

WRHS Core Values: Citizenship and Responsibility; Collaboration; Communication; Critical Thinking and Problem Solving; Creativity and Innovation

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Contemporary Novel & Film CPA

Fall, 2025

Course Overview: Film and literature are joined together. At their very core, they strive to communicate ideas, emotions and stories, each using its own techniques to convey those ideas. In this course, we will work together to critically read and analyze literature and film, each according to its strengths.

In this course we will explore how these two art forms are interconnected and examine how these 20th and 21st century artists (writers and directors) grapple with issues of war, alienation, isolation, race, gender, class, etc. **This is not a class where we read a book, then watch a filmed version of that book** (with potentially one exception). Instead, we will work this semester to learn how to “read” a film in an effort to better understand how the filmmakers communicate their ideas (techniques such as a shot, set design, storyboarding, lighting, etc.). Then, we’ll compare and contrast character and relationship types, use of literary and film conventions, communication of theme, and more in an effort to better understand how these media have shaped our understanding of the last hundred or so years.

“Novel” is the other half of the course title, so we will be reading, discussing and analyzing novels (as well as short stories, poems, criticism, etc.). Please keep in mind that this course is a literature class; we will be reading, working with, talking about and writing about literature throughout the entire course.

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Possible Texts:

- *All Quiet on the Western Front*, by Erich Maria Remarque
- *Winesburg, Ohio*, by Sherwood Anderson
- *The Pearl*, by John Steinbeck
- *Children of Men*, by P.D. James
- *Trouble is my Business*, by Raymond Chandler
- *The Goodbye Look* by Ross Macdonald
- *Cat's Cradle*, by Kurt Vonnegut
- *Anything for Billy* by Larry McMurtry
- *Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe

Requirements and Expectations: First and foremost, you must have an interest in literature and in film. We'll be reading challenging novels, short stories, essays & poems, and we'll be watching stimulating films that will require your full attention and fully engaged mind. This class requires you to think deeply, read and write carefully, and work in both small and large groups. **Because we watch films together in class, class attendance is required. If you miss class, you are responsible for making up work, viewing films and getting notes. If you are chronically absent, this is not the class for you.** *In most cases, I do not loan out copies of the film. You will have to make arrangements to view the film during studies and after school.*

1.) GRADES: In this class, the grade that appears on your report card is the grade you have earned through your talent and your effort. My assessment of your work is based upon criteria I will discuss with you for each assignment. I

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will provide you with rubrics for long-term projects well in advance of the due date. My approach to grades is as fair, honest, rigorous, and unbiased as possible. You are in control of your grade, you can always figure out your average, and I am available constantly to help you succeed. If you need help in any way, take the initiative to see me immediately. All assignments will be scored on a point system. Tests and papers might be worth 100 or 200 points, while smaller homework assignments could be worth as little as 5 points. To determine your average at any given moment, divide the points you have earned by the number of possible points this term. I will show you how to do this.

2.) TECHNOLOGY POLICY: The school's new universal technology

policy is as follows: Once the bell rings to begin class, all personal electronic devices (including but not limited to: cell phones, headphones/earbuds, wearable technology, etc.) must be silenced (not on vibrate) and cell phones will be put in a space provided by the classroom teacher. Headphones, earbuds, etc need to be put out of sight and not worn. Unless otherwise directed by the teacher, cell phones will remain in this predetermined area throughout the entirety of the class period. Students will not be able to take their cell phones with them if they leave class to go to the bathroom, locker, etc.

3.) HOMEWORK: Keeping up with your homework is vital to your success

in this course. You will have an assignment to complete most every night, and we will often use the assignment as the basis of the next day's activities. If your homework is completed in an excellent fashion, you will earn full credit for the assignment. If your homework is missing, you will earn a zero. Late work will be accepted for partial credit, as long as it is handed in within a reasonable timeframe and when it is still meaningful to your class experience, but I cannot

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stress enough that on-time completion of your homework will be vital to your successful participation in this course.

4.) DEADLINES: You will know the due dates of major assignments well in advance. If you are absent the day a paper or essay is due, your work should come to me via a parent, a friend or an e-mail attachment; otherwise your classmates and I may suspect you are at home completing the work. If one of these major assignments is late, I will deduct ten points per day. Tests and quizzes missed due to absence must be made up within three school days of your return. There may be times when it is possible for you to take the make up quiz/test during the class period, but the vast majority of the time you will need to make arrangements to see me before or after school. If it is impossible for you to make up the work on this timeline, please come equipped with a note from your parent or guardian.

5.) MATERIALS: In this course you will need the following supplies

- ✓ A binder/notebook/folder for handouts, notes and written work
- ✓ Your charged chromebook
- ✓ A writing utensil
- ✓ The text we are currently reading with a sturdy book cover protecting it.

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6.) **WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS:** All long-term projects shall be

typewritten. An acceptable written assignment shall abide by the rules of format and documentation outlined in the WRHS Writing Manual, which corresponds to the MLA Handbook. You can find this information on-line. For major writing assignments, all topics must be approved by me and cannot be changed without my approval. We will be working collaboratively on the writing process in this class, and all final copies of work must be handed in with all the preliminary drafts attached. Do not discard any evidence of the work put in to planning and executing any major project.

7.) **ACADEMIC HONESTY:** Any work you submit in this class from the

smallest homework assignment to the largest research project is expected to be your own. Copying the work of a peer, stealing a classmate's original idea, paraphrasing a published literary critic, buying a paper off the internet, or cheating in any other way is considered plagiarism, a violation of the rules of our student handbook. Should you choose to be academically dishonest in this class, I will contact your parents and your administrator. You will earn a zero for the assignment. In cases of cheating in which one student copies from another student, both students will be considered equally culpable of dishonesty and will receive the same punishment. (See the WRHS writing manual and the student handbook for more information on academic dishonesty and plagiarism).

8.) **ATTENDANCE:** Just a friendly reminder that you are only allowed 8

unexcused absences from this course for the year. If you are terribly ill, please stay home, recuperate, and spare the rest of us from your illness; however, no one wants to miss the brilliant contributions you have to offer for many days. Get a good night's sleep, and take good care of yourself! ☺

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9.) BEHAVIOR: How you treat each other is incredibly important to me. This

classroom is a safe place for EVERYONE, and it should be a place in which everyone is happy to come and to learn. I think it goes without saying that I expect you to respect each other, to respect me, and to respect our surroundings this semester. We are going to become a tight-knit learning community. Each member of this circle is essential, valued, and worthy of being treated with respect and kindness.

10.) **SEATING:** It is my expectation that you are in your seats unless otherwise directed.

A particular pet peeve of mine is when I see students packing up before the bell. Class is over when the bell rings, and it is distracting (and a bit rude), if you start to pack up your materials while your classmates or I am talking. If by some chance we do finish before the bell actually rings (this will be rare and avoided at all costs), please stay in your seat and **do not gather near the door.**

- **This is a NUT-FREE classroom and some students may be severely allergic, so please be aware of this during any snack time.**

LUNCH: When this class meets 5th period, we will have **SECOND** lunch.

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