

Syllabus: Writing Seminar—Writing for all Disciplines

Rancho Christian School

Mrs. Gorham

A. A. English at Cuyamaca College

B.A. English at San Diego State University

M.A. English (American Literature) at San Diego State University

Contact Info:

wendy.gorham@ranchochristian.org
(951) 303-1408

Office Hours:

Mondays 3:00-4:00

Welcome to our writing seminar. I look forward to a semester exploring the amazing ways that we are able to learn and communicate through the written word. I am fascinated by the gifts of creativity, language, and writing that God blesses us with, and we will be focusing on becoming more competent and enthusiastic writers. To that end, here are the basic plans for this class, as well as my expectations of you:

Assignments Overview (subject to change):

Writing Workshop: Students will practice various skills learned and discussed in class. This practice will take place in class as well as at home. Students will also actively peer edit one another's work in order to provide healthy creative criticism and to be able to look more critically at their own work

Lectures and Discussion: Students will practice taking lecture notes. Students will participate in discussion covering writing topics, authors, media texts, written texts, etc.

Formal Essay Writing: Readers are writers, and the best way to engage with the text being studied is to write about it. We will be working with many essay types, with our ultimate focus being the argumentative and research essays. We will also be striving toward a more organic structure in our formal writing.

Various Other Writing: Students will be asked to do shorter forms of writing in order to practice techniques being learned.

Curriculum Overview (subject to change):

Our work this semester will focus on writing strategies, some found in the curriculum for the Institute for Excellence in Writing, as well as other resources. To practice writing techniques we will draw on various source material including topics from American Literature class. Also some writing assignments will draw from various exposure to other classes, as well as media items such as movies and/or T.V.

Grading:

The quarter grades in this class will be weighted as follows:

Homework

20%

| | |
|-----------------------|-----|
| Class work | 20% |
| Tests/Essays/Projects | 40% |
| Quizzes | 20% |

The final semester grade will be weighted as follows:

| | |
|-----------------------|-----|
| Homework/Class work | 32% |
| Tests/Essays/Projects | 32% |
| Quizzes | 16% |
| Final Exam | 20% |

Student Preparedness:

Renweb, Teacher Website, Blendspace, etc.: various digital sources and resources will be used during this class. It is the student’s responsibility to maintain any student accounts, remember passwords, turn in assignments on time and keep up with missing or absent work using all of these resources.

Paper Headings (Print and Digital): Please put your name, the date, the period you have this class, and the title of the assignment on the upper LEFT hand corner of each and every paper, unless otherwise instructed. Further, if the assignment requires a title or heading, it should be centered at the top of the first page, immediately below the name, etc.

Materials: Students will come to class prepared with a pen (blue or black), a binder with loose leaf paper, their digital device (charged up and ready to use), their class spiral notebook, and any homework, project, and/or reading assignment that is due. A student who is unprepared in any way will receive a lowered grade on classwork for the day as they will be unable to complete it. If this problem persists, additional action will be taken.

Absences/Late Work: Appropriate make-up time will be given to students who have been absent, as per the RCS student handbook. However, it is the student’s responsibility to make sure that all missed work is accounted for and all missed assignments have been turned in, not the teacher’s. Students shall keep track of missing assignments due to absences by checking the various digital resources first and then asking the teacher after that is not successful or if something is unclear. If an assignment is late due to excused absence, then extra time will be allotted as per handbook policy.

If an assignment is late due to negligence, the assignment can be turned in up to one week late and will receive only up to 50% credit. After one week no credit will be given
Devices: Use of devices is strictly at the discretion of the teacher. The “Device On” sign will be used to indicate the use of devices, otherwise your device should be put away. Only appropriate class related use of devices will be tolerated. Any misuse will result in immediate action.

Dogs, siblings, computers, and other things that may “eat” your homework: We all have people and situations in our lives that are potentially damaging to our work. We

must all diligently safeguard our books and papers from such destructive forces. Computers are especially temperamental, and precautions must be taken in the event of computer/printer problems. There are several options available to students in the event of computer difficulties. Here are a few to consider: plan to use the RCS computer lab to type or print your assignment, use a friend's computer or printer, have your files printed in a print shop. The best strategy against computer malfunctions is to allow yourself ample time to do the assignment. Waiting until the night before it is due is a bad plan for many reasons, not the least of which is that it doesn't allow for technical difficulties. So, in case this wasn't clear thus far...neither the dog nor the computer "eating" your homework will be a valid excuse for not turning in an assignment on time.

Courtesy and Discipline: Much of classroom success stems from the courtesy afforded to the teacher and fellow students. This courtesy is shown in our speech, actions, and attitudes (ie. raising our hands to speak, using appropriate language, not eating/drinking/chewing gum/misusing cell phones/etc.) and Student Handbook rules will be strictly enforced.

Restroom Policy: One of the most troubling things to get around is restroom use. Please use the restroom at break and lunch. If you must ask to use the restroom, there are certain rules: don't ask to use the restroom during the first or the last 10 minutes of class, don't ask to use the restroom during a lecture, and don't disrupt the flow of a group discussion with a request to use the restroom. During block classes, a break will be given around the midpoint of the class, so please wait until that break to request to use the restroom, and if permission is given to go to the restroom you must take the appropriate hall pass with you.