

Syllabus for College Literature Honors

Presented by Josh Cabat, Roslyn High School

Course Description:

This Semester 1 course is designed for seniors who desire a college preparatory experience. Students study classic and contemporary fiction, non-fiction, drama and poetry so that they may grasp the nature and variety of great literary works, refine their comprehension, analytic and appreciation skills, and use literature to make sense of their lives. Considerable time will be devoted to the writing process, and assessments will be varied and challenging. Special attention will also be paid to the study of rhetoric, and how to apply rhetorical techniques to both speaking and writing. The class will culminate in a multi-step research thesis project, which will mirror both the structure and the format of college-level writing. In this section of the class, the teacher will conference on a regular basis with each student as they move through the steps of the thesis.

Grading:

Grades will be calculated as follows:

- Average score on major grades (projects/papers) = 60%
- Average score on minor grades (quizzes and homework journals) = 20%
- Class participation = 20%

Homework will be done in one of two ways. At the beginning, we will work in “dialectical journal” format, which will be graded on a “Check Plus/Check/Check Minus” (equivalent to 100/85/70) basis, with “F” signifying that the assignment was not completed. As the course goes on, we will do more of our homework assignments as threaded discussions on ProBoards, where you may either respond to my comments or to the responses of your fellow students.

As 12th graders a year away from college, it goes without saying that the honor code will be strictly enforced on all assignments, large and small. All other policies laid out in the Student Handbook, relating to such topics as attendance, conduct and grading, will be strictly applied in this course.

College Credit:

Any student who wants to may sign up for 3 college credits through the auspices of SUNY Farmingdale for the successful completion of this course. This credit will be offered at a steeply reduced fee, and will be contingent upon the student receiving a grade of ‘C’ or above at the end of the semester.

Texts:

Excerpts from *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* by Joseph Campbell

Excerpts from *Man and His Symbols* by Carl Jung

Inferno by Dante Alighieri

The Stranger by Albert Camus

Hamlet by William Shakespeare

Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close by Jonathan Safran Foer

Supplementary poems and stories

Assessments:

There will be no short answer or multiple choice exams in this class. For *Inferno*, you will have to write an essay on Dante's use of language, and you will have to participate in a group project where you present and teach one of the important *cantos* (chapters) in the poem to the class. For *Stranger*, you will have a concluding essay where you will be asked to read a short piece of criticism on the work and respond to it based on your knowledge of the text. Our assessments in *Hamlet* will be largely performance-based, but you will also have a concluding project that will give you several options in approaching the play through new media techniques. *Extremely Loud* will be an outside reading book, and you will be asked to write an essay discussing how the unusual form of the novel reflects and influences its content.

Please note that on all long-form written assignments (except the thesis), I will accept rewrites of papers which receive a grade of 85 or below; rewrites may be handed in for up to a week after the paper is returned. With rewrites, the new grade is averaged with the original grade. Rewrites must be based on content as well as grammatical error correction, but not solely for grammatical error corrections. The old paper must be stapled to the new paper in order to be accepted. The penalty for late work on most essays is **five points per school day**.

The Thesis:

The final thesis project will be broken down into the following components:

Choice of topic – 5 points

Preliminary Works Cited list – 5 points

Outline – 15 points

Rough Draft – 15 points

Final Draft – 60 points

Please notice that if all you do is hand in a paper at the end, the best you can do is a 60. The idea behind the project is that it gets you used to the process you will have to use in college writing, and it gives us a chance to confer one-on-one at every stop along the way.

Schedule:

Week 1: "The Hero with 25 Faces:" The Patterns of Mythology

Week 2: Rhetoric

Week 3: Rhetoric/Intro to *Inferno*

Week 4: *Inferno*

Week 5: *Inferno*

Week 6: *Inferno*

Week 7: *Inferno* Projects/Intro to *The Stranger* and Existentialism

Week 8: *The Stranger*

Week 9: *The Stranger*

Week 10: *Stranger* projects/Intro to *Hamlet*

Week 11: *Hamlet*

Week 12: *Hamlet*

Week 13: *Hamlet*

Week 14: *Hamlet*

Week 15: Responses to *Extremely Loud*

Week 16: Thesis: Choice of topic and preliminary reading list

Week 17: Research and outline writing

Week 18: Rough draft

Week 19: Rough draft

Week 20: Final drafts