11th Grade
English Honors Project

Fall Semester
2012

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION DEADLINE
October 3, 2012
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THE HONORS PROGRAM IN ENGLISH
11th Grade

A. **Eligibility**

In order to be accepted into the honors program, a student must have demonstrated superior work in English and must submit a recommendation from his/her previous English teacher.

B. **Description of Honors Projects**

- **Literary Projects:** Studying specific authors, genres, or styles. Sample titles include the following:
  - “The Treatment of Women in the Works of Oscar Wilde”
  - “The Concept of Manliness in Hemingway”
  - “A Comparative Study of Homer’s *Odyssey* and Joyce’s *Ulysses*”

- **Expository and Creative Writing Projects:** Compiling a creative writing portfolio: analyzing writing styles and attempting to emulate them; writing scripts; reporting on a community agency, a social problem or a career, with interviews as a main source of information. Sample projects have included the following:
  - “How Writers Write: Interviews With Local Authors”
  - “Poetic Forms: Application of Research Through Original Works”
  - “The Third World: Essays on the Subject Using Definition, Cause and Effect, Argumentation, and Problem Solving”

- **Speech and Dramatics Projects:** Preparing a director’s prompt book; creating costume or set designs; studying the stage history of a play. Recently completed projects have included the following:
  - “Shakespeare’s *Macbeth* as a Rock Musical”
  - “A Conversation with Toni Morrison and Her Characters”

- **Media Projects:** Multi-media projects on literary or artistic periods; videotapes of student plays; multi-discipline projects using music and art.” Examples of this type of project include the following:
  - “Setting Sonnets To Original Music”
  - “Multi-media Presentation on the Literature, Art, and Music of the 60’s”
  - “A Videotaped Analysis of the Verbal S.A.T.”

The above list is by no means exhaustive. The nature of the course and student interest will dictate the subject matter and the type of product.

C. **Reading Requirement:**

All students are required to incorporate a minimum of two full-length works into their project proposal.

D. **Speaker Requirement:**

All students are required to attend one of the two author lectures offered each semester, and compose a 1 - 2 page written speaker response on the experience, which will become a part of your Honors Option portfolio. The dates and times of the lectures will be posted on the English Department bulletin board across from the English office.
Dear Parent,

Your son/daughter has, with teacher recommendation, chosen to participate in the English Honors Program. This program is an intellectually stimulating and challenging one which allows the student to work closely with the regular instructor of his/her English class, who acts as a mentor and who, with the English Chairperson, evaluates the work presented. This program gives the student freedom to explore a topic of interest and to produce a project reflecting mastery of both concepts and skills.

Any student that is doing superior work in English may propose a project to the course instructor, who will act as mentor throughout the semester. A candidate will receive the honors project packet and will be expected to follow all procedures therein, including securing a recommendation, having a contract signed by a parent or guardian, and following a calendar of required meetings with the mentor. Students must also adhere to the schedule set up with their teachers for completing each part of the project in a timely manner. Parents will be notified if any of the required steps have not been met, and a student may be asked to terminate a project for being remiss in following the stated requirements.

Please note that the completion of the project does not result in automatic granting of Honors credit. The project must meet the conditions of the approved contract and be accepted by both the mentor and the chairperson. The mentoring experience and additional literature enrichment, combined with the problem-solving and critical thinking required to complete the project, provide an engaging opportunity for students to work on an individual basis with their teacher and to challenge themselves to grow intellectually. Granting of the honors credit reflects the entire experience.

The specific demands of the program, including a calendar for each semester, are outlined on the accompanying sheets. You are asked to note the contract your child has signed and to acknowledge your acceptance of it by adding your signature on the appropriate line.

We wish your son/daughter success in this program.

Sincerely,

Joan Lisecki
English Department Chairperson
ENGLISH HONORS

Teacher-Student Contract

NAME OF STUDENT_______________________________

TEACHER ________________________________ GRADE ____________

Project Description – Please attach a detailed proposal page stating your topic, reading choices and goals of your project. This proposal should be a clear reflection of the quality of work you intend to submit as your Honors Project. The proposal will be evaluated by your teacher/mentor and department chairperson.

The Contract:

I understand that this project will be done in conjunction with my present course instructor – his/her workload permitting. If the instructor’s honors workload does not permit his/her assuming more candidates, a student shall be assigned to an instructor within the department.

Periodic meetings, which will be determined between my mentor and myself, are mandatory. UNEXCUSED ABSENCE FROM TWO OF THESE MEETINGS WILL RESULT IN BEING DROPPED FROM THE PROGRAM (see accompanying calendar).

STUDENT’S SIGNATURE _____________________ Date: ______________

I have read the project packet including the letter to parents on page 3.

PARENT’S SIGNATURE _____________________ Date: ______________

MENTOR’S SIGNATURE _____________________ Date: ______________

CHAIRMAN’S SIGNATURE _____________________ Date: ______________
HONORS PROJECT CALENDAR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event Date</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>September 19 - 28</td>
<td>Required proposal meeting with mentor to discuss potential project ideas and readings. (Bring your own ideas and be prepared to brainstorm.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week of February 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday, October 3</td>
<td>Deadline for submission of honors project proposal, including teacher recommendations and parent signature. <strong>Absolutely no proposal will be accepted after this deadline.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday, February 13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week of November 5</td>
<td>First required meeting with mentor. (Complete half of the reading and bring reading log.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week of March 18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week of December 3</td>
<td>Second required meeting with mentor. (Finish reading texts and bring reading log.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week of April 22</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To Be Determined By Mentor</td>
<td>Third required meeting with mentor. (Rough draft of project/portfolio due.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday, January 10</td>
<td>Final project due date.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday, May 30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** Additional meetings will be scheduled at the mentor’s discretion.
TEACHER’S RECOMMENDATION

Honors Project in English

I recommend ___________________ for participation in the English Honors Program for the ____________ semester.

I believe that this student has demonstrated, by past performance, his/her intellectual ability, as well as the necessary independence and reliability, to meet deadlines and to produce a worthy product.

Teacher’s Signature__________________
Date______________

(Additional comments may be added here):
Instructions for Preparing a Reading Log

Your reading log is a way for you to engage with the texts you are reading by asking questions, making connections, analyzing observations, providing insights, and drawing conclusions. It will also be used to generate discussions with your mentor, and to develop your final project or portfolio. Your reading log will reflect your work over time, so it is essential that you read and write regularly. The length of your log entries will be determined by your mentor.

Think of your reading log as a friend to whom you are describing your books—describe what you are thinking and feeling as you read, make observations about what you think is most important, predict what might happen next. Don’t be afraid to say why you love or hate the book. Most importantly, try to make connections to your other texts and your project theme in general. Your reading log is a way for you to record your thoughts as you read for later use.

Below are some suggestions for how to write entries in your reading log:

1. Talk to someone else who has read this book. Compare your impressions of the characters, themes, and events.
2. Consider the characters’ choices—would you act as s/he does in the given situation?
3. Describe your impressions of a significant place or event in the book. Why is it important to understanding the text?
4. Compare and contrast the text to something you have read earlier.
5. Examine the trustworthiness of the narrator. Does the “truth” shift and change depending on different characters’ points of view?
6. Identify and describe various conflicts in the book.
7. Write about a symbol or metaphor in your book. Why do you think it is significant?
8. Analyze the significance of the book’s title.
9. Critique an aspect of the book (writing style, dialogue, character development, plot). What do you like or dislike about the book and why?
10. Describe any recurring images or motifs. What purpose do they serve in the book?
11. Describe a scene that is particularly important, interesting, confusing, exciting, heartbreaking, or joyous. Why did the scene affect you?
12. Describe what you think will happen in subsequent chapters or at the end of the book.

Reading Log is checked by teacher, then returned to you.
Your completed Honors Project should include the following:

1. Cover sheet *see page 9
2. Table of Contents
3. Cover Letter/Rationale *see page 10
4. Speaker Response
5. Completed project
   *(No binders due to lack of storage space.)*
   - Reading Log *see page 7
Each of your five portfolio pieces must be discussed in a reflection in which you explain why you chose the work(s) you have responded to and why you chose to respond in the way you did.

Your reflection could include the following:

1. Introduction

2. Why did you choose to respond to the work you selected in the way that you did?

For example, if you decided to write a radio-show version of a certain chapter/story, what was it about that chapter/story that made it a "good candidate" for this project?

OR

If you wrote a piece describing the contents of a particular character's wallet, why did you choose that character? Why would that character be a "good candidate" for this project option?

3. Analyze the content of your portfolio piece by describing the choices you made as an artist/writer and explain the reasons for those choices.

For instance, why did you choose to include certain aspects/portions of a story and not others? For visual art, explain your choice of color, detail, etc. What themes were you attempting to convey in a particular frame of your comic strip? Why did you draw a certain character in a particular fashion? What features of this character's personality were you attempting to capture?

If you rewrote a work as a poem or a song, what aspects of the story did you include and why? Did you include any symbols?

4. Reflect on the process you went through as a writer/artist. What were some of the issues you struggled with? What steps did you take to overcome the creative obstacles you faced?

5. Reflect on the strengths and weaknesses of this portfolio piece. What does this piece show about you as a writer/thinker? Include ideas about things you have learned as well as things you still need to learn.