

Course Description: This course is a thematic study of American Literature. It is an examination of a rich and diverse array of characters, and the authors that created them. American Literature is a survey course, which means that it covers literature written in this country on a broad scale. As we read we will examine the social, political, psychological, emotional and intellectual forces that shaped the authors' writing. We will also discuss themes relevant to students today, with a particular focus on the "American Dream."

The writing program will focus on helping students develop theses, employing close and critical reading skills in analysis of content, demonstrating knowledge in expository and persuasive writing, and mastering mechanics and research skills. We will also practice timed writing and study vocabulary in preparation for the SAT and ACT.

Objectives:

Students will be able to:

- Read and interpret literature critically
- Write multi-paragraph essays incorporating secondary material and proper citations
- Shape well-supported and logically reasoned positions regarding issues of our time
- Employ literary criticism in their writing.
- Make mature connections between literature, history, their own lives and other relevant disciplines
- Assess their own strengths and weaknesses in both reading and writing in preparation for college work

Essential Questions:

- What is the American Dream? Is the American Dream realistic? attainable?
- How does the author's style expose her or his beliefs?
- What are the various strategies and approaches a skilled reader uses to create meaning of a text?
- How does society impact the individual and what kind of impact does it make?
- How do culture, religion and societal standards play a role in the formation of relationships?
- How does literature transcend time and space, making deep connections with the reader?

Grading Policies: Assessments will vary in length and format, but grades will be based on the following categories:

- Analysis/Reasoning (30%)
- Mechanics/Grammar/Punctuation (30%)
- Content/Conceptual Knowledge (15%)
- Final Synthesis Paper (25%)
- A "Habits of Scholarship Mark" will be reported that is separate and distinct from the grade for academic achievement. It communicates student effort, behavior, ability to meet deadlines, & improvement. In addition to academic marks, will look to these grades when assessing if a student is ready for Advanced Placement courses.
 - The grades represent the following: E = Exceeds Expectations and Standards M = Meets Standards U = Unsatisfactory (Below standards)

"I" or Incomplete Grade A final summative grade of "I" will be assigned at the end of the term when a student does not complete the requirements for the course. Under normal circumstances, this "I" grade is a permanent grade. The "I" grade is the equivalent of an "F" grade, and is calculated in the student's GPA. When an "I" is assigned, a student receives no credits for the course.

The mark of "I" may be reported for any assessment when a student does not submit the assessment. In such cases, the "I" mark indicates that the student has not provided evidence of learning, thus preventing the teacher from making a determination of the student's level of achievement of the course outcomes being assessed. In such cases, the mark of "I" is the equivalent of an "F" mark.

Rewrites and Extensions: Our English course devotes step-by-step, in-class support and time for students to complete their major assessments. Thus, we already provide ample time and opportunity for work to be completed. For this reason, rewritten papers are not accepted. Essential preparatory work for papers include research notes, outlines, rough drafts and revisions. This in-class and at home preparatory work will be factored into a student's Habits of Scholarship grade for the term.

Late Work: Submitting work in a timely manner is a basic expectation of all Saint Mary's students. It is expected that students complete and submit all work, assessments, tests, and quizzes on the date announced by the teacher. In the rare instance that unforeseen problems arise and a student cannot submit work on or before the due date, the student must contact the teacher as soon as the conflict is recognized, prior to the due date, either in person or by email. I will establish new due date for submission. Except for extraordinary cases (eg, medical or family emergency,), late submissions must be made within three (3) school days of the original due date. If communication protocols are met and the student has a sufficient excuse, there will be no grade reduction and the student will NOT receive a "U" if the paper is turned in by the rescheduled due date.

Students who do not communicate only have three days from the original due date (including non-school days) to TURN IN their essays. Their grade will be an "I" until the assessment is turned in. Once received within three days, the paper will be graded as usual. Due to the lack of communication, the students will receive a "U" as their Habits of Scholarship final grade for the course.

If the student does not turn in the paper within three days of the due date, the grade will remain an "I," and the student may not pass the course. In addition, without communication, the student will receive a "U" for Habits of Scholarship. This "U" will remain the Habits of Scholarship final grade.

Culminating Assessments and Final Exam: The culminating assessment for all English Courses is a Synthesis Paper. This paper is worth 25% of your final grade. It is due on the final day of class for the term. Failure to submit or complete a culminating assessment will result in a student receiving a final grade of Incomplete ("I"), which will be treated as an "F" in computing a student's GPA, resulting in no credit for the course. The student will then have to complete the course again, independent of St. Mary's.

Class Website: The course website is an important resource for students for class handouts, resources, the course overview, and homework. *Students are expected to check this website daily regardless of whether or not they are absent.*

Classroom Policies: Behavior in the classroom should be guided by one simple word: respect. In this case, respect is demonstrated by not engaging in activities that will distract anyone from completing tasks in our learning environment. Students must adhere to all the rules of Saint Mary's College High School as they are spelled out in the Student-Parent Handbook. Pay particular attention to the sections dealing with academic integrity, dress code, and the use of electronic devices.

The Often Paperless Classroom: Many assignments and assessments in Ms. Libby's class are submitted on Google Classroom. In order for assignments and assessments submitted online to be graded, students MUST include their name in the file title. *Work submitted without a student name in the file title will be treated as any other "no name" assignment and will NOT BE GRADED until a student has submitted work with a name.* Additionally, if a student submits work late, or resubmits an assignment or assessment via Google Classroom, s/he MUST email Ms. Libby to let her know it has been (re)submitted so she may grade it.

Required Texts:

Books may be in iBook and/or hard copy form.

1. *The Great Gatsby* F. Scott Fitzgerald
2. *Death of a Salesman* Arthur Miller
3. *Into the Wild* Jon Krakauer
4. *They Say, I Say (Third Edition)* Gerald Graff and Cathy Birkenstein

Required Major Assessments:

1. *The Great Gatsby* Mirror Project
2. *The Great Gatsby* and *Zoot Suit* Essay
3. *Into the Wild* Mission Statement
4. Final Synthesis Essay

Required Supplies – bring to class DAILY:

1. Laptop or iPad (binder paper if you prefer to do freewrites, etc. on paper)
2. Apps: Notability or similar annotation app, Google Drive, Docs, Classroom
3. The book we are currently reading
4. Pen and pencil
5. (Recommended supply: stylus for iPad)