

Freestyle Academy English IV

Instructor: Mr. Greco

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[Course information sheet \(CIS\)](#)

Course Summary:

English IV is a project-based Senior course that connects your reading, writing, and speaking to media projects for authentic audiences. You'll read across genres—science fiction, solarpunk, magical realism, satire, poetry, essays, and journalism—to explore ideas about storytelling, power, ethics, language, memory, freedom, truth, technology, culture, and society. You will develop your writing practice by doing the following: crafting meaningful reflections (including a college personal essay you may use in applications); practicing research methods to investigate a specific worldbuilding topic or issue of interest; collaborating on a worldbuilding story treatment, slide deck, and persuasive pitch; analyzing how comedy works rhetorically; and scripting a short work of humor or satire. Throughout the year, you'll hone your communication skills through Socratic discussions, the writing process, and presentations, aiming to think critically about complex texts and present ideas clearly, creatively, and professionally. The year culminates in a portfolio showcase tailored for a professional reviewer in a Freestyle-related field of your choice. Freestyle's integrated, technology-focused curriculum will invite you to explore how language interacts with digital media, including generative AI. An additional goal of the course is to help you become an AI-aware communicator who knows when AI can support inquiry and the creative process, how to verify outputs, and when to rely on human judgment.

Materials:

- Writer's Notebook: your preferred paper notebook and pen/pencil
- Charged laptop: your own laptop or school-issued Chromebook. Please be aware that there are no classroom laptops, so you will be without a computer if you forget to bring your own. You may not use your phone as a backup computer.

Course Texts (provided):

- *College Essay Essentials* — Ethan Sawyer
- *1984* — George Orwell
- *The Craft of Research* — Wayne C. Booth, et al.
- *Slaughterhouse-Five* — Kurt Vonnegut
- Short works from Ursula K. Le Guin, Gabriel García Márquez, Octavia Butler, Ted Chiang, Becky Chambers, Isabel J. Kim, George Saunders, David Foster Wallace
- Various poems, essays, news articles, and samples of popular humor and satire.

Projects and Outcomes:

Semester 1:

- Reflections: SFMOMA Art Curation + Personal Essay
- Worldbuilding: Poetry + Research Presentation

Semester 2:

- Worldbuilding, continued: Collaborative Story Treatment + Pitch Presentation
- Humor & Satire: Rhetorical Analysis of a Work of Humor + Performance/Recording
- Senior Showcase: Portfolio

Grading, Revision, Late Work, and Extension Policies:

- Learning experiences in this course align with the [Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts](#) (Grades 11-12) and complement your work in your CTE media classes. This course also adheres to equitable grading practices—see [Grading for Equity \(Feldman, 2018\)](#).
- Standards-based grading scheme: Each standard assessment is based on at least one defined standard and carries equal weight in the semester grade. Assignments are designed to provide you with several opportunities to show evidence of your degree of mastery for each standard assessment. While each assignment will receive a 5-point score/letter grade in Canvas, only the actual standard assessment counts for your grade. This grade reflects the strongest evidence of your performance on the given standard.
- The following evaluation scale appears in each assessment rubric and corresponds to the grading scheme for the course:

Exceeding (A+)	Proficient (A)	Meeting (B)	Approaching (C)	Emerging (D)
5	4	3	2	1

- A “O” score, or grade of F, indicates a missing assignment, or the attempt at the assignment was not complete enough for accurate assessment. The assignment may be submitted or resubmitted for assessment within the assessment period defined in Canvas and considered for the standard assessment grade. Otherwise, your grade for that particular standard will depend on other existing evidence.
- There is no late penalty for an assignment, but if an assignment is not submitted within the assessment period, it will not be considered as evidence when grades are determined.
- Homework is designed to be reasonable, meaningful, and manageable. Some units may require extended reading, research, writing, rehearsal, or fieldwork outside of class. In these cases, you are expected to estimate the time needed for these assignments and plan accordingly.

Grading Scheme:

Letter Grade	Range
A+	5 to 4.01
A	< 4.01 to 3.5
B	< 3.5 to 2.5
C	< 2.5 to 1.5
D	< 1.5 to 0.5
F	< 0.5 to 0

Phone Use, Academic Integrity, and Generative AI Policies:

- Freestyle’s Phone-free Policy prohibits access to phones during instructional time. As part of our daily routine, you will be required to place your phone in the secure locker at the beginning of each instructional session (the entire AM or PM session), where it will remain until the end of the instructional session.
- As a Freestyle student, you are subject to [MVLA’s Academic Integrity Policies](#). Cheating, plagiarism, and inappropriate use of Generative AI will not be tolerated.
- AI Policy: You’ll see an [AI Assessment Scale](#) on each assignment. I use this scale to sort common task types and make clear where AI is helpful, where it’s risky, and where it’s off-limits. We’ll discuss the scale together before you begin so you understand the strengths and limitations of AI for that specific task—and why the expectations are set the way they are. My goals with the scale are to move beyond a simple “use it/don’t use it,” to be transparent with you about what’s appropriate and useful (and why), and to design fair assessments with GenAI in mind. For each assignment, follow the stated level, ask questions if you’re unsure, and disclose your AI use (tools, prompts, and how you used the output). Work that doesn’t adhere to the designated level won’t be accepted as evidence of learning and may trigger disciplinary action under the District’s Academic Integrity Policy.