

AP Language and Composition

Olathe Northwest High School, 2023-2024

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Course Description

American novelist and linguist Julia Penelope once wrote, "Language is power, in ways more literal than most people think. When we speak [or write], we exercise the power of language to transform reality." **I believe that.** Language is a kind of alchemy: a magic of sorts. And that's the focus of this class – how well can we recognize and analyze the effects of language being used to influence people? How are these mysterious powers affecting us? And, finally, can we use those same rhetorical strategies to make ourselves more powerful in the world?

Learning Goals and Objectives

Students will learn how texts are deliberately crafted to achieve a specific effect in a specific rhetorical situation. To strengthen their abilities, students will study the conventions of standard English and effective argumentation including grammar, diction, vocabulary, syntax, etc. This class strives to connect students to the world happening around them, and it takes seriously the College Board's stated goal of "cultivating the reading and writing skills that students need for college success and for intellectually responsible civic engagement" (*AP English Language Course Description*, 2019).

Homework and Late Work

As stated in the *Olathe Staff Handbook*, "all grades should include consideration for difficulty of assignment, accuracy, neatness, ability of student improvement shown, and effort, attitude, initiative of student" (p. 23). For these reasons, **students should strive to demonstrate their depth of understanding in academically desirable ways rather than completing assignments quickly and carelessly.** Late work is accepted for **two weeks after the due date or until the quarterly grading period closes, whichever comes first.**

Teaching can be hectic, and I am an imperfect person; however, I will do my best to update our Google Dojo by 4:00 pm the day of the assignment. In any case, **delaying the start of my lesson to ask what was missed is inconsiderate of the other students;** please find a more appropriate time to get what you need. Make the most of seminar, AI, or come in after school.

	Google (Dojo) Classroom classroom.google.com	Turnitin.com turnitin.com	AP College Board myap.collegeboard.org
Hour 2	uvuhpbr	39966628 - Ravens1	WGX766
Hour 3	dyrdg3i	39966680 - Ravens1	JMN3RG
Hour 4	beq5oqk	39966704 - Ravens1	WRYVRG
Hour 5	xme7pwv	39967989 - Ravens1	3GJZ9L
Hour 6	tqigmsy	39968050 - Ravens1	4E4GXP
Hour 7	bagr65a	39968066 - Ravens1	LLJDY4

GRADEBOOK AND GRADING

GRADING CATEGORY	WT.	SAMPLE ASSIGNMENTS
Reading	20%	Reading quizzes, reading guides, APMC practice, summative assessments, etc.
Writing	25%	Written responses, essays, reflections, summative assessments, etc.
Speaking and Listening	15%	Courtesy and etiquette, presentations, discussions, quality of discourse, etc.
Language Study and Voc.	10%	Grammar exercises, ACT practice, vocabulary lists and quizzes
Learner Habits	10%	Poor classroom habits can adversely affect your student's grade; such considerations will be communicated through this gradebook category.
Semester Exams	20%	At the end of each semester, students will take a cumulative written exam. The notes, handouts, and graded assignments will serve as study aids.
TOTAL	100%	

Grading Scale

89.5-100%	A	Superior
79.5-89.4%	B	Above average
69.5-79.4%	C	Average (what I would expect most kids are capable of)
59.5-69.4%	D	Minimum achievement, but passable work
0-59.4%	F	Failure to meet minimum standards

These descriptions, taken from the *Olathe Grading and Assessment Handbook*, are interpreted literally in this classroom; simply doing what is asked on any assignment is *expected* – and, therefore, by definition, *“average.”* I do not offer extra credit and I do not “adjust” or “round” percentages at the end of a grading period. Doing what is asked *impressively*, every time, is the surest way to achieve the distinction of *“above average”* or *“exceptional.”* For more on this, see the “Homework and Late Work” section on page three of this syllabus.

Interpreting the Gradebook

Because Kansas College and Career Readiness Standards (KCCRS) emphasize the specific “strands” of reading, writing, speaking and listening, and language study, these comprise the first four categories of my gradebook. This is helpful for quickly identifying which specific skills have been mastered and which may require some additional attention. When I am entering an assignment, I will do my best to provide enough information that you or your student knows what to ask for or ask about. In any case, an attentive student in this college-level course will be able to find the information they need to advocate for their own needs.

In an effort to distinguish a student's academic *understanding* from their academic *habits*, my gradebook also has a “learner habits” category. ***Because I am committed to meeting each student where they are and providing equitable opportunities for their academic and personal growth, this information may be used when offering retakes and revisions, opening supplemental learning opportunities, or recommending additional supports.*** Please note the weighting of this category is 10%. That means that, mathematically, your student could earn a “zero” in this category and still end with an “A” in my class; however, having this information allows me to identify and communicate patterns that could negatively influence academic success in the future, when such habits might more directly impact college acceptance, GPAs, and/or scholarship opportunities.

CLASSROOM POLICIES

Although I try hard to make my classes interesting and fun, there is **NOTHING** more important to me than maximizing each student's academic growth in the time we share. My policies are simple:

NEVER think that because my class is fun, it is easy or a free-for-all.

1. Respect our time and topics (do not stop early, do not line up at door)
2. Acknowledge my verbal cues (greetings, transitions, corrections, etc.)
3. *Avoid distractions (cell phones must be in blue pocket chart)
4. Be kind, considerate, and civil at all times

Attendance/Tardy Policies

Attendance will be recorded daily. Students get the most out of the advanced, fast-paced AP curriculum if they attend regularly. **Tardy** is defined as being late to class without a signed pass, and "unexcused tardiness may result in a detention assigned by the classroom teacher" (*Olathe Staff Handbook*, p. 64). When assigned, students will have one week to serve a detention.

Students arriving more than ten minutes late to class without a pass will be recorded as an unexcused **absence** for the entire period. Students should also note that any combination of excused and/or unexcused absences in excess of 16 per semester "may result in the student being ineligible to receive credit" (*Olathe Staff Handbook*, p. 64).

Discipline

Disciplinary issues not addressed in this syllabus will be handled in accordance with the OPS *Code of Student Conduct* and may be recorded in our student information system, depending on the seriousness of the offense.

Revisions, Retakes, and Recovery

AP Language and Composition is a college-level course governed by the standards and policies set forth by the College Board. Because of the maturity level expected, the academic rigor inherent, and the weighted credit available, revisions, retakes, and opportunities for academic recovery **are offered at the discretion of the teacher and based on my professional assessment of each student's area of greatest need**. This approach is supported by decades of research on differentiation, as well as the Olathe Public School's more recent emphasis on academic equity rather than academic equality.

AI/ChatGPT Policy:

All work in this class must be your own. Use of AI software (eg. Chat-GPT, Bard, GrammarlyGo, and other search engine Large Language generative composition programs) will be grounds for discipline and academic penalties, **up to and including failure** of the course.

Final Exams

There will be a cumulative semester final given during the scheduled final exam times. This final may include matching, multiple-choice, short-answer, and essay questions. It will be a paper-and-pencil final (not computerized) and will account for 20% of your semester grade. Your classroom organization and notes will assist you in preparing for semester exams, and we will always have a final review session.

Recommended Materials (*for students who struggle with organization)

- Three-ring binder with 3-5 tabbed dividers used exclusively for this class
- Writing paper with three-hole design and smooth or perforated edges
- A variety of highlighters (if your student is a visual learner)
- Sticky notes (if your child struggles to focus or comprehend when reading)

Students, parents, and guardians;

Thank you for entrusting you/your student's education to me. I love what I do, and I love working with students in ways that engage them, deepen their understanding, and prepare them for college.

If your student is struggling in my class, **the quickest way to improvement or resolution is for them to take the initiative**; juniors are monitoring seven classes at a time; I am responsible for 150 students. For this reason, students or parents often recognize a concern before I will. Seminar is a great time for students to approach me, and I regularly stay after school to offer extra support. Before school is discouraged.

Thanks again! I am looking forward to another great year.

Dr. Fouquet

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