St. Pius X High School

"To Restore All Things in Christ," Pope Pius X

English IV 2026-2027

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Course Overview

Welcome to English IV! English IV is a year-long course for seniors which explores various themes and topics common to life in the late 20th and early 21st centuries through the use of modern novels, short stories and poetry. Students will exhibit understanding of theme, point of view, plot and conflict in assigned works through class discussion and written expression through a variety of essays and written assignments. Students will also work on developing independent reading skills and considering a multitude of cultural and social justice issues. Students will read short stories and poetry selections, as well as some of the novels from the following list: *The Screwtape Letters, All American Boys*, *Tuesdays With Morrie*, *Into the Wild*, *The Things They Carried*, *Bottled Up*, *Maus*, and the play, *A Christmas Carol*. **Mrs. Estep will send out an email with a due date on when the books will need to be purchased and ready to go for our class work.**

Essential Skills:

Essential Skills to be mastered this year include:

1. Analyze and interpret modern literature to gain understanding of the social justice issues occurring in the texts and our modern world.

2. Practice collaboration and skills necessary for higher level learning.

3. Use the stages of the writing process to produce effective essays and demonstrate research skills and proper documentation of sources when needed.

4. Use literary vocabulary to analyze and discuss (orally and in writing) works read.

5. Develop vocabulary.

6. Perceive the relevance of theme, plot, point of view, conflict and characterization of literary works.

Course Materials

- 1 inch three ring binder
- College Ruled paper
- Pen/Pencil
- Highlighter

- Folder in which to keep all work and handouts
- One spiral notebook

Resources

Students will have various assignments with required use of a computer. Chromebooks are available for student use during class.

Attendance

Promptness and coming to class prepared are imperatives. All students are expected to be seated when the bell rings. Attend class regularly. Please see the St. Pius X handbook for attendance policies. Each student will be expected to adhere to the school policy and will be held accountable.

Getting notes from a friend or obtaining the handouts for a given class cannot substitute for your actual presence in class. Many of the activities completed in class cannot be recreated.
If you are absent, you are responsible for make-up work. If you miss a test or quiz, you need to make an appointment to come in before school. I am at school every morning by 7:20 for questions and extra help.

It is necessary to complete assigned readings before coming to class and you must be willing to question and critique the ideas raised. Since class sessions depend extensively on discussion and group work, it is important that you are in class both to learn from others and to help others as you express your ideas and contribute to their work.

Assignments

Turn in assignments on time. I will provide detailed instructions/expectations for assignments in advance. LATE ASSIGNMENTS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED FOR A FULL GRADE. 10% off per day the assignment is late. Electronic submission of assignments, when absent, is expected to meet this requirement. If a student is absent on the day a major assignment is due, the assignment can be emailed to the teacher at school, or hand delivered to the teacher by a friend or family member. If emailed, the assignment will be dated by the time on the email. A hard copy reflecting the same content as the emailed copy (no edits or changes) must then be given to the teacher the day the student returns to class. There are no test retakes or corrections for this class.

Discussions

Get engaged during class sessions. Because class sessions depend extensively on discussion and group work, it is important that you are in class both to learn from others and to help others as you express your ideas and contribute to their work.

Discussions are an essential part of learning, particularly as we consider various genres, cultures, and perspectives. We will be discussing a wide range of important ideas and issues throughout the course. We will spend a lot of time honing the ability to critically discuss issues with others, reserve judgment,

consider alternatives, and form opinions/arguments based on a thorough investigation of each topic. Please note: Each student receives a grade for class participation. Any of the following behaviors will result in a severe point deduction—falling asleep in class, refusal to participate, failing to stay alert and engage in active listening, or consistent failure to bring necessary materials.

Writing

Demonstrate professionalism in written assignments. All work assigned for completion outside of class needs to be typed. Please use Times New Roman, 12 point font, one inch margins, and comply with MLA guidelines on headers and citations on all assignments.

Make your papers as readable as possible. Use the published SPX Writing and Language Standards and MLA format. Readability includes the following:

- type or use computer (all essays are to be typed)
- if written, use ink and double space. Make your writing as legible as possible
- do not turn in papers with ragged edges.

Participate in discussions and activities. People who are involved in the daily class business tend to be more aware of the content and processes of the course. Consequently, they perform better on papers and exams. Students who do not engage with the course usually perform poorly on tests and papers.

Academic Dishonesty

Adhere to academic honesty policies. This classroom has a zero tolerance policy when it comes to cheating. Any instance of academic dishonesty (e.g., cheating on exams, papers, or plagiarism) will result in a grade of "0" for the assignment or exam, second offenses will result in a semester grade of "F", and third offenses will result in a semester grade of "F" as well as an immediate Disciplinary Board meeting with the possibility of expulsion. For more information on academic honesty, please consult the St. Pius X catalog.

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

We will talk a lot about Artificial Intelligence (AI) this year. While amazing things can be done with AI, it can also be the source of many problems for young students who don't fully have a grasp of what plagiarism truly is. AI will be discussed with most every assignment given. Make sure you LISTEN!

Professionalism

Your role as a student should be perceived as serious and professional. When you email your instructors, realize that you are asking for their time, thoughts, and consideration. Always include the following basics: student name and hour/class, subject line, request or question. For example: "This is my rough draft of the descriptive essay. In my second body paragraph, what details might make the image more vivid?"

If you have questions about anything on this sheet or about the course, please ask me in class or request an appointment after class.

Grading

Your grades will be calculated by total point accumulation for the semester, with the exception that your semester final will reflect 15% of your final grade.

Classroom Expectations

1. The guidelines for student behavior as described in your student handbook will be enforced in the classroom.
2. Come to class on time and be prepared every day. This means having all materials ready to use, homework finished, and inside the classroom door as the bell rings. Try to use the restroom during your passing periods – although emergencies happen and will not be penalized.
3. No food is allowed in the classroom. Students may bring a water bottle filled with WATER only.
4. Cellphones must be kept in lockers if they are brought to school.
5. Keep trash off of the floor and in the trashcan! The custodians and I have enough to do without having to pick up after you, too!!
6. I am a firm believer in kindness. Luke 6:31 says, “Do to others as you would have them do to you.” Not everything that pops into your head needs to be spoken. You are seniors this year.
7.**All purses/small bags allowed to be taken from class to class will need to stay on the designated table in the classroom. No student should have a purse/small bag at their desk or below their desk at any time during the class period.**