

January 5, 2018

Dear Parents:

Welcome to Honors American Literature and Composition (HALC)! Your child will receive the course syllabus soon, so please ask to review it with him/her. You can also download it and other important forms/assignments at the class web page: <http://mrslawsonclasses.weebly.com>. Part of the syllabus lists each unit's specific readings, skills, and assignments. You will also find a link to the state standards for this course on the web page.

To succeed in this course, students must be organized, conscientious, and present in class. Students cannot easily comprehend lessons from borrowing another's notes or by attempting assignments without my instruction. When students know they will be absent, they must see me in advance. Those who have unexpected absences must email me as soon as possible, so I can email them that day's agenda and homework. Catching up after an absence can overwhelm students, causing them to fall more and more behind, so being proactive is the key to avoiding that stress and frustration.

The Policies and Procedures section of the syllabus details reading requirements and explains the purpose behind non-graded-yet-vital-to-learning assignments. A major part of learning is practice, and each practice does not need a grade for students to know what skills they still must develop. Plus, students need more practice than I can possibly grade. Many assignments build on other assignments, so while I may okay earlier steps, I will only grade the final product. Nonetheless, students must do all the steps in the process so they can produce a quality product (paper, test, or project). They will earn zeroes for final products that do have previous steps attached.

I teach using a variety of methods to reach all learners and require a range of assignments to reinforce learning. Students will receive a toolkit of advice, resources, guidelines, and practice that they will not only use throughout this course, they should take it to college to help them. Their roommates will want to borrow it!

Students should check the class web site (see above and front page of syllabus) daily. I post all due dates, links and downloads they need, and additional help and information there.

Usually, I only contact parents if students' grades drop below passing. During the semester if you are concerned about your child's learning, please see the syllabus again and discuss the requirements with your child. Problems usually arise because students have decided to take shortcuts or to neglect assignments, especially reading and non-graded tasks. Helping your child find ways to motivate him/herself intrinsically so that he/she values learning and understands that true learning rarely comes easily is the most successful way of turning around poor grades. To contact me, e-mail me at cathie.lawson@cobbk12.org. For students, I am available until 4:30 on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays so they can work in my room or seek help. Students also should seek assistance from their in-class, before-, and after-school tutor(s). 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 _____

Parent Signature _____