**12th Grade Contemporary Literature Course Syllabus**



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**Course Outline**

Through the study of short stories, novels, plays, essays, films, art, and other media we will explore the voices, ideas, and styles that have emerged in contemporary literature. We will focus on understanding how literature has developed into what it is today and how it can be useful and enjoyable, simple yet challenging, and familiar but mind-opening. We’ll also use different lenses to examine these works while using various formats to develop our writing skills. While many of these types of writing are geared toward college preparation, all assignments are designed to be helpful and applicable to any student, regardless of post-graduation goals.

**Course Expectations**

\*\*Being a senior will not excuse you from being a responsible student in this class!\*\*

* Come to class prepared and ready to learn and participate meaningfully
* Be responsible and respect others
* Have an open mind
* Challenge yourself and work hard

**Course Texts**

* *Patterns For College Writing* by Laurie Kirszner and Stephen Mandell (textbook)
* *The Things They Carried* by Tim O’Brien
* *A Thousand Splendid Suns* by Khaled Hosseini
* *Born A Crime* by Trevor Noah
* *David vs. Goliath* by Malcolm Gladwell
* Tentative book club options:
	+ *The Handmaid’s Tale* by Margaret Atwood
	+ *The Bluest Eye/Sula* by Toni Morrison
	+ *First They Killed My Father* by Loung Ung
	+ *Call Me by Your Name* by Andre Aciman
	+ *The Namesake/Interpreter of Maladies* by Jhumpa Lahiri
* Selected short stories, poems, videos, and other media

**A Note About the Content**

Contemporary literature encompasses a range of topics communicated with an honesty that, while important, may not always be appropriate until your senior year. Some of the texts we read include moments that might be graphic in terms of language and/or description. The nature of these instances, however, is purposeful and not merely gratuitous.

Additionally, the course may include films to supplement the curriculum, and some of these films are Rated R, usually due to language, violence or innuendo (no nudity). In these cases I will always let the class know what we are watching in advance so you will have time to speak with me privately if you have concerns or would like an alternate assignment. Despite some mature content, classroom expectations for language and respect shown towards others are just as high as they would be at any other time. A parent signature on the syllabus signature sheet will suffice as permission for viewing these films.

Contemporary literature is rich in its variety, and I am looking forward to exploring it with you this year! Please feel free to discuss with me any concerns you have at any time.

**Grading**

Your course grade will reflect the standard grading percentages. I will round your grade up if you are in 0.25 % of the next grade level. There will be no exceptions to this rule.

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| 93-100% A90-92% A- | 87-89% B+83-87% B80-82% B- | 78-79% C+73-77% C70-72% C- | 68-69% D+60-67% D0-59% F |

Grades in this course are divided among three categories outlined below:

**40 % Assessments:** essays, projects, timed writes, Socratic Seminars, exams

* Final drafts of major essays must achieve a minimum 70% grade. If your essay does not meet this minimum requirement you will receive an incomplete for that assignment. I will work with you to get your essays to this minimum standard throughout the year.

**30 % Classwork/Homework:** In-class activities, in-class graded work, homework assignments, graded discussions

**20% quizzes:** reading quizzes

**10 % Participation:**

**A note on discussion participation***:* I define participation broadly to includephysical and mental presence in the classroom along with *meaningful* and respectful contributions to class discussions. This can be demonstrated verbally or in writing through thoughtful commentary, questions, discussions, etc. Students will receive a holistic participation grade each month. I deduct points for not participating in class and/or disruptive behavior including but not limited to texting during discussions/lectures, sleeping in class, doing other class work.

**Extra credit is rare** but may be provided as necessary to boost engagement with content and/or your colleagues in instances where class time might be limited for supplemental in-depth or out-of-the-box thinking and collaboration. I would highly encourage you to take advantage of these periodic opportunities. However, these opportunities may not be used to rid you of your responsibility of demonstrating effort toward mastering regularly assigned work.

**Missed Work**

Unexcused Absences: If you have an unexcused absence, you will receive no credit for work done in class. You will also receive no credit for work due on the day and have no opportunity to make up the missed work.

Excused Absences: If you have an excused absence, you are expected to communicate with me regarding any missed work. Check the class website for details on in-class activities and make-up work. You will also receive Remind texts to keep you up-to-speed with major assignment deadlines (assessment category work). However, it is your responsibility to turn in any assignments, make up a test/quiz on the day you return. You are expected to keep up with all reading deadlines since you’ll receive a reading calendar at the start of each unit (for longer texts).

Essays: Writing assignments are due on turnitin.com on the scheduled due date. If you are not in class that day, I expect your assignment will be on turnitin.com on time. If you have any extenuating circumstances, please communicate with me appropriately.

Late Work: Grade earned is reduced by 10% for each class period when the work is turned in at any point after it is collected. No late work will be accepted after five school days of the due date. Please be aware there are assignments that will not be accepted late **for any reason**. This includes group projects or essays/writing assignments that can be emailed.

* The Fine Print: I understand that there will be times during the semester where you will feel overwhelmed with school work and will need extra time to complete assignments. For this reason, you will receive **two late passes each semester**. Each pass will provide you with an additional week to turn in your work without any penalty. You may choose to use a late pass on **homework assignments or final drafts of essays only**. Use these wisely! Unused late passes from the first semester will not carry over to the second semester. No extra credit is provided for unused late passes.

**Remind.com**

Remind.com is a free text messaging service that allows me to communicate with you regarding assignments and upcoming due dates. I highly recommend signing up to receive text messages from Remind.com so that you can better track the deadlines for major assignments.

\*\*Note: I will not have access to your phone numbers if you sign up for Remind.com.

**Academic Integrity**

Please refer to the student handbook for specifics about Liberty’s academic integrity policy. Our department adheres strictly to this policy, so please do not be tempted to plagiarize.

**First instance of plagiarism**:

* No credit for assignment and no opportunity to make up the assignment grade
* Referral to administration
* Email sent to parent
* No recommendation provided by English department teachers

**Second instance of plagiarism**:

* Receive a failing grade for the course during that semester

Please note that this course is a graduation requirement. If a student receives a failing grade s/he will need to take responsibility to make up the course requirement on her/his own, i.e. summer school, correspondence course, etc. as approved by the student’s school counselor and administrator.

**Recommendations**

I understand you will come across several opportunities this year where you will be required to submit a recommendation letter from a high school teacher. Typically, I need to have known a student for at least a full year before writing a meaningful recommendation. However, I may make some exceptions given advanced notice and after assessing a student’s extenuating circumstances.

*+10 Points (Participation)*

**12th Grade Contemporary Literature Course Syllabus – Ms. Dalia**

**Parent/Student Signature Page**

I have read the information provided in this syllabus in its entirety. I understand the information and know that I can access it on Ms. Dalia’s class website at any time. I also am aware that I can contact Ms. Dalia at any time with questions about the syllabus or the course.

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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Student Email: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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| Please check which of the following you have available to you at home: | Please check to which of the following you have an account: |
| \_\_\_ internet access\_\_\_ USB (flash/thumb) drive\_\_\_ printer\_\_\_ computer without internet access\_\_\_ smart phone with accessible data | \_\_\_ Google Drive\_\_\_ Dropbox\_\_\_ Twitter |

Note: If at any time a computer and/or the internet is not accessible, please let me know right away so I can make sure we can work together to accommodate assignments

**\*\*Please refer to the next page for instructions to sign up for Remind.com!\*\***