

A.P. English Language and Composition

Course Syllabus

Instructor

Mr. Lopez-Cepero— clopezcepero@slusd.us

To learn more about me—my background, teaching philosophy, etc.—please visit my teacher page at the school website: SLHS.net.

Course Description

Welcome. This course has been approved by the College Board as the equivalent of an introductory college course in critical reading and writing. Expect our work to reflect this college-level rigor in the readings we engage and in the writing we do. Much of our energy will be directed to success on the College Board's AP test at the end of the year, which will present a significant challenge for even the most prepared and highly-skilled students.

However, the course is not the test—this is not a test-prep class. Students come into this course with a wide range of abilities and experience, and **the primary goal of this course is student success**. More than a score on the AP test or a grade on the transcript, our aim will be to improve students' skills to equip them for success in the future, both in their academic careers and, in a broader sense, as thoughtful citizens.

Grading Policies:

88% -- 100% = A 80% -- 89% = B 70% -- 79% = C
60% -- 69% = D 59% or below = F

- **Late work:** Student work will lose one letter grade if it is not turned in at the beginning of the period on the date due. After a week has passed, late work will receive only half credit, at most.
- **Grade improvement:** Students may re-take/revise any major assessment or writing assignment for an approved grade, provided that they are willing to conference with me outside of class time.
- **Extra credit:** None. See above regarding improving grades.

I know students and their families live busy, complicated lives. If circumstances outside class are displacing assigned work and due dates, please engage me in dialogue; in many cases, I may consider additional flexibility.

Academic Honesty

This class has no busy work; all assigned work aims to prepare students for class assessments and for the AP test. Students who don't complete work miss an opportunity to improve and may fall behind.

Unfortunately, some students do not complete work and choose to engage in academic dishonesty instead, such as copying work, plagiarism, and cheating. Student who make these choices similarly miss an opportunity to improve, but these behaviors are also toxic to the efforts of the entire class and create in an environment that inhibit the success of all their peers.

Therefore, academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Students who make these choices will face serious disciplinary measures, impacting both their grade and their permanent academic record.

Class Norms and Policies

The class is not the gradebook; the class is the minutes we have together to engage in learning. We have a great amount of very difficult work to do this year, and the most precious resource we have is class time. Classroom expectations and policies are designed to help us protect and maximize this resource.

Class Policies

- **Phones and other electronic devices:** The class will observe the official SLHS electronics policy; any electronic devices must be put away and out of sight for the entirety of the class period. This includes headphones, regardless of whether they are on or plugged in.
 - While SLHS policy stipulates that these electronics must be put away before entering class, I will allow their use during passing periods and lunch. Students must put them away before the bell is done ringing.
 - We will occasionally use electronics for instructional purposes, the allowance and disallowance of which I will both announce aloud and show on the board, next to the daily agenda.
- **Attendance:** Being in class is crucial to the success of each student, as most of our ideas will be generated from discussion in class. There is simply no way to make up class time. Absences should be limited to illness only. Students must take responsibility for meeting with me (*outside* class time) to receive necessary materials and negotiate due dates.
- **Tardy:** A student is tardy when she or he is not in the assigned seat and ready to work when the bell rings.
- **Bathroom:** Students have an ample passing period and should take care of bathroom needs before or after class. Per SLHS policy, students may not use the bathroom in the first 10 or last 10 minutes of class. I may excuse students to use the restroom within this window as class activities allow.
- **Food and drink:** Students may eat in class, provided it does not interfere with the lesson. Lessons including computers or other technology, of course, will be excepted from this policy. *Students making a mess will lose the privilege for their entire class.*
- **Turning in papers:** With few exceptions, I require physical submission of work; I will not grade electronic submissions. However, I will accept an electronic submission as a “placeholder” that ensures on-time credit, allowing additional time to get it printed. All handwritten work must be written in pencil or black/dark blue ink.

Parents/Guardians:

To reiterate: the goal of this course, and the policies outlined above, is student success. I look forward to working with you to help your student be successful in my class and at SLHS in general. **Please feel free to contact me if you ever have any questions or concerns;** I always welcome parent/guardian involvement.

A final note on content: course readings and discussion will engage a wide range of challenging, and occasionally provocative content, including, but not limited to, politics, religion, race, sexuality/gender. My commitment as the teacher is to maintain an academic environment, where we can discuss sensitive topics in a safe way. If you ever have any questions or concerns, please contact me.

Acceptance of Policies and Signature

Student
Name: _____ Period: _____

Student
signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent
signature: _____ Date: _____

Parents/guardians—what is the best way to contact you?

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____