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| **Mr. Paluczak** |
| Current Issues Syllabus   Fall 2019 |
| Incarnate Word Academy |

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***The Importance of History in our own Lives***

*There are myriad reasons why you should stay informed on current events and global issues impacting the world we live in today including being part of the global community, building informed opinions, improving your reading and writing skills, enhancing your employment opportunities, learning about new cultures and preparing for travel. Globalization is a reality! There is no choice but to be part of the world rather than stand alone. It’s more important now to “connect the dots in what’s becoming a very small world.” Gaining knowledge in world affairs and current events allows you to decide where you fall on key issues impacting your city, region and country. It also provides you the ability to influence legislators in a meaningful and thoughtful way. Margaret Mead once said, “Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it’s the only thing that ever does.” Competition from professionals in the global market-place is growing. It’s increasingly vital to set yourself apart from your peers by displaying a broad understanding of international affairs and current events. You’re likely to find people from many different countries in your home, school or work places with the influx of immigrants into the United States. By keeping up-to-date with current events, you have the opportunity to change your views on cultural stereotypes (if any) and learn about what’s happening and what matters to the international communities in your respective towns and cities. Being informed about a country before a visit can decrease unexpected “surprises” and travel mishaps (i.e. basic safety procedures.) In addition, keeping up with the news also allows you to get to know the country, people and cultures that you will encounter during your travels abroad. Finally, for students to become competent lifelong learners, they must learn how to use nonfiction materials to expand their knowledge base, solve problems and make decisions.*

***Text***

There is no required text for this course. Students will routinely consult magazines, newspapers, journals and book excerpts.

***Course Description***

Current Events is a one semester course aimed at better familiarizing students with the world around them. They will attain a greater comprehension of both national and international issues and how those issues directly impact them. Particularly, a portion of class will focus on the upcoming 2020 Presidential Election. Through readings, discussions and debates, students will learn how to craft well-reasoned opinions grounded by factual information. Ultimately, the course will better prepare students to actively participate in the democratic society in which they live.

Students are required to read, watch, and listen to different medias in order to find reliable information to create an intellectual and well informed opinion about several contemporary topics. Students will explore and analyze new subject matters, and learn to respect others’ opinions on those matters while developing their own.

***Overall Objectives***

1. Develop well-reasoned opinions grounded by factual information
2. Differentiate between fact versus opinion, multiple perspectives, and cause and effect relationships.
3. Identify bias in different medias.
4. Debate different subjects by creating logical arguments and understanding multiple points-of-view.
5. Perform research in order to write and support an original thesis.
6. Evaluate the role groups and individuals play in the development of the world.
7. Critique and/or defend political figures, media, personal opinions, etc...
8. Evaluate how continuity and change have impacted the world today.
9. Create effective techniques to express opinions (ex: posters, videos, outlines...)
10. Examine conflicts in society and evaluate techniques to address those conflicts.

***Laps***

Each Lap will be roughly a cycle in length and consist of an assortment of different activities, discussions, and open labs.

1. Politics of the USA
2. Revolution
3. Terrorism
4. Health Care
5. Student Choice

***Assessments, Scoring, and Open Labs***

**Assessment**

Each Lap will have a series of formative assessments known as learning goals. Each of the Learning Goals will have their own unique assessment. Assessments are designed for the student to show me what they have learned and how students communicate to me their knowledge of the goals. No classroom learns exactly the same way so assessments per Lap will undoubtedly vary.

Students who have achieved a satisfactory score, yet want to improve their score, must fill out the Assessment Retake Form.  Below is a copy of the Assessment Retake Form.  Assessment Retake Forms will be found in a folder by my open lab sign in sheet.  Not all retake requests may be granted.

**Scoring Breakdown**

Grades will be broken down on a points system.

* **Formative Assessment Learning Goals** consists of homework, open lab work, quizzes, and day to day activities/assignments.
* **Summative Assessment Essential Questions** consists of tests and projects.
* **Final Exam** will be worth **15%** of the total points for the semester.

**Structured Open Lab**

I reserve the right to structure any student who I believe is struggling.  This structuring could last a cycle, Lap, or longer.  The purpose of structured open lab time is for the student to get more individual assistance in the areas in which they are struggling (homework, quizzes, concepts, in class readings, etc).  This is not a tutoring session.  Students will be expected to work and put forth a solid effort while structured.  Once their grade rises or their effort increases structuring will be lifted.  This is not a punishment!  This is to aid the student. However, if you miss a structured open lab you will receive a 1-D.

**Open Lab Policies**

1. **Arrive promptly** in appropriate uniform and prepared with materials.
2. **Sign in** to every open lab and indicate what you intend to accomplish.
3. **Open lab is for learning activities, such as LAP activities, conferencing, or group projects.**
4. Work alone silently or quietly and respectfully in small groups.
5. Purses, pencil cases, book bags, or any other kind of bag must be on the floor at all times – no exceptions.
6. Open lab assignments are due on the date and time according to the Lap.  Some assignments may be handed in at 3:00, by midnight, or before break.  You never know. It really depends on our schedule.

***Expectations***

1. According to school policy, any **phones** that ring during class or open lab will be confiscated
2. No **purses or bags** will be allowed on the desk tops during class or open lab.
3. **Respect** your instructor, your fellow students, and yourself at all times
4. I expect all students to **come** **prepared** to class with their book, paper and pen/pencil every day.
5. I expect all students to **arrive promptly** to class and be ready to begin in a timely manner.
6. I expect all students to **behave** in a responsible and mature manner for the entire class period.
7. I expect all students to **participate** appropriately in class discussions.
8. I expect all students to be in **proper uniform**.
9. I expect all students to complete written assignments using **complete sentences and proper grammar**.
10. Students may be given a **required** **outside** **reading** assignment to enrich the lesson.  This will be listed in the lap where appropriate.

***Student Responsibility***

1. I emphasize **responsibility**, **maturity**, and **college preparation** skills in my class.
2. All students are given a **lap** which covers what we are doing for the entire unit.
3. **Every** Practice Assessment, quiz, Learning Goal, project, EQ, etc. is listed in the lap.
4. **Every** due date is listed in the lap.
5. There is **no excuse for not turning in assignments or being unprepared for tests, Learning Goals, or EQ projects/papers**. Time management is a very important skill and it is stressed in my class.

***Email Policy***

If you need to email me with questions, assignments, or other concerns, please note that you must use your school email account IWA is no longer communicating with outside student emails and you will not have access to your personal email accounts during the school day.  In addition, you must **check your student email account daily**. I will often send reminders, updates, or other emails with important information.  You are responsible for checking your email to receive these updates. Please make sure that your Edline account is up and running.

Additionally, it is important when emailing a teacher to note appropriate etiquette. **I MAY NOT RESPOND TO EMAILS SENT AFTER 6:00 PM, OR ON SATURDAYS.**

**Remember, you are addressing a teacher when you email and it is a great skill to learn how to write concise and professional emails.**

***Enrichment***

1. Enrichment is exactly what it sounds like, enriching your understanding and knowledge of the material covered in the Lap.
2. Enrichment is designed to further your understanding of the material and not bail you out if you are struggling in class.  **Enrichment activities will never be worth more than 5 points**.
3. Enrichment activities will vary.  On some Laps, depending on the material that we are examining, students may be required to visit certain local museum exhibits, watch educational television programs or movies, write short papers over a primary documents, etc.
4. If you are struggling in class concentrate on the assignments and not the enrichment because the assignments are worth more and are more important than the enrichment activities.
5. Enrichment will be added at the end of Lap.

***Absences***

1. If you miss classes consult your Lap for information regarding what you missed. **It is up to you, the student, to figure out what you need to get caught up.**  I will certainly help you, but you must take the responsibility in getting caught up. I will not seek you out if you missed a class or did not turn in assignment in.
2. **For all extended absences a timeline for the completion of your work will have to be agreed upon by the teacher and administration.**  Contact me if you know that you will be missing school or my class for more than three days.
3. While you were absent, if an assignment has been turned in, **you must turn it in the next calendar day**.
4. Write “**Absent**” on all work

***Mr. Paluczak***

***Fall Semester 2019***

[***mpaluczak@iwacademy.org***](mailto:mpaluczak@iwacademy.org)

***Syllabus***

**Student Agreement**

I have read and understand the expectations Mr. Paluczak has set forth for his class.  I agree to abide by these expectations.  If I chose not to do so, I willingly accept the consequences of my decisions.

**Student Name (Printed): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Parent/Guardian Agreement**

I have read and understand the expectations set forth in Mr. Paluczak’s syllabus.  I will support my daughter in her endeavors to meet these expectations.  Likewise, I understand the consequences if she fails to meet the expectations.

**Parent/Guardian Name (Printed): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Optional:**

**Contact Information**

Parents/Guardians –

Please fill out the bottom portion of this sheet so that I know the way you prefer me to contact you.  This is not required, but it is appreciated.  I look forward to working with you to help your daughter be successful in my class.

Thank you,

Michael Paluczak

**Email Address:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**  **Phone:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**