Writing Research Right

*Subject to revisions based on the needs and pace of the class*

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1. **Overview:**

The research paper need not strike fear into the heart of your high school student. This seven-week course addresses all aspects of the conception, development, and execution of a scholarly research paper. Research papers are typically required in high school and university courses and are often represented in numerous content areas. We will address all components of the writing process, from the idea to the argument, sources to citations, and writing to revision. Students can choose to write on topics of personal interest or use the products of this course to meet requirements of other courses. Students will receive one round of individualized feedback prior to submitting a final paper as well as a grade and feedback on the final product. They will also practice presenting and discussing research in a digital academic conference on the last day of class.

Live classes take place on Mondays, from 3:00-4:00pm. (Please note that Canvas often defaults to Mountain Time so you may want to reset your time zone appropriately.)

**II. Course Objectives:**

* Students will develop skills associated with argument and persuasive writing
* Students will practice skills and strategies of organization, pacing, and empathy
* Students will be able to distinguish between fact and opinion, as well as between reliable and unreliable sources of information
* Students will produce research artifacts as they develop a thesis statement and organize evidence around that thesis
* Students will demonstrate mastery of at least one variety of citation method and cite sources properly
* Students will write and revise at least one paper in the genre of research paper, following the steps of the writing process and acknowledging genre characteristics
* Students will present research and demonstrate expertise in their chosen subject area in a Digital Academic Conference

1. **Course Materials:**

All texts provided by instructor via Canvas. Please ensure you that your computer includes software that allows your student to open, read, and annotate PDFs and documents (.doc, .docx, .pdf).

The following materials are **mandatory** and provide a smoother online learning experience:

- High speed internet connection

- A webcam or computer with internal camera

- A headset with headphones and a microphone that plugs into your computer’s headphone jack

1. **Grading Policy**

Grading percentage weights:

Major Assessments (Tests, Papers, and Projects) 50%

Supporting Assessments (Quizzes and Minor Responses) 25%

Homework & Participation (Substantive, weekly responses & timely homework) 25%

**A student’s final grade in this course will be determined using the following grading scale:**

A 90-100

B 80-89

C 70-79

D 60-69

F 59 and below

Grades are calculated using total points.

Students will be asked to demonstrate proficiency through written assignments, quizzes and tests.

**Major assessments** consist of formal assessments at the end of each unit.  These tests may include but are not limited to: vocabulary, short answers, multiple choice and essay questions.  Published papers and quarterly projects may substitute for tests but are weighted equally.

**Supporting assessments** include assessments to demonstrate knowledge and/or mastery of prior classroom instruction

**Homework and participation** will consist of practicing skills introduced in weekly classes, generally through online discussions and homework as well as thoughtful contributions and questions in weekly classes.

**Late work policy:** Late work will be accepted (at the discretion of the instructor) for up to one week after deadline. Late work will receive a grade but will not receive feedback. **All assignments are due on Mondays at noon EST. Assignments submitted after that time will be considered late unless an extension is negotiated with the instructor.**

**V. Academic Integrity**

All students are expected to adhere to a code of academic honesty. Cheating or plagiarizing (the use of others’ words or interpretations without giving credit) will not be tolerated. Proper documentation style will be covered thoroughly in class; therefore, students will know how to avoid this grave offense. Consequences for an infringement of this type will be determined by the instructor at the time of the offense.

**VI. Gentle Reminder** (With great thanks to **Christine Hong**, University of California, whose [syllabus](http://apcentral.collegeboard.com/apc/members/repository/ap07_englit_teachersguide.pdf) inspired this section)

* Please communicate with me exclusively through the Canvas messaging system once your login is set up. This way, we have a dedicated line of communication that I check and respond to daily; I ask that you do the same.
* I typically respond to emails from 10am to 6pm on weekdays and usually within 48 hours. Please allow that time to elapse before sending a second message on the same topic.
* E-mail etiquette: I am not available to give extensive feedback and editing via e-mail but I do provide extensive feedback via Canvas and comments on your document for the draft and final copy. That said, should you need to notify me concerning an absence or wish to contact me about a brief matter, feel free to use e-mail for that purpose.
* Web-ex discussions are optional and they are recorded each week for students to review as necessary. Live Web-ex lectures will be held three times a month. The fourth week will be reserved for a recorded lecture, advisory days (when students will have opportunity for one-on-one interaction with the instructor), or other alternate format.
* While grades are a necessary evil of academic life, don’t let them become the focal point of your experience in this class. Rather than obsess over your grade on an individual paper, focus on your overall growth as a writer over the course of the semester. One surefire way to mature as a writer is to be flexible and self-reflexive about your writing. Although you probably won’t and shouldn’t always agree with the feedback from your peers and from me, keep in mind that we function as outside readers of your work and therefore furnish you with a valuable external point of view on your work. Also, be open to the idea of revision. Ultimately, being able to see your own work with a good measure of critical distance is essential to the evolution of your writing.
* For extra safety (technological failures can never be predicted), save all major assignments on disk, to your hard drive, to the cloud, or on an external hard drive in case of loss. Keeping an extra hard copy of each of assignment is also a good idea. This will also be important if you need to collect artifacts for a portfolio. Please don’t throw away anything until you have received a final grade for the course.
* The syllabus is open to alteration. We’ll see how things unfold throughout the course of the term and play it by ear. I’ll make certain to announce any changes as clearly as possible.

**VII. Tentative Course Schedule**

Detailed reading, writing, and response assignments will be distributed as each course segment begins.

We will try to adhere to this schedule as much as possible but please be aware some changes will probably take place during the course of the school year. Each student is responsible to have read all readings and completed all assignments by the date they are listed. I reserve the right to make adjustments to this syllabus in order to adjust to the needs of the course and students.

**Course schedule:**

Weekly assignments will usually include elements of the following (unless otherwise specified):

* Assigned reading
* 2-3 hours of collecting, drafting, or revising OR reading, analysis, and note-taking
* Preparation for final projects
* Participation in weekly class meeting

**The syllabus below has broad topics and assignments but other assignments are likely to arise.**

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| Week | Date | Topics |
| 1 | Week 1 | Introduction to research writing and assessment criteria  Appropriate and manageable topics  Introduce Digital Academic Conference Sources: viable and reliable? |
| 2 | Week 2 | Developing a research thesis  Developing a thesis  Envisioning now equals less revision later  Scrupulous structure |
| 3 | Week 3 | Officially outlining – three argument types  Sources and documentation: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/553/01/>  APA research guidelines  MLA research guidelines (and when to use them) |
| 4 | Week 4 | Outline due  Moving from aggregating to arguing and analyzing  Mentor text analysis  Identifying and clarifying your position |
| 5 | Week 5 | Research paper draft due  Tightening topic sentences  Closing sentence of each paragraph refers to thesis  In-text citations, footnotes, and endnotes |
| 6 | Week 6 | Individualized revision conferences throughout the week |
| 7 | Week 7 | Research papers due  Students present in Digital Academic Conference |