

Common Syllabus for American Literature 1,2 Honors  
English Department, La Jolla High School

### **1. COURSE RATIONALE**

English language arts, K–12, focuses on the process by which we learn and use language. Students increase their communication abilities through reading, writing, speaking, and listening experiences that are related to and reinforce one another. Instruction respects the home language of students and builds from this base the English language skills needed to communicate effectively.

English language arts instruction is designed to support students in developing proficiency in reading, writing, speaking, and listening. The instruction is intended to support students in achieving the California English language arts standards for each course in the English language arts curriculum.

Educational standards describe what students should know and be able to do in each subject in each grade. In California, the State Board of Education decides on the standards for all students, from kindergarten through grade 12. In 2010, California joined with what is now a group of 44 other states to adopt the same standards for English language arts and mathematics. These standards are called the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). Having the same standards helps all students get a good education, even if they change schools or move to a different state. Teachers, parents, and education experts designed the CCSS to prepare students for success in college and the workplace. The San Diego Unified School District is working toward full implementation of the CCSS for the 2014–15 school year, which is reflected in the following course description. If the course description includes a notation: [UC] [CSU] it means that the course is accepted by the University of California and the California State University systems as a college-bound course.

### **2. COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Honors Preparatory Course (HP). This course meets the University of California's b (English) subject-area requirement [UC] [CSU]

American Literature 1,2 Honors is a college-level course of literary study designed to emphasize independence and responsibility in critical analysis of a variety of literary texts, including poetry, essays, short stories, historical documents, drama and novels. The course is granted weighted credit by the University of California.

Class content is arranged chronologically and/or thematically. Students examine the development of American thought, ambition, and imagination through the heritage and history of the country's diverse peoples. Different points of view—and the ways in which the prevalent philosophical, political, ethical, and social influences of the time affected those views—will be explored through a historical look at literature. Emphasis will also be placed on studying the craft of the writers, including the techniques they used to express ideas.

Students in this course are not only active participants in ongoing intellectual dialogue, but they gain increasing ability to facilitate discussions and mediate divergent views with respect and confidence. Coursework, including homework, consists of a variety of college-level academic endeavors including crafted analysis and research-based essays, in-class essays, reading response, Socratic seminars, debates, presentations, vocabulary development, and self-directed reading. In all their coursework, students should show evidence that they are increasing the depth and complexity of their knowledge of American literature, representing other's ideas responsibly, and developing academic writing skills. As preparation for college, the course's writing and reading activities are designed to deepen and extend discourse in the pursuit of knowledge.

All students enrolled in this course must take the UC-required comprehensive, written final examination, the purpose of which is to permit students to exhibit their depth of knowledge and their independent ability to write original analysis at the college level. This exam is required for students to earn weighted credit.

### **3. STUDENT EXPECTATIONS FOR SUCCESS**

The extent to which a student will succeed in this course involves a combination of time management, goal-setting, and adherence to societal expectations regarding interaction with and respect for fellow students and staff. To demonstrate effective time management skills, students are expected to maintain a calendar/planner and devote enough time each night to complete the homework, review concepts, and study, as well as read regularly for schoolwork and for pleasure. To meet goals, students need to continue a cycle of self-reflection: what did I need to learn today (what was the purpose of the lesson), did I achieve the stated outcome, and what can I do to continue to improve/learn? To achieve success in the La Jolla High School environment, read the school's mission statement, core values, and student-learner outcomes.

#### **La Jolla High School's Mission Statement and Core Values**

LJHS strives to provide an effective, innovative, and relevant educational experience for its students, challenging them to achieve their full intellectual, social and emotional potential.

##### **CORE VALUES:**

- Excellence – We encourage faculty, staff, coaches, and students to innovate and collaborate with each other in order to experience a productive process and meaningful outcomes.
- Honor – We create a culture of honesty and respect for all interactions.
- Fortitude – We foster an appreciation and respect for intellectual curiosity, academic rigor and the hard work required to achieve lasting success.
- Community – We engage fully in our environment—on campus, in our neighborhoods, and in the world beyond us.

#### **La Jolla High School's Schoolwide Student-Learner Outcomes (SSLOs)**

1. **COMMUNICATE AND COLLABORATE**  
Students will demonstrate effective oral, written, technological, visual, and interpersonal communication skills in order to experience a productive and meaningful outcome.
2. **ANALYZE AND EVALUATE**  
Students will demonstrate the higher order thinking skills of analysis, synthesis, application, and evaluation in order to cultivate intellectual curiosity, engage in academic rigor, and develop a focused work ethic.
3. **ENGAGE AND INTERACT**  
Students will engage in their school environment in order to create a school community that fosters a culture of honesty and respect for all interactions. Students will develop strength of character that prepares them to make a significant difference in the world.
4. **THINK BEYOND**  
Students will become thoughtful, engaged citizens in a global society prepared for participation in the world beyond high school. Students will learn about the cultural, political, historical, scientific, ethical, and economic forces shaping the world.

### **4. PACING GUIDE FOR HONORS AMERICAN LITERATURE**

(see individual teacher's syllabus)

### **5. HOMEWORK REQUIREMENTS**

Students will be expected to...

- Keep a notebook daily in class.
- Write extensively in the notebook.
- Use the notebook as starting points/inspiration for fully developed final drafts.

### **6. GRADING**

#### **Scholarship Grades:**

To graduate from high school, and to participate in many extracurricular activities including athletics, students are required to maintain a 2.0 grade point average in scholarship. Grades are calculated using a point system. Students must accumulate the following percentage of points possible in order to earn the scholarship grade listed below:

4.0 **A** = 90-100%    3.0 **B** = 80-89%    2.0 **C** = 70-79%    1.0 **D** = 60-69%    0.0 **F**  
= below 59%

All student work that is graded is placed in a particular category:

**Writing** (final draft writing)= **50%**

**Assignments** (includes classwork, notebook checks, etc.) = **30%**

**Participation** (discussions, etc.)= **10%**

**Final Exam/End of Course Assessment** = **10%**

## **7. STUDENT SUPPORT PLAN**

### **Before a unit of instruction begins:**

- Daily agenda will list the purpose and outcome for each day's lesson.
- The daily agenda will be posted on the class website.

### **During instruction:**

- The teacher will provide instructions in at least two ways (verbal, written).
- On specific activities, students will be able to ask for help from fellow students.
- On most writing assignments in this class, multiple drafts are required and reviewed during the workshop process which includes brainstorming, models of the type of writing expected, peer editing, and the chance for revision.
- The teacher is available after school if a student needs further clarification or help with an assignment.
- The teacher will answer questions via e-mail (but not the night before an assignment is due).

### **After assessment:**

- After a final draft of a writing assignment is graded, a student may ask to review the details of the parts of the paper that did not meet the expected standards in an afterschool meeting with the teacher upon request, in order to learn from his/her mistakes and improve on the next assignment.
- All tests are final. No retakes are allowed.