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| **American Literature and Composition****SYLLABUS**2015-2016 |
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| Instructor:  | Ms. Goycoolea | Phone:  | (323) 261-7124 |
| E-Mail:  | lgoycoolea@mustangsla.org  | Class Location:  | Room 314 |
| Tutoring: Wednesday 2:45-3:15, Flex period, and by appointment |

“Reading makes a full man, meditation a profound man, discourse a clear man.”

-Benjamin Franklin

# Course Description

Beginning with the founding of our country and growing out of the tradition of the classics of Western civilization, American literature flourished within the cultural context of the new nation. A distinctly American voice emerged and we will be exploring the American tradition as we read the short stories, essays, poetry, drama, and novels that formed this tradition.

# Course Objectives

After completing this course, students will be able to…

* Read, analyze, and respond to short stories, essays, poetry, drama, and novels.
* Identify themes occurring across American literature that make it uniquely American
* Write analytical essays critiquing course readings
* Recognize and understand key academic vocabulary
* Develop reading skills and strategies to aid in reading comprehension
* Understand grammar usage and mechanics and apply this to writing and editing

# Required Texts and Materials

*The Compact Bedford Introduction to Literature*

*The Great Gatsby*

*The Things They Carried*

Binder, lined paper, pen/pencil

# Supplementary (Optional) Texts and Materials

Additional texts as determined and supplied by Ms. Goycoolea. Students will be responsible for attaining a copy of an independently read novel each semester (a list of suitable novels will be provided by Ms. Goycoolea).

# Grading Policy

In addition to points, the following codes may also be used in the online grade reporting system, Aeries.

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| --- | --- | --- |
| CR | Credit | 100% |
| NP | Not Passing | 50% |
| INC | Incomplete | 50% |
| NA | Excused | No points count for *or* against |

# Grade Weights

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| --- | --- |
| Assessment | % of Final Grade |
| Materials/Participation |  5% |
| Homework/Classwork | 20% |
| Quizzes | 15% |
| Drafts/Revisions/Reflections | 20% |
| Essays/Projects/TestsExams | 25%15% |
|  | 100% |

**Materials/Participation:** *Students are expected to prepare for class by completing all homework and readings and bringing all required materials. Material checks will be completed on a weekly basis. Students must also participate in all small-group and full-class discussions.*

**Homework/Classwork:** *Homework/classwork will be assigned on a daily basis. Students are expected to enter the class with their homework completed. Students who do not bring completed homework will be sent to Academic Lock-Out.*

**Quizzes:** *Quizzes will cover reading, grammar, and vocabulary. The two lowest quiz scores will be dropped at the end of each semester.*

**Drafts/Revisions/Reflections:** *Drafts, revisions, and reflections will be assigned in-class and as homework. Drafts must be completed in order to participate in revision in class.*

**Essays/Projects/Tests:** *One or more will be assigned at the end of each unit and contribute a significant amount of points to a student’s final grade. The date of tests and due dates of essays/projects will be given well in advance. Test retakes and late essays/projects will not be accepted unless there is an extreme unforeseen circumstance.*

# Additional Grading Policies

# Late Work Policy: Late work will not be accepted. If something was assigned, it must be completed. Missing essays will result in mandatory after school detentions until the essay is completed and a 30% grade reduction.

 **Extra Credit Policy:** Extra credit opportunities will be assigned throughout the school year at the teacher’s discretion. Extra credit will not be given to any student trying to raise his grade immediately before the end of a grading period. Don’t even ask.

 **Group Work Policy:** Group assignments will be assessed based on the rubric.

# Attendance

**Absent Work Policy:** After returning from an absence, a student must check the ABSENT WORK binder. In this binder, the student will find any missed assignments/handouts and comments about the missed class. If the student has questions, he must ask another student before asking Ms. Goycoolea. Any work that was due on the date of the absence is due upon the student’s return to class. Any work that was missed will be due one class later.

**Tardies:** A student will be considered tardy if he is not sitting in his seat with his materials working on the warm-up by the time class starts.

# General Policies & Information

**Ms. Goycoolea’s Expectations:**

**L** Listen to whoever is speaking.

**E** Enter the classroom prepared. Bring all necessary materials and complete the homework/reading.

**A** Always try your best. There is no “can’t” in my classroom.

**R** Respect yourself and others.

**N No excuses!**

**Restroom/Hall Passes:** The restroom is to be used before or after class. Students will not be allowed out of class to use the restroom. In the case of desperate need, the student will owe Ms. Goycoolea a 15-minute detention at lunch or after school. Any student outside of the classroom will need a hall pass.

**Technology:** Ms. Goycoolea has set up a class assignment/homework blog and twitter feed. Some of our class resources/readings will only be accessible through the blog.

Twitter: @MsGoycoolea

Website: <http://msgoycoolea.weebly.com/>

Text Message Reminders: text “@msgamlit” to 81010 OR (323) 645-5960

Occasionally, Ms. Goycoolea will ask students to use smartphones in class to enhance lessons. A smartphone is not required to participate, however, and cellphone use will be revoked if abused.

# Schedule

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| **Units of Study**  | **Major Assessments/Projects** |
| **Introduction to American Literature***The activities in this unit are designed to give students a quick introduction to the course and what they will learn during the year.* | 1. **Outcomes Reflection**
2. **Grammar Pre-Test**
3. **Student/Teacher Responsibilities**
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| **Defining an American Identity***In this unit, students will study foundational American documents including the Declaration of Independence, selections from the Constitution of the United States, and selections from famous speeches in American History. The goal of study will be to explore the American Identity and how it was defined.* | 1. **Debate**
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| **Focus on Poetry: Dickinson, Frost, Hughes***Students will read poems from famous American poets, comparing themes and ideas across literary periods. Students will learn about the basic elements of poetry including meter, rhyme, and form.* | 1. **Comparison Paper**
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| **Standardized Testing** |
| **Novel Unit: *The Great Gatsby****In this unit, students will read, annotate, analyze, and discuss the novel,* The Great Gatsby*. They will examine themes, symbols, and characterization in the novel.* | 1. **Process Paper**
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| **Focus on Fiction: The Literature of the South***In this unit, students will explore the complex and diverse themes prevalent in the American South. Described by writer Flannery O’Connor as “rich in contradiction, rich in irony, rich in contrast, and particularly rich in speech,” the literature of the South will provide students with an introduction to American Voices.* | 1. **Argument**
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| **Semester Exams** |
| **Non-Fiction Unit: *The Things They Carried****This unit will focus on the non-fiction text* The Things They Carried, *which tells the stories of various American troops during the Vietnam War. Students will learn about the historical context of these stories and will review concepts related to non-fiction including memoir and the need for authorial truthfulness.*  | 1. **Research Process Paper**
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| **Group Novel Study: American Voices***This special unit will engage students in independent group reading projects. Students will choose a novel that expresses a non-traditional American Voice, including the perspectives of American immigrants and others who have historically been marginalized. Through this unit, students will engage in different perspectives than their own.* | 1. **Group Novel Project**
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| **Focus On Drama: *Death of a Salesman****In this unit, students will become familiar with modern American drama and the concept of the American dream. We will discuss the genres of drama, particularly tragedy.* | 1. **Creative Writing Assignment**
2. **Literary Analysis Essay**
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| **What’s Next? Life After High School***The readings in this unit prompt students to think specifically about why they may want to go to college or pursue another kind of experience in their future.  Two readings provide students with information about going to college, one reading suggests that not going to college is a viable option, and another asks students to consider “hidden” intellectual qualities that students may not recognize in their own behavior.  All in all, the readings in the module serve to promote self-reflection and provide information about life after high school.*  | 1. **5 Year Plan**
2. **Personal Statement**
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| **Final Exams** |