

COURSE OVERVIEW

In order to complete the requirements for the Language and Composition aspects of the course, students develop analytical skills as readers and writers working in the genre of the essay. Each student forms his or her own sense of style and purpose as an essayist, while simultaneously studying the work and style of major essayists who have contributed significantly to the development of the essay as a literary genre. Work in writing essays is based on an understanding of the origins of the modern essay form and its evolution toward a way to understand what each of us seeks to accomplish as writers of the essay. This course is conducted by workshop method (writing), lecture, and discussion (literature). Requirements include developing an awareness of how other writers express themselves as well as working on the development of students' own prose. In short, most classes will consist of essay content and style analysis, writing workshops, discussions, and a few lectures. This is a writing-intensive, college-level course. It is anticipated that students' commitment to this type of class will be evident in their work ethic. In this course students:

- read extensively and master a wide range of works of non-fiction.
- implement the QUEST framework to help students situate their research appropriately into an ongoing conversation within a chosen field.
- understand and responsibly employ rhetorical strategies in any communication, recognizing the rhetorical modes, structure, and strategies used by writers to accomplish their purpose and reach their audience.
- become better informed citizens, capable of framing and effectively writing cogent arguments that analyze, synthesize, and evaluate various viewpoints on a wide variety of contemporary social, economic, and political issues.
- improve meta-cognitive thinking skills so as to respond to reading through thoughtful inquiry, articulate discussion, better test performance, and incisive writing.
- improve their research skills, particularly their ability to evaluate primary and secondary sources, properly attributing their sources in accordance with MLA guidelines.
- analyze graphics and visual images, recognizing the significance of such "texts" in contemporary society.

- write insightfully, intelligently, and critically in a variety of forms (e.g., journals, formal multi-draft compositions, and in-class timed essays), with an emphasis on expository, analytical and argumentative writing.
- develop a stronger and more confident voice in their oral and written communication, a voice which reflects an enriched vocabulary and an excellent command of diction and syntax.

In order to develop all necessary skills for the Capstone Research aspect to the class, we include two specific research-focused days each week throughout the year. These days are student-centered, and they require that students meet specific PREP deadlines throughout the year. Students create Scrible.com accounts for the class, and through this program they submit all annotations and highlighting of their research documents to demonstrate thorough inquiry into both their subject matter and into the proper methodology for reporting in their fields of choice.

Projects and Checkpoints:

Research Skills: The Prep, Poster Project and Elevator Pitch, Annotated Bibliography, Miniature Project Presentation, Literature Review

Composition Skills: Literary Terms Presentations, Literary Terms Test, Nonfiction Book Response, Follow a Columnist, Modes Essays, Journal Responses

RESEARCH SKILLS AND TIMELINE

Big Idea 1: Question and Explore

The first part of the research element of this course hinges on building an understanding of the Quest Framework. At the same time as students are learning to look critically at Purpose and Audience in preparation for AP Language Question 2, they are also looking at what various writers add to the conversation. Much as a writer has to find a hook, or an angle, to convince the audience that an argument is valid or important, a researcher must find a Gap. For example, students look at the work of Simone de Beauvoir and see that she has situated her argument in “Woman as Other” against the historical dismissive attitudes that make false assumptions about gender. Although the ground work for this skill must be laid early, it will appear throughout the semester as students are expected to identify purpose in all pieces of writing and to identify what is new to the debate (or area of study) in any written piece.

Big Idea 2: Understand and Analyze (assignment types: rubric activities, Identifying a Gap, Style Guide Activity)

Students will use example papers from Bridgewater.edu, and identify the style guides followed by different styles of paper. <http://www.opendoar.org/find.php?rID=2831&format=full> In addition, the students will find the specific Gap that the research fills—how is this research adding information to a larger field? Students apply these principles to their own research questions to aid in the process of determining the gap they each wish to address.

Big Idea 3: Evaluate Multiple Perspectives (assignment types: Socratic Seminar, Concession to the Opposition, Straw Man Fallacy, Qualification, Follow a Columnist Project)

Students will bridge the skills from AP Language to AP Research, analyzing the value of using different lenses in social criticism (Critical Race Theory, Feminist, Marxist, Psychoanalytic) to aid their analysis across issues, and the class will discuss how these perspectives apply to the different methods used by research fields.

Big Idea 4: Synthesize Ideas (assignment types: Creation of a Synthesis Question, Application of Synthesis Question concepts to the art of research)

Students will create their own synthesis documents in the style of the AP Language Exam question 1, and they will test their classmates' abilities to draw wider conclusions based on a variety of data. These skills will be directly linked in the PREP to the importance of situating research within a larger field in the Literature Review portion of the Research Paper.

Big Idea 5: Team, Transform, Transmit (assignment types: Poster Project, Elevator Pitch, Mini-presentation, Socratic Seminar)

These skills appear throughout the course, as students work together through peer review, discussion with their mentors, and regular discussions with the teacher about the progress of their research.

Timeline for Key Assessments and Checkpoints

Student-led work time: Each Tuesday and Thursday throughout the year until the project deadline, students will have at least 60 minutes of work time to devote to their research. Mini lessons and Prep consultations with the instructor make up the rest of that class time. Because students receive all of their deadlines in advance through a google calendar, they know that their work time both in and out of class are dedicated to achieving mastery of the assignments listed under "Deadlines."

Research Assignments:

The Prep: This ongoing requirement for all members of the class is essentially a sketchbook and journal that records the Quest of each researcher. Although many of the entries early on are specific responses to teacher-created prompts, every student's Prep becomes tailored to that student's own research goals. Part of the teacher's role on research workdays is to roam from student to student, having one-on-one conversations with each student researcher and examining that student's Prep so far. There is no one due date for this, though its quality and depth help determine how all other assignments are graded. Additionally, one-on-one conversations about the Prep allow for the instructor to notice pitfalls in ethical research, feasibility, method, and quality of sources that allow for guidance that prevents unethical procedures and makes clear what areas the class needs whole-group reinforcement of ideas.

Initial Declaration of subject area of interest: The teacher visits the AP Seminar classroom in May of the previous year, explains the general scope (shown below), and collects a statement from each AP Research class candidate about his or her initial area of interest.

In the classroom and independently (while possibly consulting any expert advisors), students learn and employ research and inquiry methods to develop, manage, and conduct an in-depth

investigation of an area of personal interest, culminating in an academic paper of 4,000-5,000 words that includes the following elements:

- Introduction
- Method, Process, or Approach
- Results, Product, or Findings
- Discussion, Analysis, and/or Evaluation
- Conclusion and Future Directions
- Bibliography

Creating a Research Question with an Aligned Method—key activities that support students in their initial choice of research questions and methods. The end result is that students must submit a preliminary Research Question and chosen Alignment with an explanation of why that alignment is best. Students complete the three Prep activities below, and they then submit to me a draft of their research question and a description of the methodology most aligned with their goals.

Prep 1: Take the survey on pages 6-7 of the student handbook. Take note of what the results tell you, and reflect on whether the research you wish to conduct matches the values you hold according to the survey. Use the language of the survey (Conceptual Theorist, Analytical Scientist, Particular Humanist, and Conceptual Humanist) in a reflection about yourself as a researcher.

Prep2: As per the instructions on the Student Handbook Page 12, students complete a type of researcher activity. Students write their first entry into their PREP, identifying what type of researcher they most see themselves as being and their early ideas about how to apply that research philosophy to their areas of interest. Also, we use this day to begin exploring EBSCO so that students can get a good basic idea of what information they have readily available on their topics.

<http://wacenter.evergreen.edu/docs/natlproject/dimensionsdisciplinaryunderstanding.pdf>

Prep 3: Students go to the pdf above, and they choose the discipline that most closely matches their topic of choice. Students then complete a PREP entry in which they reflect on what aspects of the Forms, Knowledge, Methods, and Application Process they will need to concentrate on as they conduct research in this field. At this point, they are also expected to reflect on the significance or contribution of their scholarly work in a larger context.

Applying Ethical Considerations in Research—In order to ensure that students have taken into account the importance of protecting their research subjects, they will complete an activity in class, first reading 102-108 in Leedy and Ormond's *Practical Research*. Students then complete the checklist activity on 107-108 and share in table groups the next day, before writing the prep entry below.

Prep 4: Determine any possible pitfalls in ethical research practices that could be relevant to your proposed topic. Refer to our lesson on Planning an Ethical Research study, and say specifically whether your study is likely to need IRB review.

Poster Project and Elevator Pitch:

Students create trifold posters (or a fitting substitution), and they decorate the posters as aides to a specific pitch to me that their research question and methodology are legitimate and important. The required elements of this three-minute presentation are the following: primary research question, expected methodology, progress on securing an expert adviser and how that person can help you, early understanding of the existing research, any possible ethical concerns (any necessary use of the Internal Review Board IRB), and where you see a gap. Prep entries so far and how you have used them.

Rubric:

90-100: The student has considered all of the major aspects of the research he or she will be conducting, and I am confident that the paper is off to a strong start. The poster is an effective aide in capturing the idea of this research topic.

80-90: One of the areas of research is not sufficiently considered, so the student needs to refine his or her plan so that the pitch is clearer. The poster is adequate for the purposes of the presentation.

74-79: As above, but two categories are unclear or incomplete, or the poster is insufficient for the purpose of explaining the proposed research.

73 and below: more than two areas of the project are hazy, which means the project is significantly behind schedule. The poster fails to support a claim that this research is legitimate.

Research Notes Checks:

Students submit for review either physical or electronic copies of research articles with appropriate annotations. Though the scope of some projects is larger than that of others, students submit roughly ten sources on each of the two note-check days.

Inquiry Proposal Form:

Students complete a Google form on which they detail all of the major aspects of their projects. This form is modeled directly on the example from the Course and Exam Description, page 55.

Annotated Bibliography:

As a last step before students are ready to begin writing their literature reviews, each must write one paragraph per source in their research notes, detailing specifically how that article relates to his or her research. This step helps them weed out which sources will not actually be relevant enough to include in the formal paper, and it ensures that they think about the larger overall connections before submitting the literature review.

Literature Review:

Shortly before the end of the first semester, students look over sample papers (a mix of those available to them online, as well as some in class made available through the Instructor training course), and they create their own literature review sections. This looks significantly longer or shorter depending upon the research methodology, and students will have justified their formats already through the note checks and bibliography.

Deadlines

Initial declaration of area of interest: May 21st, turned in to the AP Seminar Teacher

Research Question with an Aligned Method: Week 2

Poster Project and Elevator Speech: Week 6

Research Notes Check 1: Week 8

Inquiry Proposal Form: Week 10

Research Notes Check 2: Week 12

Annotated Bibliography: Week 14

Literature Review: Week 16

Work in Progress Practice Presentation: Week 18

Second Semester

Biweekly Work in Progress Interviews: Weeks 19-26

Practice Presentations: Week 28

Final Presentation before the panel: Weeks 30-32

READING

The chief organizational principle for readings is rhetorical mode, with a movement from narration to exposition to argumentation. With all readings the emphasis of our study is the author's stylistic techniques and/or rhetorical strategies. Students sharpen their skills in discerning purpose, main idea(s), tone, and pattern of development, as well as develop their ability to analyze how word choice, selection of detail, and syntactic choices help writers achieve their purposes. We strive to develop a mature, critical,

“mind at work” approach to reading, in which students wrestle with a text rather than merely absorbing it. Most readings come from *The Language of Composition*. Others come from other collections of essays or from contemporary media. Readings include (but are not limited to)

Narration:

George Orwell: “Shooting an Elephant”

Richard Rodriguez: “Workers”

Santha Rama Rau: “By Any Other Name”

Michael Griffith: “Home Truths”

Russell Baker: “A Memory of Rope”

E.B. White: “Once More to the Lake”

Art Spiegelman: “Mein Kampf” (visual text)

Exposition:

Ray and Tom Magliozzi: “Inside the Engine”

Chang-Rae Lee: “Coming Home Again”

Atul Gawande: “The Cancer Cluster Myth”

Jonathan Kozol: “The Human Cost of an Illiterate Society”

Sarah Vowell: “Cowboys v. Mounties”

Sherry Turkle: “How Computers Change the Way We Think”

Lynda Barry: “Common Scents” (visual text)

Natalie Angier: “Why Men Don’t Last”

Samuel Johnson: “The Solitude of the Country”

Joseph Addison: “In Westminster Abbey”

Scott Russell Sanders: “Under the Influence”

Argumentation:

Christina Nehring: “Books Make You a Boring Person”

Jonathan Swift: “A Modest Proposal”

E. Eisenberg: “Dialogue Boxes You Should Have Read More Carefully” (visual)

Martin Luther King, Jr.: “Letter from Birmingham Jail”

George Orwell: "Politics and the English Language"
Abraham Lincoln: "The Gettysburg Address"
Anna Quindlen: "Uncle Sam and Aunt Samantha"
Charles M. Young: "Losing: An American Tradition"
Benjamin Franklin: "The Speech of Miss Polly Baker"
Joan Acocella: "Under the Spell"
Michael Kinsley: "The Intellectual Free Lunch"
William Wilberforce: "Abolition Speech"
Simone de Beauvoir: "Woman as Other"

For each reading, students complete brief composition assignments that emphasize critical thinking. A typical question (for "The Cancer Cluster Myth"): "What is the Texas Sharpshooter fallacy? Explain why it is or is not an effective analogy for the problem Gawande describes." Students also participate in wide-ranging class discussions on each reading. In these discussions students debate the content of the essays (Should women be eligible for the military draft?) as well as analyze the essayist's methods (Why does Quindlen reference Afghanistan in her essay?). Some essays also serve as models for multi-draft compositions – Vowell's "Cowboys' v. Mounties," for example, exhibits for students the features of a strong comparison/contrast essay.

As they discuss literature students learn and practice using appropriate terminology for describing tone, language, and syntax. They also learn common logical errors – the post-hoc fallacy, circular reasoning, the either-or fallacy, the strawman, to name a few – and strive to detect them in the writing of others and avoid using them in their own writing.

In small groups students select an essay to teach to the entire class. Popular selections include "Shop Like a Man" (Paco Underhill), "On Dumpster Diving" (Lars Eighner) and "Make That a Double" (David Sedaris). The groups are responsible for:

- closely reading the essay and preparing a page of preparatory notes on the author's strategies
- composing journal topics and discussion questions for the essay
- preparing a creative, electronic audio-visual presentation that connects thematically to the essay
- leading a class discussion of the essay

In addition to readings from textbooks, students select a well-regarded contemporary newspaper columnist to study, such as George Will, Paul Krugman, Clarence Page, or Peggy Noonan (among others). Students critically read and annotate five columns by

the columnist. They also find an alternate view of the topic of one of the columns and then write an analysis of the rhetorical effectiveness of that column. They are also expected to attempt to employ some aspect of their columnist's style in a later essay of their own.

COMPOSITIONS

Multi-draft compositions include (but are not limited to) a personal narrative, a comparison / contrast essay, and a research-based argument essay. For each of these assignments, students go through an extensive writing process, including guidance in selection of topics, intensive study of models (both professional and student-written), group and paired review of sharing drafts, and individual conferences with the instructor as needed. Throughout the process we emphasize effective word choice, logical organization, and establishment of tone and voice. In addition, as we go through the composition process students receive instruction in techniques for improving style, including precise word choice, incorporation of original figurative language, variation of sentence structures, and limitation of passive voice. The essays are evaluated with the use of a modified English 1101 rubric. Students receive extensive written feedback on these compositions.

For the research based argument essay students learn techniques for critically analyzing potential sources and integrating information gathered from research into an essay based on their own thinking. In addition, they learn to use the conventions of MLA citation.

Students complete several (10-12) **in class timed essays**. These essays require students to analyze the rhetorical strategies in a text, formulate and support an argument, or synthesize information from various sources into an argument. Student receive intensive instruction on approaches to these essays, including guided practice in pre-writing, analysis of model essays, and feedback on completed compositions. These essays are evaluated using the College Board 9-point holistic scale.

Students also keep informal **journals**. The journals are kept in a bound notebook and brought to every class meeting. The journal should include a balance of reading response entries and creative entries. After students read and carefully contemplate an assigned class reading, they reflect on it in their journals. For example, students might comment on the effectiveness of a particular technique the author chose to employ or elaborate on their thoughts about an intellectual issue raised in the essay. The creative journal entries can be about topics of the student's own choosing. This should be a place for experimentation and exploration. For example, students might write descriptively about their favorite possession that cost under \$10, or write about an experience they had with a dress code. The creative side of the journal should *not* be composed of mere "what I did today" diary entries. The purpose of the journal is less to record experiences than it is to develop fluency and voice.

OTHER NOTES

Core Textbook

The Language of Composition: Reading, Writing, Rhetoric by Renee H. Shee, Lawrence Scanlon, and Robin Dissun Aufses

Additional Text: *Practical Research: Planning and Design* by Paul D. Leedy and Jeanne Ellis Ormrod

Supplies

- Three-ring notebook with tab dividers
- White loose-leaf paper
- Pencils
- Dictionary and thesaurus for at-home use
- Black and White Composition Book
- Pens (blue or black)
- Highlighters

Grading Policy

Students have a syllabus for each three to four-week period of the semester. It is expected that students will complete the readings, assignments, and essays at their pace while adhering strictly to the listed due dates. Grading attempts to match college standards whenever possible. Because of the more rigorous standard, ten points are awarded to each student's final course grade at the end of the term. Grades are based on the following:

45% = Major Grades (Tests, Special Projects/Presentations, Compositions, Multiple Choice Tests, Annotated Bibliography, Elevator Pitch, and Literature Review)

35% = Daily Assignments (Classwork, Homework, Journals, Short projects, Prep Assignments, Research Skills quizzes, Work-in-Progress presentations)

20% = Final Exam

Grading Scale:

A= 90-100	D= 70-73
B= 80- 89	F= below 70
C= 74-79	

Plagiarism Policy

Cheating by students is inexcusable conduct at Peachtree Ridge High School. Cheating includes plagiarism, which is the use of another's words or interpretations without giving credit. Proper documentation style, using the guidelines of the Modern Language Association's Style Guide (MLA), will be covered thoroughly in class; therefore, students will know how to avoid this grave offense. After instruction, instances of plagiarism will be considered cheating and will be met

with a zero on the assignment and an administrative referral. Also, ALL ASSIGNMENTS should be a reflection of the student's work, his/her own research, writing style, and capabilities. If a student has any question or concern about an issue of plagiarism, he/she should see the teacher PRIOR to the assignment's due date.

Additional Capstone Considerations:

AP Capstone Policy on Plagiarism and Falsification or Fabrication of Information Participating teachers shall inform students of the consequences of plagiarism and instruct students to ethically use and acknowledge the ideas and work of others throughout their course work. The student's individual voice should be clearly evident, and the ideas of others must be acknowledged, attributed, and/or cited. A student who fails to acknowledge the source or author of any and all information or evidence taken from the work of someone else through citation, attribution or reference in the body of the work, or through a bibliographic entry, will receive a score of 0 on that particular component of the AP Research Performance Task. A student who incorporates falsified or fabricated information (e.g., evidence, data, sources, and/or authors) will receive a score of 0 on that particular component of the AP Research Performance Task.