

WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
ATYP SYLLABUS 2026-2027
HONORS ENGLISH 9/10

Section Information

Wednesdays 1:20 PM – 3:50 PM
Classroom: 4250 Sangren Hall

Instructor Name

Valerie Lark, MFA
(Please refer to me as Instructor Lark or Professor Lark)
Pronouns: She/Her/Hers

Contact Information and Availability

Email: valerie.lark@wmich.edu
Phone: (616) 648-5116 (You can call/text this number)

*If you are reaching out to me via email/phone/text, I will respond between the hours of 8:00 am and 5:00 pm Monday-Friday, and if it is after that time frame I will get back to you within 24 business hours (Excluding Saturday, Sunday, and holidays).

Course Description

The purpose of this course is to prepare you for **advanced literature and college-level writing. Additionally, it is to prepare you to think analytically, creatively, and independently.** Critical thinking, time management, communication, interpersonal, and metacognitive skills will be emphasized alongside your writing throughout the year. This class is about process, not necessarily the end product (i.e., the writing PROCESS is weighted more heavily in almost all cases – that means prewriting, editing, REVISION as well as drafting.) At the end of each semester, you will submit a portfolio which will include EVERY draft of EVERY piece of writing you do.

What does that mean in practice? Your instructor will give you more feedback on your writing than you've likely ever received before. That can be hard. If you lean into the process, think of your teacher as your coach, it becomes easier. Our weekly class meetings are similar to the college model: one longer class session followed by substantial independent work to supplement your learning, stretch your thinking, and push your writing. This rhythm fosters **responsibility and intellectual growth.** Oh, and cringy jokes, hilarity, and genuine, authentic community will happen along the way, too.

Mistakes are Encouraged

When one never makes mistakes, one is not learning. Ask your caregivers about how it was that you learned to walk. Did you fall? Did you bump your bum or your head? I would guess that for most of you, you did, learned from the fall, recalibrated in your brain, and then went on to make new mistakes. It will be the same in this class. If you are not making mistakes (and

learning from them), you're not taking enough risks. So, be bold.

The best learning happens when you are in what educators call a “moderate state of challenge.” That means it won't always feel comfortable—but discomfort often signals growth. Think of it like learning to walk: you will stumble, sometimes fall, and occasionally require a glittery Band-Aid. But you'll also keep moving forward, supported by me and your community at home. I'll cheer you on, listen when you're discouraged, and coach you through what you let me.

As your teacher, I promise you that I will not allow anyone in our room to judge you for mistakes. No one expects you to be perfect, especially not me. No one expects you to always have the “right” answer. After all, Pobody's Nerfect! When you make a mistake, own it as quickly as possible. Apologize. If it's a late homework assignment, email me, copy your caregiver, and be sure to tell me how you won't make the same mistake again. I will apologize to you when I make mistakes; I expect you to do the same.

Help Sessions Available on Microsoft Teams

So, what if you're struggling? Fantastic former students are here for you when you are perplexed about an assignment, struggling with revisions, or do not know what a particular reading means. They've all been where you are. They are college students who want to give back to the program, so they work with us to help you. Tutoring is offered through Microsoft Teams Sunday-Thursday. Check Ms. Citino's weekly emails for specifics.

Student Expectations

- Thoughtful, thorough, and timely completion of assignments
- Follow formatting requirements
- Thoroughly address all parts of the homework
- Submit homework on time throughout the week.
- Organization
- Organize your thoughts about the writing assignments before drafting using your prewriting notebook.
- Organize your ATYP files on your computer to avoid errors in submissions – folder, subfolders, and proper file names are key.
- Organize printed materials in your portfolio.
- Close, careful reading of all texts and feedback.
- Thoughtful notetaking on readings.
- Reading and completely addressing feedback in revisions.
- Recall and engage with the readings during class discussions.
- Apply learning and feedback to written work.
- Be coachable.
- Approach feedback as a means to improvement, not a personal attack.
- Be open to the suggestions of both your teacher and your peers.
- Be willing to make changes.
- Energetic participation and respectful attentiveness during class.
- Comport yourself in a manner befitting the university setting
- Adhere to the ATYP Code of Conduct

- Respect the ideas, beliefs, and opinions of others.
- Regularly communicate respectfully with your teacher and peers.
- Executive Function Growth.
- Demonstrate time management skills.
- Create a regular weekly schedule considering personal, familial, academic, and extracurricular obligations in conjunction with our homework load.
- Proactively address issues in task completion, procrastination, direction following, and distractions with provided resources.
- Apply executive function education and discussion to your daily life.

If something is affecting your class performance, please let me know so that we can work on it together. Remember that I'm here to help you—keep in touch with me about your concerns, frustrations, struggles, ideas, and triumphs. Never hesitate to ask for help. If a problem can be named, we can do something about it.

Working Agreements

This list of working agreements includes ways to practice being in a caring community of people. We are working together during challenging times and will use class literature to delve into topics that may be uncomfortable to talk about. ATYP is a challenging environment, too, both academically and emotionally. It will put you out of your comfort zone regularly. You'll feel vulnerable with other students when you have to share your writing or participate in a class discussion where you don't know all the answers.

The following agreements have served me well not only in challenging learning spaces but in my relationships, both personal and professional. I believe these agreements will help us become a community of learners. We will practice them together.

- Take risks; lean into discomfort.
- Value the process as much as (if not more than) the outcome.
- Give honest feedback.
- Be mindful of other people's time and efforts.
- Be both a teacher and a learner.
- Respect confidentiality: stories stay, learning leaves.
- Avoid put-downs (even humorous ones, *even about yourself*).
- Take space, leave space: be mindful of air time.
- Practice *oops* and *ouch*.
- Practice self-awareness and self-care.
- Remember that "Pobody is Nerfect"

Course Reading Materials HE 9 Books:

(May be purchased or borrowed from the office—also if you're going to purchase these books yourself, please purchase the exact ISBN listed for class)

- *Patterns for College Writing, 12th edition*. Laurie G. Kirszner and Stephen R. Mandell (ISBN-13: 978-0312676841)
- *Grammar Girl Presents the Ultimate Writing Guide for Students* by Mignon Fogerty (ISBN-13: 9780805089448)
- *Night* by Elie Wiesel (ISBN-13: 978-0374500016)

- *They Called Us Enemy* by George Takei et alia (ISBN-13: 978-1603094504)

HE 10 Books:

- *Refugee* by Alan Gratz (ISBN: 978 0545880831)
 - *Midsummer Night's Dream* by William Shakespeare (ISBN: 978-1501146213)
- *There will be one additional novel for second semester, but it will vary based on student interest. More information for second semester will come in January. Thank you for your patience.

2026-27 ATYP HE 9/10 Supplies for Class

- Two 3-subject notebook (1 per semester)
- Pen
- Computer
- Mic and web camera (for snow days and online meetings)
- Camera (digital or a phone – a caregiver's phone works) for scanning documents
- Internet connection
- WMU Access to:
 - Microsoft Exchange (wexchange.wmich.edu – email server for WMU)
 - Microsoft Office Programs (Word, PowerPoint, Teams, etc.) are free to download with a WMU address
 - eLearning (elearning.wmich.edu)
 - GoWMU
 - YouTube
 - Google
- Hardware token/key fob or phone (WMU account login requirement). A caregiver's phone **will NOT** work for this
- Two 1.5 or 2-inch binders, one for each semester
- 8 binder dividers (four for each binder)
- Weekly planner (this is essential to help you plan/organize your time)
- Pens (black or blue (for writing) AND red or purple (for editing))
- Stapler
- 3-hole punch
 - Everything you print for class should be stapled and punched before submitting
- Access to a printer
 - If you do not have access, you may email your documents to ATYP-Info@wmich.edu AT LEAST 24 hours before class.
- WMU ID Card
 - You will need a WMU I.D. card to borrow books and print at the libraries on campus.
 - There is a \$30 replacement fee if you lose your card. Keep it safe!

Course Policies

WMU Email and Course Communications

You are responsible for all communications sent via E-Learning and to your WMU email

account. You are also required to use your WMU provided email account for all email communications to me.

Changes to the Syllabus

I reserve the right to change the contents of this syllabus due to unforeseen circumstances. You will be given notice of relevant changes in class, through an E-Learning Announcement, or through WMU e-mail.

Important Information

NO CITRUS IN OUR CLASSROOM! Unfortunately, I am allergic to oranges, lemons, limes, grapefruits, and tangerines. Please do not bring any of those fruits (or beverages) into the classroom to prevent any allergic reaction. Also, if you have any allergies, please let me know in an email via your WMU email account. I will bring in snacks from time to time, and I don't bring anything with peanuts as rule of thumb (just in case), but if you have any sensitivities or religious preferences to snacks, please let me know. I want to be respectful. 😊

LGBTQIA+ SAFE SPACE

Our classroom is an LGBTQIA+ friendly and safe space. Everyone is welcome! You are safe to be who you are, and if you prefer to be called by a different name than is on the course roster, or be referred by specific pronouns, please let me know. I am more than happy to use your preferred pronouns and preferred name. I want you to feel comfortable in the classroom and know you are safe here.

ATYP Policies, Procedures, and Requirements

Attendance & Participation Policy

Regular participation and attendance are required for success. You receive points for coming to class each class period and if you miss several classes, your grade will reflect that. It is important to be ON TIME and regularly attend so that you can have the best chance of success in this class. Class begins promptly at 1:20 PM, so make sure you have gone to the restroom, gotten any snacks from the vending machine, etc., before the beginning of class (However, there will be a break toward the middle of the class period).

If you are going to miss class or be late, you must reach out to me via your WMU e-mail, phone, or text (see the first page for my phone number). This way, we can work out any make-up work. However, I will put on our E-Learning Course Page information (and the PowerPoint) from each class period, so please refer to that information before you go to me with your questions on what you missed since the information might already be on that post.

Missing a day of class is **equivalent** to missing **two weeks** of normal high school English. Please do not schedule non-urgent doctor's appointments or travel/vacations during our class. If you play a school sport, we're going to negotiate with your coach to share missed time. (That is, you will not leave early every week from our class for practices.) This is your chance to respectfully approach all of the adults involved and negotiate a compromise.

Snow Days:

If KPS cancels school, we will not meet in person. We will either meet asynchronously (I'll send you a videoed lesson and/or activities to complete on your own) or synchronously (in Microsoft Teams, during our class time). Because I believe that Snow Days are a fundamental rite of passage for all students, I try diligently to do asynchronous assignments UNLESS we've had multiple snow days in a year. Check your email on snow days to see which option the day holds. When we meet online (and also when we meet in person), please do not take pictures or make recordings without asking permission.

Several of you drive in to campus from over an hour away. If the person who drives you is not comfortable making the trek in, please contact me. Our classroom setup and format do not allow for you to attend class virtually, but we will figure something out together.

Minors on Campus:

Unfortunately, we live in a time when it's not safe for minor children to be unsupervised on a college campus. Your safety is one of my highest priorities! You MUST have an adult with you when you are on campus – this includes returning books or printing in Waldo Library, and visiting the Help Desk. I will be on campus by 1 pm. You may be dropped off at 1 pm. Take the time between 1 pm and 1:15 pm to chat with friends, grab a snack from Flossie's or the vending machines, use the restroom, ask questions, share your middle school gossip (seriously, I enjoy hearing "the tea"), etc. DO NOT leave Sangren Hall without an ATYP staff member with you. Attendance will be taken at 1:20, which is also when I begin class. I will respect your time. Please be in your seat ready to learn before 1:20 pm.

For more information regarding Western Michigan University's policies regarding minors on campus, please visit <https://wmich.edu/policies/minors>

ATYP Code of Conduct

ATYP students are representatives of the program at their schools, at the University, and in the community. As such, they are expected to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner, particularly while on campus.

Additionally, I refer you to the standard Rules and Responsibilities discussed and presented to you during orientation with Dr. Schultz and Ms. Citino. Please familiarize yourself with the following ATYP articles as needed:

- "ATYP Code of Conduct" <https://wmich.edu/precollege/atyp/conduct>
- "Expectations for Enrolling Students" <https://wmich.edu/precollege/atyp/about/rules>
- "Executive Function and Stress Management Strategies" <https://wmich.edu/precollege/atyp/timemanagement>
- "Avoiding Digital Distractions" <https://wmich.edu/precollege/atyp/about/digitaldistractions>
- "Homework Tips" <https://wmich.edu/precollege/atyp/about/homeworktips>
- "Rules and Responsibilities" <https://wmich.edu/precollege/atyp/about/rules>
- "Survival Tips" <https://wmich.edu/precollege/atyp/about/tips>
- "Time Management Strategies" <https://wmich.edu/precollege/atyp/about/timemanagement>
- "Safety Policies and Procedures" <https://wmich.edu/precollege/atyp/safety>
- "Working With Your Home School" <https://wmich.edu/precollege/atyp/about/school>
- "Library Student Information" <https://wmich.edu/library/policies/borrowing>
- "Photo Release Form" <https://wmich.edu/precollege/atyp/photo>

Students with Disabilities and Special Needs

WMU provides academic assistance for students with disabilities, including the emotional, technical and academic support necessary to achieve academic and personal success. Students are encouraged to tell the instructor if they need disability services. Please let me know whenever you feel overwhelmed. This class is meant to be challenging but not crushing! Along with your parents, you have a support system in the ATYP staff, our tutors, and me.

Phones, Laptops, Electronics: *Classroom Community & Guidelines*

Use your devices appropriately while in class or online. Ex: Refrain from checking your phone or from visiting unrelated sites during class time. Ask before taking a photo or recording a video, as people value their privacy. Maturity, generosity, and playfulness will go a long way toward making this a pleasant experience for us all. Practice patience, troubleshoot problems actively, and let me know if you have questions.

Plagiarism

When a student submits work as his or her own but that work in any way borrows ideas, organization, wording, or anything else from another source without appropriate acknowledgment of the source, the student is guilty of plagiarism.

- Copying or resubmitting work from a previously completed assignment is self-plagiarism and not acceptable.
- Unless an assignment has been given as collaborative homework, all work turned in must be the student's own.
- If the work is collaborative, the names of all participants must be on it.

Consequences for plagiarism will be a zero on the assignment for the first offense, and a failing grade in the course if there's a second offense.

Academic Honesty in a Time of Chat GPT and other AI:

You may use AI to assist with writing a better paper *only* in terms of checking grammar/spelling, but not to create content for you or to summarize readings for you. You must identify specific AI use in your work as part of the materials you turn in. Explain how it was used in your metacognitive writing. Example: "This paper used Grammarly to check my grammar and made (x) changes."

Tip: Do not assume your AI is listing or parsing sources that are real or accurate. Do not assume that your instructors will not check your citations. Besides the academic repercussions, there are many compelling reasons to not use AI to assist you with your writing/reading process (its effect on the environment and its massive theft of art and literature, for starters). I also believe that it nixes the point of taking this course. We are here to engage our minds and think critically, and numerous scholarly studies show that using AI is a detriment to that work.

Asking AI to summarize assigned reading robs you from feeling passionate about the power of your own brain, so let's simply enjoy exploring what we can do! *As you promise to resist using AI with your homework, I will likewise pledge to not use AI to grade your papers or to assist me in the creation of assignments.* Please let me know if you ever have questions about the use of AI

in this course or in education broadly. You should always consult with your instructor if you are uncertain about an issue of academic honesty.

Digital Organization

Using Google Drive is highly recommended for keeping yourself organized. Create folders for each week of class, organized by semester, and keep your files *properly labeled with what week we're on* (Ex. Week 0, Week 1, Week 2, etc.). You have access to the Google Suite through WMU: wmich.edu/google.

E-Learning

Information for the course will be available on our course E-Learning site. This will include notes and/or Power Points that will help you learn the material. Also included will be announcements, assignments, grades, and other miscellaneous items. **It is important that you have access to our E-Learning Course and that you check it often.**

When you open the class page, you will see the latest ANNOUNCEMENT. These will be updated with homework, additional resources, and basic class information with links to assignments, notes, etc. These announcements may also be sent via when there are assignments due that day.

All papers and writing assignments will be turned in via the E-Learning site as well as a paper copy handed to your teacher on the day the assignment is due. Students can upload a .pdf, .jpeg, or .docx (no Google Doc Links or Pages App files, you will need to save them as a different file before uploading them). **All assignments are due at 10:00pm EST on the due date (Typically the day before class, unless otherwise noted).**

ATYP Writing Assignment Formatting

may feel trivial or overly strict to focus so much on formatting, but, in the real world, businesses, institutions, and traditions often demand this kind of precision. Applications, publishing, editing, and even college assignments are sometimes dismissed outright if they fail to follow guidelines. Before the college application process became fully electronic, formatting and instruction-following errors could ruin your odds of admittance; today, in publishing, short stories, poems, novels, and articles are often rejected without a second glance if they do not meet submission requirements. The same is true in higher education.

Tutorials for how to format are available on eLearning:

1. Go to our eLearning course.
2. Select "Content" from the top navigation bar.
3. On the left-hand side of the page, look for a module called "Tutorials, Templates, and Resources."
4. Find and download your desired template from the list of resources. Double check it, though, to make sure that the formatting remains correct as you begin typing.

Journals

You will receive directed journal assignments that should reflect 10-15 minutes of outlining or planning, 45 minutes to 1 hour of writing, and about 5-10 minutes of proofreading. This goal may take a few weeks to reach; however, outlining and brainstorming before writing can significantly reduce the amount of time you spend typing your paper.

Journal Formatting:

- Single-spaced
- 1 full page of writing
- 12-point Times New Roman
- 1-inch margins on all four sides of the document
- Proper heading
- Relevant title
- Proofread & checked for grammar issues
- Appropriate file name
- Saved as a .doc or .docx file
- File name: First and Last Name-Week # Journal-Draft # (example: Jane Doe-Week 1 Journal-Draft 1) Journals are worth ~1% ea. of the final grade.

Weekly Writing

Weekly Writings should reflect a total of 2-4 hours of planning, writing, and proofreading. Again, 15-20 minutes of proofreading will save you time in the drafting. This goal may take a few weeks to reach; however, outlining and brainstorming before writing will significantly reduce the amount of time you spend typing your paper.

Weekly Writing Formatting:

- 1.5 spacing
- 2-3 full pages
- 12-point Times New Roman
- 1-inch margins on all four sides of the document
- Proper heading & header
- Relevant title
- Proofread & checked for grammar issues
- Appropriate file name
- Saved as a .doc or .docx file
- File name: First and Last Name-Week # WW-Draft # (example: Jane Doe-Week 1 WW-Draft 1) WW are worth ~3% ea. of the final grade.

Essays

At the conclusion of most units, you will submit a formal essay related to the technique or topic studied in that unit. These essays will be longer and more polished than the weekly writings and journals. All essays will be revised. Depending on the nature of the essay, plan on 4-7 hours of work.

Essay Format:

- Double-spaced
- Length varies (read the instructions thoroughly for specific requirements)

- 12-point Times New Roman font
 - 1-inch margins on all four sides
 - Proper heading & header
 - Relevant title
 - Appropriate file name
 - Proofread & checked for grammar issues
 - Saved as a .doc or .docx file
 - File name: First and Last Name-Week # Essay-Draft # (example: Jane Doe-Week 1 Essay-Draft 1)
- Essay weights vary by assignment. Outlines, rough drafts, status reports, etc., will be assessed for a small percentage, while final essay projects tend to weigh more heavily on the final grade.

Revisions

As a general rule, if your writing assignment (journal, weekly writing, or essay) is green in the gradebook, you do not need to revise. You will be permitted to revise your paper up to two times for a better grade (within the submission timeline). You will save each draft of your paper with a different draft number in the file name.

Revision Protocol:

1. Make a copy of your previous draft.
2. Name this file with the new draft #.
3. When you make a change, highlight it so the grader can easily spot your new work.
 - a. If you remove work or fix something difficult to highlight, leave your grader a highlighted footnote or a message at the end of your document explaining the change.
 - b. Each new draft will have a different color of highlighting to indicate the most recent changes. Please leave the previous highlighting. If your paper goes through several revisions, your final one will be colorful!
 - Draft 2 (revisions made on your first draft): yellow highlight
 - Draft 3 (revisions made on your second draft): green highlight

Example:

File Name: Maggie Parker- Week 7 Essay - Draft 3

Text Sample:

Eighty-seven years ago, our forefathers brought forth, on this continent, a new nation, conceived in liberty and dedicated to the idea that all humans are created equal. Now we are engaged in a great civil...

After the first drafts of a specific assignment have been graded, you will have 2-4 additional weeks to elevate your grade before the assignment closes. After the revision period ends, the assignment dropbox on eLearning will be locked, and no further submissions will be permitted. This revision period will allow students to revise up to the third draft if revisions are completed weekly. Late work and waiting to complete revisions will hinder your ability to revise to the third draft stage and may negatively affect your final assignment grade. In short, work on your revisions *every week!*

I view feedback (a key part of the revision process) as an opportunity to provide specific, curated coaching to everyone. If you are noticing the same comments over and

over again, you likely aren't doing your revisions. I note that. The process of doing your revisions may seem cumbersome initially, but if you are taking in the feedback and correcting the errors, it's likely you won't make the same errors again. That shortens revision time. The students who are the MOST successful in this class tackle their revisions first every week. That way, the corrections are fresh before beginning the new assignments.

Notes

Every week during the first semester, you will show me your lecture notes and reading notes and, if applicable, show me your book annotations.

Section 1: Class Notes and ICW: In your ATYP notebook, you will take notes in class. I will look at your notes each week as your ticket out the door.

Section 2: Feedback Review: Each week that you receive writing back in class, you will add to a Feedback Review section. This is an opportunity to organize your revisions, reflect on your errors, celebrate your victories, and prepare for the week ahead.

Section 3: Reading Notes and Prewriting: In your ATYP notebook, you will take notes from your *Patterns* readings and you will show your prewriting for writing assignments. At the top of a new page each week, label the week and the title of the readings. Summarize each section, note questions you have, capture key quotes and why they are important. Do the reading first, then draw a line in your notebook. Your prewriting can take the form of notes, drawings, doodles, mind maps, or outlines. It is a visual record of your thinking. At the top of each entry, label the week and assignment, then begin your prewriting process. It is meant to be a place to start your thinking, so you are not staring at a cursor mocking you, and so you can confidently start drafting. I will spot check your notes periodically and without prior notice.

Your Portfolio

Portfolio: Each version of your writing assignments is to be printed and included in your portfolio. Revision highlights must be included in each version. The most recent edition of the paper should be on top. The original draft should be at the bottom.

Your Portfolio will have a Table of Contents, your Feedback Review document, your Prewriting Notebook, and then be organized into four main sections: Journals, Weekly Writings, Essays, and Handouts. Each section should be organized by week in ascending order. (Week 0, then week 1...all the way to week 16 for semester 1. It will begin with week 17 and go to week 34 for semester 2.) The portfolio will be graded periodically throughout the semester.

Participation & Professionalism

This is your willingness to:

- Take part in in-class activities (on camera/ use of microphone during online classes)
- Respond to emails promptly
 - o Some email responses may be graded. Check your email every weekday and be sure to follow directions.
 - o Pro Tip: Pick two times a day to check your email. This will almost guarantee you catch everything.

- Keep your files organized on your computer and in your Portfolio
 - Make sure that you are keeping your portfolio up to date before class every week.
 - I may ask to see your file organization on your computer.
- Use of appropriate file names
- Help others and be a kind team member
- Arrive to class on time
- Come prepared for class
- Work with classmates outside of class (virtually or in-person) for group projects
- Meet submission dates for assignments
- Seek help when struggling
- Adhere to the ATYP code of conduct
- ...and basically, contribute to the community of the class.

Participation & professionalism assignments cannot be made up, and late work will not be accepted. However, a large chunk of these assignments will be completed during class. Be present.

Late Work

Assignments submitted after the due date are marked late and earn a grade penalty. For most assignments, submitting anything after 10:00:01pm will be marked late by eLearning. If you miss the first draft due date of a writing assignment (or if your paper is notably incomplete), your final grade for that assignment will be reduced one grade (example: Check Plus to a Check). Late deductions are typically assessed towards the end of the semester.

Unless your grade is in the green zone (A, BA, B, Plus, or Check Plus), you are responsible for revising the paper using the comments left for you to guide your changes. If you have not revised your paper to the green zone by the revision deadline, your grade will be the highest you have earned on that assignment to date.

The homework sheets should allow you enough time to plan around events, sports, chores, other coursework, etc., but if you feel there are extenuating circumstances preventing you from completing your work on time, we can have a private conversation about this. Do your best to contact me **before** missing any deadlines/due dates. This course is not one in which one or two late assignments will crush your final grade. Life happens. Multiple late assignments will result in contact with your caregivers to help you better organize.

Pay attention to the submission list in the News section on eLearning. Assignments marked as FIF (first is final) cannot be submitted late for credit or revised for a higher grade. All Participation and Engagement grades cannot be submitted late for credit or revised for a higher grade.

Grading Scale and Grading Information

<i>%</i>	<i>Letter Grade</i>	<i>Check System Grade</i>	<i>Essay System Grade</i>	<i>Credit Grade</i>
93-100	A	Plus (100%)	Excellent (100%)	Credit (100%)
87-92.9	BA	Check Plus (92.9%)	Strong Plus (92.9%)	
83-86.9	B		Strong Minus (86.9%)	
77-82.9	CB	Check (77%)	Fair Plus (82.9%)	
73-76.9	C		Fair Minus (76.9%)	
67-72.9	DC	Check Minus ((70%)	Weak Plus (72.9%)	
63-66.9	D		Weak Minus (66.9%)	
Below 62.9	E	Incomplete (50%)	Incomplete (50%)	Partial Credit (50%)
		DNS (0%) Did Not Submit	DNS(0%)	No Credit (0%)

Grades are viewed by me as a means of **motivating** and **challenging** you as well as an indication of mastery. At any given time, your grade is a snapshot of where you are at that moment. However, our class is graded based on your progress from the first draft to the final draft. You almost always have the chance to revise, often multiple times, to improve. To be clear: your grade is in flux until the final evaluation at the end of each semester.

Our university grading system does not allow plus and minus grades. Letter grades are: A, BA, B, CB, C, DC, D, E.

We request that home schools “err on the side of generosity” when calculating grade point averages. So, a “BA” should translate to your report card as “A-“. In this class, grades are weighted. A journal will not be worth as much as an essay, and there are more journals. Talk with your teacher about the math part and where to invest most of your energy.

Mandatory Help Session (“C” and Below)

If a student’s overall grade is at or below a 77% after the first 6 weeks of each semester, the student will be required to seek extra help every week until their grade reaches a CB. Weekly help may consist of attending a help session or meeting with Ms. Citino or Dr. Schultz. You will submit your Help Session form to the Mandatory Help Session dropbox for that week. Students are encouraged to take advantage of these services and opportunities regardless of their current grade in the course.

After the initial six-week adjustment period, students must maintain a grade above 73%. If a student’s overall grade falls at or below this threshold, they will be placed on academic

probation. At this point, the student will sign a contract committing to regular help session attendance and to completing all work on time, at an acceptable level of completion. Academic probation is not a punishment—it is a structured chance to turn things around with clear expectations and support. However, failure to uphold the contract or to demonstrate consistent improvement could result in dismissal from the program.

Extra Credit

I view Extra Credit as a boost IF you have completed all your work, not a bailout. Extra credit will only be accepted if you have at least 95% of your work in on time. This includes revisions.

Help sessions (or other help—see previous page’s “Mandatory Help Session” section) are only required on any particular week if your grade is a “C” or below by the beginning of class that week. You will need to complete a Help Session Check (template on eLearning) and upload it to the appropriate dropbox the night before class that week. If you attend a help session with an “A,” “BA,” “B,” or “CB” and thoughtfully complete the Help Session Check the night before class, I will add 0.25% to your final grade for every Help Session Check (1 per week) completed-- up to 3%.

Extra credit opportunities might arise throughout the semester. While I value and appreciate all the work you do, do not count on extra credit to give you a significant grade boost. Extra credit will not exceed 5%. Most extra credit papers and events are worth (up to) 1%.

As a teacher, one of my biggest pet peeves is when a student who has not “done what they’re supposed to do when they’re supposed to do it” expects a save with extra credit. Please don’t ask if you find yourself in that space.

We expect a lot from our students, but you’re here because your adults believe you can do this, and your academic achievement has shown that you are ready for this challenge. Along with your caregivers, you have a support system in the tutors, the ATYP staff, and me.

Keep in mind, I can only help you if you let me know that you need help. I cannot read your mind - do you really want me to be able to? Think about that. That’s not something either of us wants. Wise students will attend tutoring/ help sessions with our tutors (who are amazing!), email or text when confused, ask/email questions, take risks, and stay on top of homework.

Seriously, it isn’t a bother. If I didn’t want you to contact me, you wouldn’t have my email! I will do my best to respond within 24 hours. I’m not online all the time. Please allow me the courtesy of 24 hours before you send follow-up emails.

This class, I hope, will be like nothing you’ve experienced before. It will be tough and manageable. The discussions we have will brighten your soul - seriously, we don’t deal with some of the shenanigans that you’ve experienced with classmates who just don’t “get it.” There will be times when you leave class invigorated, and there will be times when you just want to quit. Both are okay. (But, give it six weeks and TALK TO ME before you consider dropping.)

I am looking forward to working with each of you. Your classmates and I want your input and insight. Be sure to ask questions and contribute to class discussions, and *listen* to your classmates, your instructor, and yourself. Think about what others are saying when they review your work so that you can consider the counsel of others along with your own. And lastly, take some **risks**. Try new ways of approaching assignments. Explore. You will very likely surprise yourself. Good luck!

Caregiver's Role

Your role is essential. The habits your student forms at home will directly determine how they perform here. Bright students still need structure, consistency, and accountability to thrive in this challenging program. Without strong support, even the most gifted students may struggle. The following practices will serve your family well:

1. **Time Management:** Set timers based on the Estimated Time for Completion (ETC) listed on each assignment. Track how long journals take over the first few months to ensure growth in speed. If improvement is not seen, contact the office to schedule a meeting with Ms. Nan for executive functioning support.
2. **Planning:** Remind your student to prewrite and outline before writing. Offer to listen to their plan. Do not provide answers—your role is to serve as a sounding board so they can articulate their own thinking.
3. **Focus:** Eliminate digital distractions while they are working (phones and unrelated internet use should be off-limits during reading, outlining, and writing).
4. **Basic Needs:** Ensure your student arrives rested, fed, and prepared.
5. **Organization:** Print the weekly homework sheet and encourage your student to use it as a checklist. Review workload together and create a weekly schedule after class each week using their academic planner.
6. **Accountability:** Ensure all deadlines are met. Keep track of late or missing work.
7. **Self-Advocacy:** Encourage your student to email or text me directly when help is needed. (For safety, all communication records are retained for the school year.) Avoid contacting me on your student's behalf unless absolutely necessary.
8. **Seeking Help:** If your student runs into a roadblock, instead of plowing it down for them, offer advice on where they could go to find help on their own. Google? The homework sheet? eLearning? The Bronco Help Desk? Me? A tutor? Ms. Nan?
9. **Help Sessions:** Encourage your student to attend help sessions every week, even if not required.
10. **Logistics & Safety:** Ensure your student is accompanied by an adult if arriving before 1:00 p.m. Drop them off early enough to be in their seat before 1:20 pm and pick them up promptly at 3:50 from the designated Sangren Hall pickup area. Students should be dressed for the weather while waiting outside.
11. **Formatting Support:** Review the formatting of papers before submission—but leave content feedback to me.
12. **Stay Informed:** Read the weekly office emails (usually sent on Friday) and discuss the information with your student. Read the weekly email from me (sent Wednesdays after class for the first 8 weeks).
13. **Celebrate Growth:** Recognize and reward their effort and persistence. Avoid praising grades.

14. **Emotional Support:** Offer encouragement, perspective, and empathy when the work feels overwhelming. Sometimes your student will need a shoulder to cry on as much as a push forward.

In short: your involvement matters. Students who have caregivers actively implementing these strategies are far more likely to thrive.