

August 1, 2019

Dear Parents:

Welcome to 11th Grade Advanced Placement™ English Language and Composition! Please scan the syllabus and read the College Board (creator of Advanced Placement™ courses) course description available on the class web site. Daily, students must copy the homework from the class board, examine their syllabus, check the course web page, and refer to the forthcoming Test Success packet to help guide what they should work on each night. They must establish a system to track assignments and due dates, perhaps a digital calendar, paper calendar, agenda, or cellphone reminders application. Students who succeed in AP Lang systemize and organize their daily and long-term due dates and meet with the before- and after-school tutors frequently.

The College Board specifies that the course targets strong, motivated students. Because this class is a college-level course (we will also tackle necessary 11th and 12th curriculum simultaneously) and, thus, more challenging than previous English courses, students must understand that what has worked for them previously may require adjustment. Students cannot easily comprehend difficult new concepts from borrowing another's notes or by attempting assignments without my instruction. Please schedule appointments and arrange trips so that students don't miss class.

While the AP curriculum is college-level, I have adapted the content for 11th graders by breaking it into smaller pieces with many practice opportunities. I teach using a variety of methods to reach all learners and require a range of assignments to reinforce learning. Students must complete all reading assignments and tasks to progress successfully. Notably, to master a short reading selection, students must read each short selection three times, using the Critical Reading Strategies I will teach them soon. Students will read four nonfiction books as well as each unit's short selections. Those who struggle in this class do so because they neglect the quantity and quality reading requirements. Part of scheduling their homework involves scheduling their long-term reading dates and their second and third readings of short selections.

College courses require much work but give few grades. While this AP version offers more grades, it may not produce as many grades as you and your child are used to. It will require many steps leading to a graded assessment, and most of these occur outside class. Each student reads and writes at a different pace, so when students complete these tasks outside a set class schedule, they can use as much or as little time as they need. Parents and students must recognize that students will find some selections may require more than three readings and some writing assignments may require more time than previous ones. The College Board has also now implemented Personal Progress Checks which simulate the AP exam via an online application. These help students and me measure their skill attainment.

During process papers, I provide students the opportunity to consult with a former AP Lang student about their second drafts. They will meet in my room to read through their drafts, ask questions, seek guidance, and hear suggestions about improving their papers. This system emulates the college writing center and allows each student a one-on-one tutoring opportunity.

The combination of a college course's rigor with many process step checkpoints equals few and infrequent grades, especially at the beginning because students must learn basics before I assess their progress. Please do not think I am not updating Synergy; the circumstances of this course just do not lend to weekly grades. I always return work to students before I post grades, and I return work only when we have time in class for students to evaluate their progress. For each assessment, graded or practice, they will complete a written reflection and submit it and their assessment to a portfolio. At semester's end, they will evaluate their entire course work, their portfolio, as their final.

Usually, I only contact parents if students' grades drop below passing, but feel free to contact me at cathie.lawson@cobbk12.org. For students, I am available until 4:30 on Mondays, Thursdays, and Fridays, so they can work in my room or seek help. Thank you for being involved in your student's learning and success!

Sincerely,

Mrs. C. Lawson

Keep above for future reference. Return only bottom portion.

Student's name	_____	Student's cell	_____
Student's email	_____		
Mother's name	_____	Cell phone	_____
Mother's email	_____	Other phone	_____
Father's name	_____	Cell phone	_____
Father's email	_____	Other phone	_____

Signature of Parent(s) who reviewed course description and this letter _____