

The Classic Novel
Saint Mary's College High School
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I. Course Description

Works of art deemed *classic* are often debated and critiqued for generations; for literature to be held in such high regard it must captivate a special place in the hearts and minds of its readers. We will explore what a *classic* is and how such writings stand the test of time. We will examine social, political, historical, and cultural beliefs that shaped the stories they created, while making significant connections to contemporary issues. While reading, we will explore the individual and his/her conflict with society.

The purpose of this course is to help students write effectively and confidently. Over the course of the year, students will become skilled readers of prose as well as skilled writers who compose for a variety of purposes. Recognizing and appreciating literary elements in the selections they read, students will be able to produce increasingly more sophisticated pieces on their own.

II. Course Learning Goals

- Master the fundamentals of college-level essay writing, as well as writing for practical application, by practicing and improving their skills.
- Construct valid arguments and critically respond to faulty argument techniques.
- Read and interpret literature critically.
- Make mature connections between literature, history, and other appropriate disciplines.

III. Essential Questions

- How does the individual transform in a society in which there are conflicts?
- What role does an institution play in limiting/exploring free will?
- How does one's gender or race shape identity in an oppressive society?
- Are awakenings provoked by a dramatic event or change in a person's life?
- If a person experiences emotional pain or physical trauma, is the knowledge gained worth the suffering?

IV. Required Texts

Summer Reading: *Just Mercy* by Bryan Stevenson
***Passing* by Nella Larsen**
***The Bluest Eye* by Toni Morrison**
***Zorro* by Isabel Allende**

V. Additional Required Materials

In addition to required texts, students are expected to bring to class daily:

- iPad (fully charged)
- Composition Book
- Black Pens

VI. Grading Policies

Assessments will vary in length and format, but grades will be based on the following categories:

- Analysis (40%)
- Mechanics (35%)
- Content/Conceptual Knowledge (5%)
- Synthesis/Final Exam (20%)
- Habits of Scholarship (0%)

VII. Core Assessments

Students are required to complete each of the following major assignments in order to demonstrate proficiency:

Reading Quizzes
Presentations
Unit essays
Final synthesis essay

How Grades Are Determined

For written assessments, student performance will be measured against the course learning outcomes using rubrics distributed prior to the assessment. Levels of student performance on assessments will be reported using letter grades (A, B, C, D, F, or I).

Culminating Assessments and Final Exams

In English, the students' culminating exam takes the form of a "synthesis essay" which requires the students to respond to a prompt by synthesizing evidence from three different sources of literature used throughout the trimester. Students will be given class time to work on their synthesis essays the week prior to school-wide exams. Students will then submit their final essay **before** exams in their other classes begin.

Failure to complete a final examination or other culminating assessment will result in an "Incomplete" (I) mark in the course. Failure to submit or complete a culminating assessment will result in a student receiving a final grade of "Incomplete" (I), which will be treated as an F in computing a student's Grade Point Average (GPA), resulting in no credit for the course, and the student will have to repeat the course independent of Saint Mary's.

Grade of "I" or Incomplete Grade

A final summative grade of "I" will be assigned at the end of the term when a student does not complete the requirements for the course. Because the number of assessments in this class is limited, all essays must be completed or the student will receive an "I" final grade. The "I" is a permanent grade. It is the equivalent of an "F" grade and is calculated in the student's GPA as such. When an "I" is assigned, the value of credits attempted and credits completed equals zero.

VIII. Missed Assignments Policy and Late Work

Absences and Make-Up Work

Deadlines are important and must be met. If a student is absent because he/she is sick or missed school for a family or school obligation (early dismissal, funeral, theater prep, etc.), the student must communicate with me to determine how to make up the work in a timely manner. Communication is key in the event of missed class time.

Students who miss a scheduled test or quiz for a valid reason (eg, illness) must reschedule the test within three (3) school days of the student's return from the absence. A student who fails to take a missed quiz or test will receive an "I" for the assessment and have the assessment marked as missing. An "I" on quizzes or other minor assessments will not keep a student from passing.

Late Work Policy

- As stated above, deadlines are important. In the rare instance that unforeseen problems arise and a student cannot submit the essay on or before the due date, the student must contact the teacher as soon as the conflict is recognized. At this point, I will assign a new due date to the student that exempts the student from any penalties as long as the new requirements are met completely.

Late submissions that have not been pre-arranged must be made within three(3) school days of the original due date. Any late submission will receive an “I” in PowerSchool until the assessment is submitted. Once the essay is received, the “I” will be removed and graded as usual. Due to the lack of early communication, the student will receive a “U” for Habits of Scholarship.

This "U" will remain the Habits of Scholarship final grade.

If the student does not turn in the paper within three days of the due date, the grade will remain an "I," and the student may not pass the course. In addition, without communication, the student will receive a "U" for Habits of Scholarship. This "U" will remain the Habits of Scholarship final grade.

- Students will not be able to print papers for credit during class. It is due at the beginning of class, unless specified on the assignment. If it is not ready to be turned in at the beginning of class, the assignment will be considered late and the grade will be docked.
- Repeated instances of submitting work late will be reported to the student’s parents, counselor, and administration, resulting in the a temporary loss of the student’s co-curricular eligibility.

Re-Testing and Revision Policy

This class devotes step-by-step in-class support and time for students to complete their major assessments and thus already provide ample time and opportunity for work to be completed. In these cases, rewritten papers are not accepted. Essential preparatory work for papers include research notes, outlines, rough drafts and revisions.

Students will not be allowed to retake reading or vocabulary quizzes. These assessments reflect the student’s ongoing comprehension of texts.

IX. Habits of Scholarship

A second “Habits of Scholarship” Mark will be reported that is separate and distinct from the grade for academic achievement. It communicates student effort, behavior, ability to meet deadlines, & improvement. For example, in addition to academic marks, I will look to these grades when assessing if a student is ready for Advancement Placement courses. Students will be assessed at the end of each trimester using the standards below:

- E = Exceeds Expectations and Standards
- M = Meets Standards
- U = Unsatisfactory (Below standards)

Elements for Consideration in Reporting Habits of Scholarship Marks:

- Effort** – Does the student exhibit consistent, adequate effort in pursuit of academic achievement?
- Attendance/ Punctuality** – Is the student on time & in class?
- Responsibility** – Does the student submit schoolwork and other assessments on time? Does the student communicate with the teacher when issues arise? Does the student come to A-Block when he/she needs help?
- Engagement** – Is the student attentive in class and actively participate?
- Improvement** – Has the student shown improvement*? *This means an A student could show little improvement, or a struggling student could show significant improvement
- Behavior** – Is the student’s conduct in class good? respectful of teacher and peers? follow instructions? distracted by electronic devices? distracting others?

Students will receive a U (Unsatisfactory) mark in a grading period for the following behaviors:

- Any form of cheating
- Repeated failure to submit work (formative or summative)
- Failure to submit any major assessment on time
- Repeated instances of submitting work late
- Repeated failure to bring materials (iPad, notes, reading material, etc) to class
- Excessive absences for reasons other than verified health issues
- Repeated off-task behavior or misbehavior requiring teacher intervention
- Disengagement from class activities

X. Classroom Expectations

It is expected that students will:

- Arrive to class on time and prepared.
- Submit all homework assignments (including completing assigned reading) upon their due date.
- Treat each other and me with the utmost respect. Any failure to do so will be handled accordingly.
- Adhere to all the rules of Saint Mary's College High School as they are spelled out in the Student Handbook. Pay particular attention to the sections dealing with academic integrity and dress code.

Students should expect me to:

- Come to class prepared, organized, and knowledgeable.
- Grade assignments and assessments fairly according to rubrics provided and return them to with appropriate feedback as quickly as possible.
- Help students learn and succeed in this class. If you have any questions, need additional help, or have a special situation, let me know immediately so that we can work together.

XI. Class Website

The course website is an important resource for students. The daily agenda is posted to assist those who are absent and to help students keep track of our course of study.

Students should add the site to the iPad home screen.