

2021-2022

# HONORS ENGLISH 9/10

Mrs. Dekker-Black



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## Course & Program Information

**Course:** ATYP Honors English 9 & 10  
**Semester:** Fall 2021 & Spring 2022  
**Class Date/Time:** Thursday 1:20-3:50 pm  
**Location:** Microsoft Teams  
**CRN:** 41780

## Help Session Information

**Tutor:** Jake Fales (He/Him)  
**Phone:** (269) 532-6364 (text or call)  
**Email:** [Thomas.j.fales@wmich.edu](mailto:Thomas.j.fales@wmich.edu)

**Tutor:** Marlow Underwood  
**Email:** **TBA**

**Tutor:** Shoab Siddiqui  
**Email:** **TBA**



**Sunday Help Session Location:** **TBA**  
**Sunday Help Session Time:** 4:00-6:00pm

**Online Help Session:** Microsoft Teams  
**Day and Time:**

- Monday **TBA**
- Tuesday **TBA**
- Wednesday **TBA**

*Help session will run every week unless otherwise noted by the ATYP office. (Refer to the weekly emails from the office).*

## ATYP Contact Information

**ATYP Office:** 2206 Ellsworth Hall  
**Phone:** (269)387-3553 (calls only)  
**Email:** [atyp-info@wmich.edu](mailto:atyp-info@wmich.edu)  
**Facebook Page:** [www.facebook.com/ATYPWMU](https://www.facebook.com/ATYPWMU)  
**Website:** [www.wmich.edu/precollege/atyp](http://www.wmich.edu/precollege/atyp)

ATYP Director: Dr. Kelly Schultz (She/Her)  
**Email:** [Kelly.schultz@wmich.edu](mailto:Kelly.schultz@wmich.edu)

ATYP Coordinator: Ms. Nan Janecke (She/Her)  
**Office Hour Link:** <https://wmich.webex.com/meet/nan.janecke>  
**Email:** [Nan.janecke@wmich.edu](mailto:Nan.janecke@wmich.edu)

ATYP English Coordinator: Ms. Becky Cooper (She/Her)  
**Email:** [becky.cooper@wmich.edu](mailto:becky.cooper@wmich.edu)



## Instructor Contact Information

**Name:** Kailyn J. Dekker-Black (She/Her)  
**Preferred Name:** Ms. D-B or Ms. Dekker-Black  
**Email:** [Kailyn.j.dekker@wmich.edu](mailto:Kailyn.j.dekker@wmich.edu)  
**Phone:** (269) 779-1045 (text or call)  
**Address:** 7075 Country Ridge Dr. H3  
 Kalamazoo, MI 49009



About Ms. D-B

I was born in Holland, Michigan and spent my childhood pretending to be a mermaid in Lake Michigan, stealing blueberries from my neighbor's farm, and exploring the Terabithian woods around my Obaasan's house. I studied chemical technology at KVCC and biomedical sciences at WMU before finding a home in the English department/field.

Ten of my favorite things: 1.) my family 2.) dinosaurs 3.) mythology and mythical creatures 4.) fantasy (genre) movie, tv shows, and literature 5.) microscopy 6.) video games 7.) rich conversations 8.) colors: purple and green 9.) car rides 10.) food: konoge and sweet potato sushi

Qualifications: [www.linkedin.com/in/kailyndb](https://www.linkedin.com/in/kailyndb)

The purpose of this course is to prepare you for college writing and to think analytically, creatively, and independently. This class fosters a workshop atmosphere with feedback from your peers that makes our class special in that *your* writing will be a major portion of the text. Class activities will focus not only upon reading but also on the process of writing: planning, drafting, and editing. Your papers will see several stages: initial discovery draft, rough draft critiqued by peers, and a polished (publishable) draft. (This is not a class where you write a piece at the computer and turn that version in with no review.) The portfolio will showcase the best of your work and the drafts that were needed to reach that level. The only way to become a better writer is to write and to develop critical reading skills. As I become familiar with your writing, we will also focus upon individual goals for you.

During the **first half of the year**, students will work on several formal essays: narration, description, process analysis, exemplification, cause and effect, comparison/contrast, definition, argumentation, and researched argumentation. Students will study and respond to several literary essays from various authors, among them, E. B. White and Jamaica Kincaid. Students will also read short stories such as Vonnegut's "Harrison Bergeron." Public speaking components will reflect our reading. Special attention will be paid to the study and understanding of logical fallacies. Students will keep a journal in which they write directed entries. We will write about and discuss aesthetics and philosophy—specifically applicable to art/artist/process. We will use a variety of different technologies including eLearning and Microsoft Suite. Critical thinking skills, time-management, interpersonal, and metacognitive skills will be stressed throughout the course.

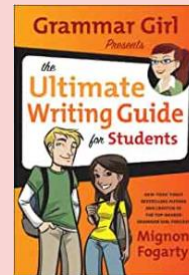
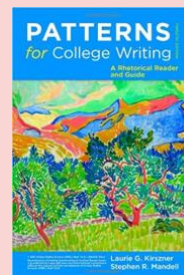
Details about second semester will be forthcoming; thank you for your patience and understanding that our schedule is subject to change.

### First Semester Books

- *Patterns for College Writing, 12<sup>th</sup> edition*. Laurie G. Kirszner and Stephen R. Mandell (ISBN-10: 0312676840; ISBN-13: 978-0312676841)
- *Grammar Girl Presents the Ultimate Writing Guide for Students* by Mignon Fogarty (ISBN-10: 0805089446; ISBN-13: 9780805089448)

### Supplies

- Computer, microphone, and web camera
- Access to phone w/camera or other type of camera
- Dependable internet connection
- WMU account to access:
  - Exchange (email server for WMU)
  - Microsoft office (Word, PowerPoint, Forms, Teams, etc.)
  - eLearning
  - GoWMU
- College ruled spiral bound notebook
- Pens (black or blue AND red, green, or purple)
- Access to a printer
- WMU ID Card
  - You will need an WMU I.D. card to borrow books and print at the libraries on campus (if/when campus is open). The Bronco Card Office is located on the main floor (room 109) of the Bernhard Center. There is a \$30 replacement fee if you lose your card. Keep it safe!



## Tentative Unit Topics

Units	Themes	Approximate Time Frame	Units	Themes	Approximate Time Frame
Unit 1	Summer Reading	~3 weeks	Unit 7	Definition	~2 weeks
Unit 2	Narration	~3 weeks	Unit 8	<i>Lord of the Flies</i>	~4 weeks
Unit 3	Description	~2 weeks	Unit 9	<i>If You Come Softly</i>	~3 weeks
Unit 4	Exemplification	~3 weeks	Unit 10	Research Essay	~4 weeks
Unit 5	Process Analysis	~3 weeks	Unit 11	Shakespeare	~4 weeks
Unit 6	Cause & Effect/Compare & Contrast	~5 weeks	Unit 12	Creative Writing	~3 weeks

### Attendance

Missing a day of class is equivalent to missing two weeks of class at your home school. If you **MUST** be absent or leave early, please notify your me as soon as you know you'll be absent so I can plan activities and groups accordingly.

You are encouraged to attend one of the other classes to make up what you missed during class.

If you are more than 5 minutes late to class, you might lose your participation points for the day.

**In-Person:** I will be in the classroom by 1:00pm. Arrive to campus early if you need to print, use the restroom, buy snacks/drinks, ask questions, return library books, etc. Class will begin at 1:20.

**Online:** Please begin logging online by 1:15 pm so we can begin class promptly at 1:20. I will try to be in Teams at 1:10 to address any questions or concerns you may be having. Plan to be present and available until 3:50 pm.

### Arrival & Departure

### In the Event of a "Snow Day"

We will have class as usual! Meet on Microsoft Teams from 1:20-3:50.

### Minors on Campus

For more information regarding Western Michigan University's policies regarding minors on campus, please visit <https://wmich.edu/policies/minors>

### Students with Disabilities & Special Needs

WMU provides academic assistance for students with disabilities, including the emotional, technical, and academic support necessary to achieve academic and personal success. Families are encouraged to tell the instructor if accommodations are needed from disability services.

Please communicate any needs or relevant medical information to me at the beginning of the school year.

### Electronics Policy

We live in the age of technology. Digital communication is expected throughout the week. (A week is a long time to go without talking with your teacher.) However, digital communication can also be a hindrance to community building. During our class time together, I ask that you only use electronic devices when absolutely necessary or when asked. We need to be physically present for one another. Ask before taking a photo or recording a video, as people value their ever-diminishing privacy.

## Code of Conduct

ATYP students are representatives of the program at their schools, at the university, and in the community. As such, they are expected to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner, particularly while on campus. Please read the following Code of Conduct carefully. The form must be read before enrolling in ATYP.

- I will not leave WMU-owned and/or controlled property unattended during the Program.
- I will consider the privacy wishes and concerns of others before using cameras, video recorders, or any type of recording device. I will not use any type of recording device in restrooms or other areas where participants may expect privacy.
- I will make every effort to be present and on time for each class.
- I will make sure I have all the appropriate materials I need and will be ready to work at the designated time.
- My homework will be complete and on time.
- All homework will be done by me, and I will utilize help that is appropriate to the assignment. I will not knowingly plagiarize material from any source, but especially not the internet.
- I will keep cell phones, tablets, and laptops put away while in class unless otherwise approved by the instructor.
- I will treat all university property with respect. I will clean up after myself and bring all trash to the receptacles outside the classroom.
- I will act appropriately and courteously at all times while on campus. I understand that University classes and business are being conducted while I am present on campus, and I will not disturb those activities.
- I will use school appropriate language and behavior as well as keeping my hands, feet, and other objects to myself. This includes walking (not running) and using an indoor voice in the hallways.
- I will address other students, instructors, and staff respectfully. I will listen with the same respect, understanding that the opinions of others are equally valid. I will offer only positive comments and avoid negative stereotypes.
- I will be tolerant of others especially where it involves race, religion, sexual orientation, disability status, gender, age, or ethnic background.
- I will follow all University, classroom, and instructor rules.

When you register you officially sign a copy of this Code of Conduct. Cases of misconduct will be reported to the ATYP office and each case will be treated on an individual basis. Serious infractions, or repeated minor infractions, may result in a student being dismissed from the program.

## Student Expectations

- Thoughtful, thorough, and timely completion of all assignments
- Organization of thoughts in writing and files on the electronic portfolio
- Close, careful reading of all the material
- Energetic participation and respectful attentiveness during class
- Conduct in keeping with university surroundings
- Articulation of ideas, beliefs, and opinions
- Respect for the ideas, beliefs, and opinions of others
- Communication
- If something is affecting your class performance, please let me know and we can work on it together. Remember that I'm here to help you—keep in touch with me about your concerns, frustrations, suggestions, struggles, ideas, and triumphs. Never hesitate to ask for help.

## Working Agreements

### Working Agreements

This list of working agreements are ways to practice being in a community of caring people with each other. We are working together during challenging times and will use class literature to delve into topics that may be uncomfortable to talk about. ATYP is a challenging environment, too, both academically and emotionally. It will put you out of your comfort zone regularly. You'll feel vulnerable with other students when you have to share your writing or participate in a class discussion where you don't know all the answers.

The following agreements have served me well not only in challenging learning spaces but in my relationships, both personal and professional. I believe these agreements will help us become a community of learners. We can discuss them in class so they make more sense, we'll leave them open to revision throughout our time together, and we'll practice them with each other.

- Take risks; lean into discomfort.
- Value the process as much as (if not more than) the outcome.
- Be both a teacher and a learner.
- Respect confidentiality: stories stay, learning leaves.
- Avoid put-downs (even humorous ones, even about yourself).
- Take space, leave space: be mindful of air time.
- Practice "oops and ouch."
- Practice self-awareness and self-care.

## Online Learning Expectations

During class, students should locate themselves in an area free of distraction and, if at all possible, other people. You should feel comfortable speaking up in discussion without the sideway stares of Water Street customers or the side pokes from your family members or friends at school. This is our time, and while 2.5 hours seems like a long time right now, when we become comfortable with each other, you'll frequently scratch your head and wonder where the time went.

Please do not record or take pictures of our class without asking.

## ATYP Policies, Tips, and Strategies

I refer you to the standard *Rules and Responsibilities* memo that was mailed to you. Please familiarize yourself with the following ATYP articles as needed:

- "Avoiding Digital Distractions" (<https://wmich.edu/precollege/atyp/about/digitaldistractions>)
- "Homework Tips" (<https://wmich.edu/precollege/atyp/about/homeworktips>)
- "Rules and Responsibilities" (<https://wmich.edu/precollege/atyp/about/rules>)
- "Survival Tips" (<https://wmich.edu/precollege/atyp/about/tips>)
- "Time Management Strategies" (<https://wmich.edu/precollege/atyp/about/timemanagement>)
- "Safety Policies and Procedures" (<https://wmich.edu/precollege/atyp/safety>)

## Electronic Portfolio

Instead of physical binders and writing portfolios, students will organize their coursework in WMU's OneDrive (visit [www.office.com](http://www.office.com) and sign in with your WMU email address). All assignments, revisions, previously graded papers with teacher, tutor and/or peer comments, and other class materials should be kept in your WMU OneDrive

To successfully maintain an electronic portfolio, students will use consistent **file names**. The preferred file naming structure follows this model:

- Student's Name- Week # - Assignment Type- Draft #
- Example: Molly Parker- Week 2- WW - Draft 1

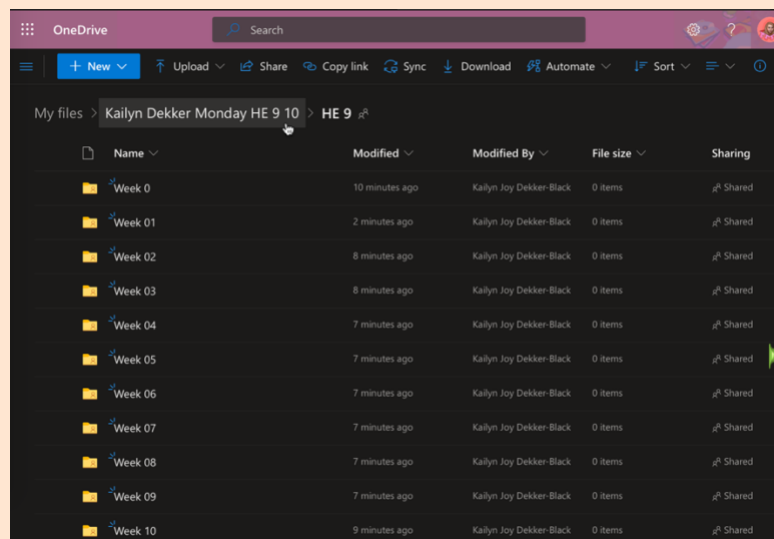


If students name files and organize their electronic portfolio carefully, the instructor should be able to see every assignment and every draft of each assignment in chronological order. Thoughtful organization will make your instructor (and you!) very happy :)

*In addition to storing assignments in OneDrive, students are expected to upload all assignments to eLearning on their respective due dates*

### How to Create a Shared OneDrive Folder with your Instructor:

1. Sign into Office with your WMU username followed by “@wmich.edu”. Your password is the same as the one you use to sign into your WMU account. *You might be redirected to a WMU login page where you'll have to log in with your WMU username and password.*
2. In the upper left hand corner, select the 3x3 dot grid to expand the application menu. Select OneDrive (app with the blue cloud).
3. Create a new folder and change the file name to **Your Full Name day we meet for class course**
  - a. Example: Molly Parker Tuesday HE 9 10
4. Hover over that new file until you see 3 dots pop up. Select the button with three dots and select “Share”. Type or copy and paste my wmich email address into this pop up window. (Make sure you give me access to edit your folder--pencil icon.)
5. Click into that main folder and create two additional folders titled “HE 9” and “HE 10”
6. Click into HE 9 and add folders “Week 0” through “Week 15” (for now)
  - a. Add a zero before single digit numbers so they organize by name in the correct order



Example

Do not confuse this work with your in-class writings and notes. You will receive directed journal entries that should reflect 10-15 minutes of outlining or planning, 45 minutes to 1 hour of writing, and about 5 minutes of proofreading. This goal time may take a few weeks to reach, however, outlining and brainstorming prior to writing can significantly reduce the amount of time you spend typing your paper.

### **Journal Formatting:**

- Single-spaced
- 1 full page of writing
- 12-point Times New Roman font
- 1-inch margins on all four sides of the document
- Proper heading
- Relevant title
- Proofread & checked for grammar issues
- Appropriate file name
- Saved as a .doc or .docx file

### **Writing Assignment Formatting Tutorial:**

<https://youtu.be/mGMTkLVlhWI>

Weekly Writings should reflect a total of 2-4 hours of planning, writing, and proofreading. Again, this goal time may take a few weeks to reach, however, outline and brainstorming prior to writing can significantly reduce the amount of time you spend typing your paper.

### **Weekly Writing Formatting:**

- 1.5 spacing
- 2-3 full pages
- 12-point Times New Roman font
- 1-inch margins on all four sides of the document
- Proper heading & header
- Relevant title
- Proofread & checked for grammar issues
- Appropriate file name
- Saved as a .doc or .docx file



# The Writing Assignments

## Essays

At the conclusion of most units, you will submit a formal essay related to the technique or topic studied in that unit. These essays will be longer and more polished than the weekly writings and journals. All essays will be revised. Depending on the nature of the essay, plan on 4-7 hours of work.

### **Essay Format:**

- Double spaced
- Length varies (read the instructions thoroughly for specific requirements)
- 12-point Times New Roman font
- 1-inch margins on all four sides
- Proper heading & header
- Relevant title
- Appropriate file name
- Proofread & checked for grammar issues
- Saved as a .doc or .docx file



## Journal, Weekly Writing, and Essay Revisions

As a rule of thumb, if your writing assignment (journal, weekly writing, or essay) is green in the gradebook, you do not need to revise. You will be permitted to revise your paper up to two times for a better grade. You will save each draft of your paper with a different draft number in the file name.

### Revision Protocol:

1. Make a copy of your previous draft.
2. Name this file with the new draft #.
3. When you make a change, highlight it so the grader can easily spot your new work.
  - a. If you remove work or fix something that is difficult to highlight, leave your grader a highlighted footnote or a message at the end of your document explaining the change.

Each new draft will have a different color of highlighting to indicate the most recent changes. Please leave previous highlighting. If your paper goes through several revisions, your final one will be colorful!

- Draft 2 (revisions made on your first draft): yellow highlight
- Draft 3 (revisions made on your second draft): green highlight

### Example:

File Name: Maggie Parker- Week 7 Essay - Draft 3

Text Sample:

Eighty-seven years ago our forefathers brought forth, on this continent, a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the idea that all humans are created equal. Now we are engaged in a great civil

After first drafts of a specific assignment have been graded, you will have 2-4 additional week to elevate your grade before the assignment closes. After the revision period ends, the assignment dropbox on eLearning will be locked and no further submissions will be permitted. This revision period will allow students to revise up to the third draft if revisions are completed weekly. Late work and waiting to complete revisions will hinder your ability to revise to the third draft stage and may negatively affect your final assignment grade. In short, work on your revisions *every week!*

Revisions are relatively simple. I find it helpful to simply do revisions as soon as they come in. -M.B.

Revisions are imperative to getting a good grade in ATYP. You should spend at least an hour (maybe more, maybe less) per week on revisions. It is important that they are high quality as well. More revisions=better grades. -G.D.

If the instructor gives you a list of things to revise, follow the list and you should be good in 15-30 minutes depending on the paper. -P.S.

Try to address all the comments if possible, and make sure to highlight as you do. You should be spending twenty minutes on journals, thirty to forty minutes on Weekly Writings, and up to about an hour on essays. Try to complete any available and necessary revisions every week because if you don't, you lose another week of grade change. -M.G.

This is your willingness to:

- take part in-class activities (on camera/ use of microphone during online classes)
- respond to emails promptly
  - Some email responses may be graded. Check your email every day and be sure to follow directions.
- keep notes during class and while reading
  - You may be asked to submit reading and/or lecture notes throughout the semester. I would prefer that these are typed; however, legible handwriting and book annotations may be acceptable.
- keep your files organized in your ePortfolio
  - Your ePortfolio may be graded throughout the semester. Make sure that you are keeping it up to date before class every week.
- use of appropriate file names
- help others and be a kind team member
- arrive to class on time
- come prepared for class
- work with classmates outside of class (virtually or in-person) for group projects
- meet deadlines for assignments
- seek help when struggling
- adhere to the ATYP code of conduct
- ...and basically, contribute to the community of the class.

### Participation (Engagement) & Professionalism:

Participation & professionalism assignments cannot be made up and late work will not be accepted. However, a large chunk of these assignments will be completed during class. Be present.



### Late Writing Assignments

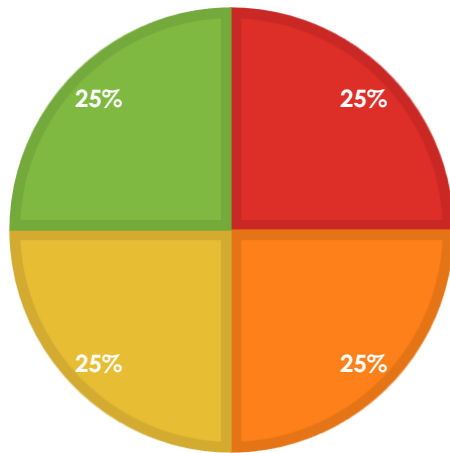
If you miss the first draft deadline of a writing assignment, your final grade for that assignment will be reduced one grade (example: Check Plus to a Check). You may not see this change in the gradebook immediately.

Unless your grade is in the green zone (A, BA, B, Plus, or Check Plus) you are responsible for revising the paper using the comments left for you to guide your changes. If you have not revised your paper to the green zone by the revision deadline, you will be stuck with the most recent grade for that assignment (plus the late first draft deduction if applicable).

The homework sheets should allow you enough time to plan around events, sports, chores, other course work, etc.; but, if you feel there are extenuating circumstances preventing you from completing your work on time, we can have a private conversation about this. Do your best to contact me **before** missing any deadlines/due dates.

## Tentative Grade Distribution

- Journals
- Weekly Writings
- Essays
- Participation & Professionalism



0.1% - 62.9%	Not Yet/ Incomplete
63% - 72.9%	Check Minus ( √- )
73% - 82.9%	Check ( √ )
83% - 92.9%	Check Plus( √+ )
93% - 100%	Plus ( + )

Writing Assignment Grade Breakdown

## Final Grade Breakdown



Grades are viewed by the instructor as a means of **motivating** and **challenging** students as well as an indication of mastery. At any given time, your grade is a snapshot of where you are at that moment. However, our class is graded based on your progress from the first draft to the final draft. You almost always have the chance to revise, often multiple times, to improve. To be clear: your grade is in flux until the final evaluation at the end of each semester.

Our University grading system does not allow plus and minus grades. Letter grades are: A, BA, B, CB, C, DC, D, E. We request that home schools “err on the side of generosity” when calculating grade point averages. So, a “BA” should translate to your report card as a “A-“.

0.1% - 62.9%	E
63% - 66.9%	D
67% - 72.9%	DC
73% - 76.9%	C
77% - 82.9%	CB
83% - 86.9%	B
87% - 92.9%	BA
93% - 100%	A

## Orange & Red Grades

If a student’s overall grade falls into the orange zone (at or below a ‘DC’/72.9%) around or after midterm during HE 9 and/or HE 10, the student will be required to seek extra help every week until their grade reaches a ‘C’/73%. Weekly help may consist of several different activities such as: attending help session, working with one of the English tutors, working with a private tutor, or meeting with me or an ATYP staff member for academic coaching.

*Students are encouraged to take advantage of these services and opportunities regardless of their current grade in the course.*

If a student’s overall grade falls into the red zone (62.9% and below) around or after midterm during HE 9 and/or HE 10, a placement conference or similar discussion will be scheduled with the student and the student’s guardian(s) to discuss placement in the program.

## Due Dates & Sample HE Schedule for Thursday's Class

Day of the Week	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>Sample Weekly Schedule*</b>	Outline Essay  Write Journal  Attend Help Session	Spellcheck, proofread, and polish the Journal  Outline Weekly Writing  Write first half of essay	Write Weekly Writing  Write second half of Essay	Spellcheck, proofread, and polish the Weekly Writing  Spellcheck, proofread, and polish the Essay  Work on revisions	Update ePortfolio  Read and take reading notes	Read and take reading notes  Work on revisions	Outline Journal
<b>Fixed due dates and deadlines</b>	Help Session 4-6pm (in-person? Online?)**	Help Session Time? (online?)**  Journals due at 10pm	Help Session Time? (online?)**	Help Session Time? (online?)**  Essays due at 10pm  Weekly Writings due at 10pm  Revisions due at 10pm  Writing Assignment Checklist due at 10pm	Update ePortfolio before class  Help Session Check due by 1pm  Class  Regular class P&P assignments due  Office Hours with Ms. Nan 4:30-5:00pm		

\*Make sure you consider your other obligations, including time for rest and relaxation. If you plan your week out, you can schedule a few days off every week!

Regardless of the time listed on the dropbox, assignment are always due by 10pm (exceptions help session check (1:00pm), ePortfolio update (1:00pm), and regular class P&P assignments (may vary –instructions will be given during class).

## Help Session & Extra Credit

\*\*Help sessions (or other help—see previous page's 'Orange & Red Grades' section) are only required if your grade is below a 73% by the beginning of class. You will need to complete a Help Session Check (template on eLearning) and upload it to the appropriate dropbox before class (1:00pm) that week. If you attend help session with a green or yellow grade and thoughtfully complete the Help Session Check by 1:00 on the day of class, I will add 0.25% to your final grade for every Help Session Check (1 per week) completed-- up to 3%.

Extra credit opportunities might arise throughout the semester. While I value and appreciate all the work you do, do not count on extra credit to give you a significant grade boost. Extra credit will not exceed 7%. Most extra credit papers and events are worth (up to) 1%.

## Pep Talk

We expect a lot from our students, but you're here because your adults believe you can do this, and your academic achievement has shown that you are ready for this challenge. Please let me know whenever you feel overwhelmed. This class is meant to be challenging, but not crushing! Along with your parents, you have a support system in the tutors, the ATYP staff, and me.

Keep in mind, I can only help you if you let me know that you need help. SMART students will attend tutoring/ help sessions with our tutors (who are amazing!), email or text when confused, ask/email questions, take risks, and stay on top of homework. Seriously, it isn't a bother. If I didn't want you to contact me, you wouldn't have my cell phone number or email! I will do my best to respond within two business days.

This class, I hope, will be like nothing you've experienced before. It will be tough, but manageable. The discussions we have will brighten your soul - seriously, we don't deal with some of the shenanigans that you've experienced with classmates who just don't "get it." There will be times when you leave class invigorated, and there will be times when you just want to quit. Both are okay. (But, give it six weeks and TALK TO ME before you consider dropping.)

The best learning happens when you are in what educators refer to as a "moderate state of challenge." My guess is that you've rarely experienced that in school. The tough part is that it doesn't always feel comfortable when you are challenged. In fact, I'd argue that the best things I've learned have been when I'm fairly UNcomfortable. Think about this class like learning how to walk. You're going to fall down. Occasionally you're going to hurt yourself. But, I promise to be your biggest cheerleader when you succeed. And, though I won't kiss your boo-boo's, I will listen to you vent frustration and help scrape you back together.

I am looking forward to working with each of you. Your classmates and I want your input and insight. Be sure to ask questions and contribute to class discussions and *listen* to your classmates, your instructor, and yourself. Think about what others are saying when they review your work so that you can consider the counsel of others along with your own. And lastly, take some **risks**. Try new ways of approaching assignments. Explore. You will very likely surprise yourself. Good luck!