

“Only when we know little can we be certain; doubt grows with greater learning.”
-Goethe

Theory of Knowledge Syllabus: Fall 2009

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Course Description: Theory of Knowledge is central to the philosophy of the International Baccalaureate program. Placed at the center of the curriculum, with the Extended Essay and CAS, it is a requirement for completing the diploma. The course is meant to be an inquiry into different ways of knowing and into different kinds of knowledge. TOK students learn to evaluate the question, “how do I know that a given assertion is true?”

Course Objectives: Having completed the TOK course, students should be able to:

- demonstrate an understanding of the strengths and limitations of the various Ways of Knowing and of the methods used in the different Areas of Knowledge
- demonstrate a capacity to reason critically
- make connections between and across Ways of Knowing and Areas of Knowledge
- make connections between personal experience and different Ways of Knowing and Areas of Knowledge
- demonstrate an understanding of knowledge at work in the world
- identify values underlying judgments and knowledge claims pertinent to local and global issues
- demonstrate an understanding that personal views, judgments and beliefs may influence their own knowledge claims and those of others
- use oral and written language to formulate and communicate ideas clearly.

Course Assessment: Students will be evaluated with a variety of written and oral assignments. The IB program dictates that the students must complete two required assessments, the External Assessment and the Internal Assessment. The External Assessment is an essay on a prescribed title of 1200-1600 words. The Internal Assessment is an oral presentation on a topic selected by the student with the guidance of the teacher. Complete details on the required assessments will be provided. In addition to these required assignments, students will keep a journal, be required to participate in discussion and complete several essays and assignments in and out of class.

Bring to class:

- ◆ notebook to keep notes and journal
- ◆ three-ring binder for handouts and assignments
- ◆ pens and pencils
- ◆ flash drive
- ◆ open mind
- ◆ public library card

Classroom Guidelines:

1. **Be ready to learn.**
2. **Show reverence for work.**
3. **Respect others, self, and environment.**
4. **Exude grace and civility in all that you do.**

Attendance:

Following an absence, it is your responsibility to check the website (call a friend, check with me, etc.) for missed assignments, activities, documents, etc. Tardiness exceeding fifteen minutes will be counted as absences. Please check the student handbook for further clarification on the school absence policy as it relates to class credit. The tardy policy will be strictly adhered to. If you are not in the classroom (that means **in the classroom**, not in the hallway or racing in the door) when class is scheduled to begin, I will consider that tardy.

WORK SUBMISSION: Assignments must be printed and submitted on paper. Your guides will not accept assignments via e-mail.

Late Work: Your work is due on the day--and time--given. **Late work is worth ½ credit, and will not be accepted beyond the Friday of the week that it is due.** Computer/prINTER problems are NOT a valid excuse to hand in your work late. You will know well in advance when things will be due, so plan accordingly. I caution you to not leave your work until the last minute.

Classroom Etiquette:

- ❑ RESPECT! Raise your hands, don't touch anything that doesn't belong to you, be on time to class and have ALL your materials with you. If you have an idea or suggestion, don't hesitate to talk to me before or after school, before or after class, or during a break in the class. I'm more than happy to listen to what you have to say.
- ❑ DISCRETION! Take care of water and bathroom needs during your passing time. You are encouraged to bring a water bottle to class, as we are not located near a drinking fountain.

- ❑ **I have read the course syllabus for IB English 11 and I agree to the course expectations.**

Student name: _____

Student signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/guardian name: _____

Parent/guardian signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/guardian email: _____

Parent/guardian phone: _____