**Effective Writing**

This is a half-year English course designed for both college and non-college bound seniors. Students will write a number of pieces designed to prepare them for life beyond high school. Pieces will include letters for various purposes: cover, business, complaint, commendation, and government/business officials. Compositions will include personal, descriptive, narrative, expository, persuasive, and research paper writing. Other topics to be covered are resumes, job applications, college applications, credit requests, and recommendation requests. The course emphasizes effective written communication and mechanics including spelling, usage, paragraphing, etc.

The objectives of the course are based on the Common Core ELA standards, with an eye on becoming “college and career” ready. Throughout the course, students will be developing their writing skills and focusing on individual areas of strengths and weaknesses.

The final assessment for the course will be a portfolio that will be assembled throughout the twenty weeks of class.

**MATERIALS**

* Loose leaf paper
* 3-ring binder
* Flash drive
* Highlighter

**Sampling of course assignments**

* “About Me: introductory essay based on interest inventory
* Cover letter/resume
* Application (college or work) essay
* Letters to business/government
* Effective e-mail and etiquette
* Reaction articles
* Descriptive essay
* Narrative essay
* Expository essay
* Persuasive/argument essay
* Research paper and project

**GRADING POLICY**

I grade using a point system. The goal of the point system is to give a greater number of points to those assignments in which we invest more time and/or importance. Listed below are typical, although not absolute, point values.

Essays: 25-30 pts. Short writing pieces & quizzes: 10 -20 pts.

Homework: 5-15 pts. Classwork: 5-10 pts. Projects: 40-60 pts.

Other graded items may include: group work, class participation, etc.

EXTRA CREDIT: Extra credit is generally not given. Students

**GRADE NOTIFICATION FOR PARENTS**

I provide students with detailed grade print outs at least once during the quarter in progress. Please feel free to email or to log on to the parent portal for the most complete grade updates. I also have a teacher site on the Liberty website.

**ABSENCES & MISSED ASSIGNMENTS**

In accordance with school policy, students with a LEGAL ABSENCE must make arrangements to make up work that requires seat time within five days. **Students who are in school but not in class for reasons such as a music lesson, student conferences, or field trips are still responsibl**e **for handing in work,** which can be handed in early, e-mailed, or dropped off during the day. Students absent from class for the above reasons are also expected to get any classwork and homework for the day. Homework is due on the assigned date unless legally excused as defined in the student handbook. In this course, homework assignments act not only as a reinforcement of our classwork, but also may be used in the next day’s lesson. Assignments may or may not be accepted late and will be penalized accordingly. Ultimately, it is the ***student’s* *responsibility*** to find out what work was missed and to make it up, whether it is reading, notes, or an assignment. I am available during the day (periods 3, 4, 6 or 9) afterschool, or via e-mail.

If a test or quiz is missed due to an excused absence, it will be made up during the next day or at a mutually convenient time. Papers and other assignments are due the first day back.

**MISCELLANEOUS CLASSROOOM POLICIES**

• **Assignments** must be turned in at the beginning of the class period on the date due. Occasionally I will allow students to hand in work by 3:00 if we have not already gone over the assignment in class. I may also permit students to hand in work via e-mail with an 11:59 p.m. deadline, similar to what many college classes allow students to do. We will be using Google Docs this year, so deadlines will most likely vary with assignment type.

• **Water Only!** Food and drinks other than water are not permitted in class. (Exceptions made occasionally if guidance verifies a student does not have a lunch period.)

• Please refrain from using your **cell phone** during class. If you have it out, as per school policy, you will be asked to turn it over until the end of the day. This will also result in a referral. In addition, as electronic equipment is against school policy, you also do not have permission to videotape or photograph other students or the teachers in the classroom.

*These rules are in addition to expectations outlined in the student handbook, which takes precedence over all. Please note that this is not a complete list and some items may change during the year according to individual class needs.*

**A NECESSARY NOTE ON PLAGIARISM**

Plagiarism is the use of another’s words or ideas and the representation of them as though they are entirely one’s own. Acts of plagiarism might include, but are not limited to:

· Using words or ideas from a published source without PROPER MLA documentation (intentionally or unintentionally).

· Using the work of another student (i.e. copying another student’s homework, writing, answers, project, or idea).

· Using EXCESSIVE EDITING suggestions.

Plagiarism on any project or paper will result in a zero for the assignment and possibly a referral. Unless given specific and individual permission by the teacher, group or partner work on any assignment is not acceptable. Students who willingly provide other students with access to their work are plagiarizing.

**LIBERTY HIGH SCHOOL ENGLISH DEPARTMENT EXPECTATIONS**

* Regular class attendance and participation are a prerequisite for the successful completion of any course. Cutting class is an illegal absence. Students will receive a zero for any grades earned by the rest of the class for that day. This will include daily oral participation grades.
* If a student is absent one to five days and misses a routine test/quiz/classwork grade, it is the student’s responsibility to obtain the missed work from the teacher. The students should make up the work as soon as possible. For a one-day absence, the student must make up the work within a day of returning. For a two-day absence, the student has two days, etc.... Failure to obtain and follow up on missed work within this time frame will result in a zero for that work. Students will have no more than five days to make up an absence which requires seat time (unless other arrangements have been made with the teacher).
* If a student misses a normally scheduled class due to a music lesson, sport event, or any other school activity, he is to make up any grades and work. It is the student’s responsibility to notify his English teacher in advance of the planned absence and arrange a mutually convenient time for the makeup work. Failure to do so will result in a zero. We encourage students to establish homework partners. These partners would be another source to find out about missed work.
* As a department, we frown upon class interruptions. Keep requests to leave the room to a minimum.
* Students should make individual arrangements to stay after school with their teacher. Transportation is provided by the school on Tuesdays and Thursdays.
* Each student will come to class prepared with his/her own textbook, notebook, pen/pencils, paper, and written homework (if assigned). Failure to do so will affect your class participation grade.
* If a student refuses to cooperate with any substitute during the absence of the classroom teacher, he will receive a discipline referral.
* Students are responsible for all books that are the property of the school. Students will not receive a replacement nor the next assigned text until obligations are met.
* Depending upon assignment type, there will be a five point per day penalty for late work for the first five days it is overdue. After five days, work may not be accepted. Some assignments, especially those that are covered immediately in class, may not be accepted late. Teachers will notify students of late penalties for particular projects (such as research paper) if warranted. This policy does not apply to SCCC college credit courses, which are dictated by the college. Students in AP English will abide by the policy set by the teacher.