

# Syllabus for Journalism/World Literature - Mr. Scotese

## An Overview

This course combines the study of modern journalism with an examination of contemporary and historical world literature. Through a common thematic approach, the instructor hopes to make students aware of not only each genre's particular offerings, but also the ideas and other factors which bind the two components of Journalism/World Literature together. In order to acquaint students with the necessary material, the course will call on the students to widely read and to write an average of one paper per every other week.

## Course Objectives

The course objectives for this class are outlined on the last two pages of this syllabus. In addition to listing the objectives, I have also outlined how these objectives *fit in* with the objectives and goals of the state of Illinois and the Chicago Public School system. Each course objective is followed the corresponding state or city goal(s) that it fulfills.

## Homework

All students will be given an average of one hour of English homework every night. Homework will consist primarily of reading assignments and written essays, though there will be a variety of other work given as well. The amount and type of homework is designed to prepare the student for the English coursework they will encounter in college.

**In addition, all students are required to read 1 newspaper per day and to watch or listen to the first 10 minutes of a national news program.** Any major newspaper (*Tribune, Defender, Sun-Times, New York Times*, etc.) may be read for this requirement. The electronic news **must be a national news** show and does not include local programs. National news is shown on channels 2, 5, and 7 at 5:30 p.m.; Channel 11 at 6:00 p.m. The students may also watch CNN (see program listings) or CNN's Headline News (on the half-hour). The teacher also strongly recommends the radio news programs heard on **WBEZ radio (91.5) at 5,6,7,8, and 9 am or at 4,5, and 6 p.m.** Students will be frequently quizzed to evaluate their adherence to this requirement.

## Late Work

Homework is due the date it is assigned to be completed. If the instructor accepts late work for any assignment, the grade of that paper will be reduced to **65% of the grade** that would have been earned had the paper been turned in on time. For example, a paper that would have earned a 100% grade would be reduced to 65% if turned in late. An F paper of 65% would earn a 42% if turned in late. **Important note:** No late work will be accepted one week prior to teacher grade entry (the end of the quarter).

## Taking Notes

It is important to take good, thorough notes for a number of reasons:

- we do NOT remember all that we think we are going to remember.
- exams and essays require that are knowledgeable of the material covered in class.
- taking notes is a good way to rethink the material presented by the instructor.
- it forces us to summarize (and thereby understand) what is being presented.
- in college, good note-taking skills are indispensable.

**I urge parents to periodically check their child's notes taken in my class.** Getting into the habit of taking good, complete notes is essential to succeeding in this class and in college.

## Extra Credit Work

Extra credit work will be given but should not be considered make-up work. Such assignments will be open to all class members and are not intended to compensate for an individual student's low or missing scores. **Important note:** Extra credit work will be accepted only if all outstanding assignments have been turned in and the student has a passing reading quiz average.

## Test and Quizzes

Students will be regularly tested on covered material and reading assignments. There will be approximately 2-5 quizzes each week at the beginning of the class period. These quizzes will be on material the student was to have prepared (read) for that day. **Students who are late or absent for that class without an approved excuse will not be permitted to take the quiz or to make it up.** Tests will be scheduled throughout the school quarter and there will be a *final exam* for the 2nd and 4th quarters. Students who have cut for any day of the quarter will NOT be allowed to have extra credit count for that quarter.

## Grades

The following scale will be used to evaluate student work:

95 - 100	= A
85 - 94	= B
70 - 84	= C
66 - 70	= D
65 or less	= F

**Because extra-credit is offered, there is absolutely no rounding of grades; a 94.9 is a B.**

**Quarterly grades are determined solely through the evaluation of points accumulated.** Student progress and grades will be computed every 5 weeks, and failure notices may be issued at this time. Students may **at any time** make an appointment with the instructor to determine current academic progress.

The 2nd and 4th quarter grade consists of an average between the grade earned for that quarter, and the grade for the quarter that preceded it.

## Points assigned

**Current event quizzes** (based on newspaper reading) - 50 points

**Reading quizzes** - 50 - 200 points

**Tests & Exams** - 300 - 500 points

**Essays** - 400 points (unless otherwise indicated)

Points given for other assignments will vary depending on the difficulty & importance of the assignment.

## Conferences

The instructor welcomes conferences between himself, parents, and students throughout the school year.

Appointments for conferences may be made by contacting the Main Office (534-7500). As the school day now stands, 3rd period on Tuesday is set aside for parent conferences. For student conferences I am available every period of the day, except 4th when I am teaching. If students have a question about their grades, assignments or standing in the class I strongly urge them to see me. Mr. Scotese can be found in The Writing Center (currently located in the back of the Media Center) every period except 4th period.

## Absences

It is of the utmost importance that students attend class whenever it is possible that they may do so. **It is impossible to recreate the classroom experience through a copied set of notes or a made-up homework assignment.** Excessive absences (more than 3 per grading period) or tardies may result in a conference between the teacher, student, and parent. The student handbook (given to all students) details our school's attendance policy.

Students are accountable for **all** assignments given out in class. If absent, it is the student's responsibility to find out what homework, class-material, and quizzes he or she might have missed. In addition, all students are required to attain the phone number of one of their classmates so that if they are absent, they won't fall behind. A student must arrange to make up all missed tests and quizzes upon the day they return to school.

## Excused absences

Students with either a general or a reading quiz average below 70 points will not be signed out for field trips or other excused absences. Students must be signed out 24 hours in advance. This includes all sports, clubs, plays, and other extra-curricular activity.

## Tardies

A student is tardy if he/she **enters** the classroom after the tardy bell sounds. A student with an unexcused tardy is **not** permitted to take that day's current event quiz, for other quizzes the student will be penalized 20 points. In addition, tardies, after the first one, will result in detentions; Saturday school; and in & out-of-school detentions.

## Cuts

If a student cuts my class (incurs an unexcused absence) the following consequence will occur:

No work will be accepted that was due the day of the cut.

No quizzes or tests for that day will be allowed to be made up.

The student will not be allowed to turn in extra credit for that quarter.

The first cut will result in a call home, the second (and further) will result in a parental conference.

If you are absent, you may NOT come to school or attend a school related or sponsored activity such as a field trip or concert or take part in a sporting or academic event. You will be considered truant.

## Classroom Materials

### Textbooks

Our textbooks for this year are *Press Time*, 4th ed., and *Themes in World Literature*. Textbooks are school property and are expected to be returned in the same condition in which they were issued. All textbooks must be covered within one week of being issued.

### Other Books

In addition to the textbook, students are required to obtain the following novels:

*Othello*, William Shakespeare (New Folger Ed.)/ *Candide*, Voltaire

*All Quiet On the Western Front*, Enrique Remarque/ *In Our Time*, Ernest Hemingway

*Song of Solomon*, Toni Morrison/ and one more novel to be named later in the year.

These books listed on the previous page may be either obtained by the student from a book store (new or used), or borrowed from a library.

### Dictionary

Students are required to own a good (not miniature) paperback dictionary.

### Notebook

Students will need to obtain a good quality vinyl binder (at least 1", though I suggest 1 1/2") to keep their corrected essays, notes, and other materials in.

### **Other materials**

Students are expected to bring a pen, loose-leaf paper, and their appropriate text to class every day.

### **Class behavior**

Students are expected to act decorously and respectfully (with regard to both their classmates and their teacher). Any excessively inappropriate behavior will be brought to the attention of the offending student's parents.

### **A final note**

It is not possible and perhaps it is not advisable to attempt to cover every objective and guideline that a teacher has set for his class. Unforeseen situations and the inherent nature of individuality demands adaptable teaching. This course seeks to develop some of those same flexible capabilities in its students. I dearly hope to impart a knowledge of the English language which endures. To paraphrase an ancient Chinese proverb:

Tell me something and I will quickly forget it.  
Show me what it is and I will remember it a little longer.  
Teach me so that I can do it myself.  
Then, and only then, I will remember it for the rest of my life.

**Please sign, date, and return the section below by Monday -- October 1, 1995**

### **Student and Parent Acknowledgment**

I have carefully read the above objectives and guidelines and fully understand what is expected of me in this course. I am aware that my child is required to watch national news & read a newspaper every day in addition to his/her regular assignments.

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Parent (Guardian) Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_