3s, tablets, cameras, etc. Aurora Central High School is not responsible for lost, stolen or damaged electronic devices. This includes electronic devices that are confiscated by staff. Aurora Central High School reserves the right to not investigate lost, stolen or damaged electronic devices.