

OVERVIEW

The Seminar program in San Diego Unified School District is for students who have been tested for intellectual giftedness. This indicates the need for more depth, complexity, acceleration, and novelty in the curriculum in order to stay engaged with school, as well as stay challenged at their level. As such, students not used to strict grading may find that their work will be closely scrutinized and that they will be expected to pay close attention in class, follow directions, do the reading and write with proper grammar in order to pass the class. Students will also be expected to take notes for credit. The 9th grade curriculum is structured around classic works of literature (listed below), which are used to attain mastery of reading and writing while creating a baseline of academic general knowledge. The Seminar class, in particular, focuses on preparing students for the rigor and demands of AP and Honors courses.

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS

It is the goal of University City High School's English department to prepare all students for career and college-level reading and writing by planning coursework around the California Language Arts standards as well as the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). By the end of the 9th grade school year, students will develop the reading and writing skills needed to discuss complex ideas, formulate valid opinions, and cite the work of others in academic arguments. Students will also develop leadership skills by participating in group work, sharing their insight with the class, and learning how to listen actively in order to be more productive when working with others.

Common Core is not scary. It has nothing to do with what literature is taught; it is about HOW it is taught.

1. Students are not lead through the materials as much as in years past. In other words, rather than "front loading" students with introductory material, they are often asked to have a "productive struggle" through "complex text." Although lectures are sometimes appropriate in a college-level class, students do a lot more discovery on their own with Common Core.
2. Because Common Core is about a lot of non-fiction material, teachers in all subject areas now use supplementary texts, sometimes called companion texts. In English courses, we do not drop the core literature; we add to it. So, for example, with fiction or drama units, non-fiction articles, documentaries, historical documents and even cartoons are integrated into the units using a variety of lessons, sometimes replacing lectures or other activities.
3. Part of the Common Core is learning HOW to struggle through complex texts, so students will be learning how to annotate texts and will be required to do so for credit.
4. Academic language is also important to Common Core, so teachers are using and developing academic language through both the texts chosen and discussions.

CURRICULUM

Core Reading List:

Various articles and short stories will be used in addition to the following works of literature:

The Odyssey, Homer

Of Mice and Men, John Steinbeck

Romeo & Juliet, William Shakespeare
Literature, McDougall Littell

Writing Assignments:

A core goal for the year is mastery of writing a close analysis of text using the “analytical paragraph” model created by the UCHS English Department. By align this form of writing with the Common Core State Standards, students will write essays that fall into narrative, informative, and argumentative forms. Use of evidence will be stressed as well as academic and professional standards for research, grammar, and revision. Students will also practice writing personal narratives, and writing for research-based purposes. All assignments must be written using the Modern Language Association (MLA) format. MLA offers handbooks for all rules regarding writing research papers, and is widely used by English teachers and university humanities departments. Easybib.com is a free resource that is recommended for creating accurate citations, and the Online Writing Lab (OWL), published for free online by Purdue University offers tutorials on every type of writing required in college-level, academic courses. Finally, written assignments will be submitted through Google Classroom, which students will join during the first week of class.

Listening & Speaking:

Several assignments throughout the year will require public speaking, interacting in groups with peers, listening actively in groups, and viewing complex films.

Vocabulary Study:

A mixture of required vocabulary words will be assigned by the teacher, or found by students independently throughout the year. Etymology, usage, and spelling will be assessed.

Grammar Study:

The Seminar class provides a classics-based English course, in which a traditional understanding of grammatical structure will be taught using a district-adopted workbook. So, in addition to using proper grammar, students will learn its technicalities and rules on a deep level.

ANCHOR ASSIGNMENT

There is 1 assignment that will be ongoing, and regularly due throughout the school year. Each assignment can be worked on in class if class work is finished early. Each of these will constitute most of your homework time.

1. **Journal:** 5 Pages due every two weeks (roughly 1500 words), according to your last name. This is a place for you to freely write, and otherwise express yourself in a non-structured format. I will check to see how much you have done, but it will not be graded on quality. This is a place for you to practice expressing yourself without being judged, and increases your artistic and writing fluency. On Mondays, prompts will be given in-class. The rest of the week you are on your own. Many students choose to simply record what they have done through their day, while others reflect

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deeply on life, write stories & poetry, or make lists of songs they like. Please be as creative as you want. Regular, ungraded writing will increase your writing fluency, and many reluctant writers find that this is actually an enjoyable assignment!

A SUCCESSFUL STUDENT WILL BRING THE FOLLOWING MATERIALS TO CLASS

1. Some kind of a contraption (three ring binder preferable) with a section dedicated to this class. Class handouts/ printouts will be stored in this binder section.
2. Lined 8 ½ x 11” paper, preferably college ruled
3. Blue and black ink pens for class, colored ink pens (no neon or fluorescent) for editing.
4. Highlighters for handouts.
5. A personalized journal of your choice. If you do not wish to purchase your own journal, a spiral bound 100-page notebook will be provided.

SUBMITTED WORK REQUIREMENTS

All class work is to be done neatly in blue or black ink, or typed. **(TYPED WORK STRONGLY PREFERRED!!)**. Please label papers in the **upper left hand corner** (MLA format J):

Joey Ramone (Student Name)

Mr. Pores (Teacher Name)

English 1, 2, Period ____ (Course Title & Period #)

8 September 2015 (Complete date)

Picasso Research Paper (Title is centered)

ALL MAJOR ASSIGNMENTS ARE REQUIRED TO BE TYPED USING STANDARD FORMAT:

- Times New Roman Font, 12 pt.

- Double Spaced

Expect and plan for at least one hour of homework a night. **HOMEWORK MUST BE TURNED IN ON TIME!** Late work will be marked down to 75% of the score earned, and is not accepted past the end of each 6-week grading period. **COMPUTER/PRINTER PROBLEMS ARE NOT A VIABLE EXCUSE.** (Parent notes will not be accepted: remember, this does not work in college, nor will it work with me.) Having said this, I understand “life does not always go as planned”. I will accept a clean handwritten copy of the assignment with the TYPED version submitted the next day.

Please note: research-based papers will BE SUBMITTED VIA EMAIL AS WELL AS IN PERSON

GRADES

If you have been a student who was either a “point counter” or one who has passed classes in the past by “acing tests” (but not doing homework), this is your warning. It will not work in this class. Grades are computed in PowerSchool using a *percentage* calculation. This means that one missed homework assignment will average a zero percent into that category, dramatically dropping that grade. A zero in a significant category like “Writing” or “Exams” may result in an F for the six-week grading period. Do not let yourself fall into this trap.

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If you have been a student who does not complete reading assignments, but plans to get all necessary information from lectures or Sparknotes, also beware. In a literature course, especially a Seminar literature-based course, you must actually read and comprehend the literature. Random quizzing and various testing techniques will let me know if you have actually completed the reading. If you want to pass, you must do the reading and complete the work.

100-87.5%	4 (A)	(Outstanding, Exceeds Class Standards)
87.49-62.5.0%	3 (B)	(Meets all standards at a complex and basic level)
62.49-37.5%	2 (C)	(Meets all standards at a basic level)
37.49-0%	0 (F)	(Does not meet enough standards at a basic level to pass)*

*A “D” grade is not awarded in this class, as the grading scale is adjusted in order to accommodate a full scale of standards mastery. On class assignments, a “1” will be applied only if a student indicates an attempt at completion of an assignment that only partially demonstrates some level of mastery.

An in-depth explanation of your grade book will be given in class, and is available on your class website.

ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY

Plagiarism is the copying of someone else’s work. It could be an entire essay, a paragraph, a sentence or even an idea. It could be done in a formal writing assignment or a homework assignment. In this course, the student must create all writing; all researched material must be properly cited.

In recent years, students have begun to lift massive amounts of material from the Internet, especially essays. Not only does this mean that the student will not learn the skills necessary to write college level papers and therefore prepare for his/her senior year and college, but the consequences of such actions are severe. For example, a student caught plagiarizing ANYTHING at UCSD is kicked out of the university. That’s how serious this is.

At UC High, the English Department policy states that students caught plagiarizing will:

- Receive an “F” (zero percent) on the assignment (which can drop the student’s grade two full levels if it is the major writing assignment for the grading period)
- Receive a “U” in citizenship for the grading period (which can affect participation in extra curricular activities)
- Receive a referral that states for the permanent record that this student has plagiarized

How is a student caught plagiarizing?

Teachers at UC High use a variety of methods, including Google and turnitin.com.

CITIZENSHIP POLICY

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Respect is the name of the game in Mr. Pores' classroom.

1. Rude, discourteous or inconsiderate language or behavior will not be tolerated.
2. Students must show respect to both the teacher and other students.
3. School policy on suitable attire, tardies, unexcused absences and trancies will be upheld (3 tardies=N, 4 tardies=U, 1 truancy=N, 1 grade per unexcused absence)
4. Students are required to come to class on time and stay until dismissed by me.
5. Phones must be in backpacks or purses (not pockets) during class. After the second time a student is asked to put a phone away, citizenship will be lowered one grade, and it will be confiscated and given to an administrator.
6. Students wishing to earn an "E" in citizenship must demonstrate leadership qualities and participate regularly in class discussions. A "G" is considered average classroom participation & behavior, but the student may not volunteer to ask or answer questions, or may frequently decline to speak up or jump right into group work with the same enthusiasm as an "E" student.
7. The no-phone-zone policy is in effect! That means it's always put away, out of sight.

I strictly adhere to the tardy policy of University City High School. According to this policy, excessive tardies WILL result in a lowered citizenship. You risk losing privileges and eligibility to participate in school activities if your citizenship is less than satisfactory. I realize that B-9 is not in the middle of campus, so plan ahead and be on time! If you are early, you are on time. If you are on time, you are late. If you are late, you are tardy.

ATTENDANCE

Simple: BE HERE! This is a class you do not want to miss. Due to the rigor and intensity of this class, it is difficult to "catch-up". Always have your three ring binder and required book in class with you. Materials reviewed one day may be referred to weeks later. You never know.

STUDENT AND PARENT COMMUNICATION

Students need to keep track of their academic progress in this class by keeping a record of assignments given and grades received on those assignments. They should keep this record in their three ring binder. Parents may contact me by phone (858-457-3040 x 156) or email (apores@sandi.net). Student grades will be available on Power School.