

**MVLA
2025-26
COURSE INFORMATION SHEET**

Course Title: Philosophy in Literature

School: Mountain View High School

UC/CSU requirement: Yes, “b”

Textbook and/or other learning resources: “This I Believe” essays; excerpts from: *Sophie’s World*, *The HarperCollins Dictionary of Philosophy*, and *From Archetype to Zeitgeist*; full texts including *The Little Prince*, *The Stranger*, and *Siddhartha*; a variety of articles, excerpts from original documents, films, TED talks, and research documents

Student Learning Outcomes:

Philosophy in Literature is a college-preparatory senior English class in which we study the development and ideas of Philosophy through analysis of literature. Through a sequence of rigorous instructional units, students in this course develop advanced proficiencies in argument, informative/explanatory and narrative reading, writing and speaking and listening. All students complete a Senior Thesis that involves in-depth inquiry and college-level research skills. In-class discussions to develop skills in Socratic discussion and collaborative learning are an essential component of the class.

Course Outline/Units of Study/[CTE Industry Standards](#)(If applicable to your course):

Unit 1: Introduction to Course & Personal Beliefs

Unit 2: What is Philosophy?

Unit 3: Happiness & Comparative Philosophies

Unit 3 Part 1: *The Little Prince* and Romanticism

Unit 3 Part 2: *The Stranger* and Existentialism

Unit 4: Ethics

Unit 5: Senior Thesis Research Project and Paper

Unit 6: *Siddhartha* and The Heroic Journey

Unit 7: Final Project-Students reflect, analyze, synthesize and articulate the value of their learning in the course.

Assessment and Grading ([BP 5121](#) / [AR 5121](#)): To ensure that every student has an equal opportunity to demonstrate learning, the course instructors implement aligned grading practices and common assessments with the same frequency.

1. Grading categories and their percentage weights:

Semester grades will be determined from assessments of a student’s ability to demonstrate proficiency in achieving the course standards. Those standards and the weight of each in the calculation of the final semester grade are as follows:

Semester One:

- Reading & Research = 30%
- Listening & Speaking = 30%
- Writing & Language = 40%

Semester Two:

- Senior Thesis Reading & Research = 15%
- Senior Thesis Listening & Speaking = 15%
- Senior Thesis Writing & Language = 20%
- Reading & Research other than senior thesis = 15%
- Listening & Speaking other than senior thesis = 15%
- Writing & Language other than senior thesis = 20%

2. Achievement evidence collected within each grading category:

The following Common Core standards will be addressed and assessed in this course:

- **Reading & Research standards**—through wide and deep reading of literature and nonfiction, students gain a reservoir of literary and cultural knowledge, references and images; the ability to evaluate intricate arguments and the capacity to surmount the challenges posed by complex texts

- **Writing & Language**—for students, writing is a key means for asserting and defending claims, showing what they know about a subject and conveying what they have experienced, imagined, thought and felt. To be college and career-ready writers, students take task, purpose and audience into consideration
- **Listening & Speaking**—students must be able to contribute appropriately in a variety of structured conversations built around important content. High school graduates will depend heavily on their ability to listen attentively, to build on others’ ideas, and to express their own clearly and persuasively.

3. Grading scales:

Letter Grade	Proficiency Level	Letter Grade Equivalent	or	Narrative Grading Equivalent
A	Advanced	89.5- 100		3.5-4.0
B	Proficient	80- 89.49		2.5-3.49
C	Approaching	70- 70.49		1.5-2.49
D	Beginning	60- 69.99		0.5-1.49
F	Emerging	50- 59.99		0-0.49
	Missing	Incomplete		Incomplete

4. Homework/outside of class practices ([AR 6154](#)):

Homework will follow our district homework policy for college preparatory classes. Students in Philosophy in Literature can expect an average of 30 minutes of homework three times each week. Independent research time varies during the Senior Thesis unit. Students are expected to participate in class by bringing completed work each day, joining in discussions and completing in-class assignments. Students must be prepared, and collaborate in class activities.

5. Excused absence make up practices ([Education Code 48205\(b\)](#)):

This is an in-person class and attendance is essential for progress. Lessons, activities, and assessments canNOT be replicated by posting material online. When absent, it is the students’ responsibility to review any materials posted online and check in with their teacher the day they return - to get clarification. Students will be given the same number of days as the excused absence to complete and submit missing work. It is the students’ responsibility to meet this deadline.

6. Academic integrity violation practices ([LAHS Academic Integrity Policy](#) / [MVHS Academic Integrity Policy](#)):

Students are expected to follow our district’s academic integrity policy for all assignments which means submitting work that includes only original ideas written in their own words. Students will not cheat, lie, plagiarize or commit other acts of academic dishonesty. **This includes using artificial intelligence to generate writing and submitting it as original work. Chat GPT, Co-Pilot, Grammarly, and other artificial intelligence tools are strictly prohibited unless the instructor explicitly permits their use and how to document/cite what is artificially generated and what is original work.** Other examples of cheating include: resubmitting work completed for another class or previous English class for a current assignment, copying another’s work or turning in someone else’s ideas as his or her own, collaboration with others when students are expected to complete an assignment independently, copying homework, allowing someone else to copy your work, plagiarism, copying or allowing others to copy from another’s exam, improperly obtaining and/or using tests, questions, or answer keys, using unauthorized notes/materials from the internet or other electronic equipment (e.g. calculators, cell phones, etc.). Students will submit work to Turnitin.com to confirm originality. Maintaining academic integrity is especially vital for process essays. Violations will be addressed in accordance with the MVHS Academic Integrity Policy.

7. Late work practices:

The course is carefully planned and paced to allow students opportunities to develop the skills assessed. Late work negatively impacts a student's ability to participate in these carefully planned lessons, activities and revision opportunities.

- a. **Prearranged absences:** Students are expected to communicate upcoming absences with the teacher. Students missing class due to a school-approved activity are expected to submit all work prior to the absence.
- b. **Unexcused absences:** The deadlines for submitting work must be followed. Late work will not be accepted for unexcused absences.
- c. **Excused absences:** Please see #5

8. Revision practices:

Because making and correcting mistakes is a valuable part of the learning process, practice and revision designed to develop student proficiency is built into the pacing of the unit. Students should revise during the writing process--not after. This prepares students for the demands of college-level reading and writing. Please see your instructor for extra support and help *before* the assignment is due. There are no revisions after assessments are submitted.

9. Extra credit practices:

There are no opportunities for extra credit in this class.

10. Additional grading practices:

Senior Thesis Policy for All 12th MVHS English Courses

In support of our school's vision valuing "the intellectual, emotional, and physical well-being of our community" and "empowering lifelong learners who can ... participate ethically at MVHS and in our greater democratic society," the English Department has updated the Senior Thesis policy as follows for all 12th English courses.

Deadline

- All senior thesis units for all senior classes including AP Literature, Philosophy of Literature, and Literature, Culture, and Society will conclude by **Friday, April 3, 2026 at 3:45 pm**.
- No work related to this project will be accepted past this deadline. This deadline represents extra time built into course calendars to accommodate all student needs.
- **Friday, April 3, 2026 at 3:45 pm represents the final deadline by which a student may submit any work connected to Senior Thesis.**

Scope

- This deadline applies to students with 504's and IEP's as official Senior Thesis deadlines may occur prior to Friday, April 3, 2026 for each course.
- Links, documents, paper copies of any kind related to this project will not be accepted past this deadline.

Evaluation Criteria and Grading Policy

- All senior instructors will evaluate a student's research and argument skills based on the body of work submitted prior to this date according to the English Language Arts Common State Standards for Grades 11-12 for Reading, Research, and Argumentation.
- If a student fails to submit work by this deadline or if a link or document is not accessible past this deadline even if work is completed, etc., student skill will be assessed based on what is already submitted and available to the instructor.
- If a student has not submitted any evidence of the unit's skills by Friday, April 3 at 3:45 pm, students will receive an alternate opportunity to demonstrate the unit's focus skills. Students will be given a timed argument performance task to be completed on an assigned date.

- All senior courses are set up such that a student may still pass and receive course credit even if students do not submit any official work for senior thesis. This grading principle also applies to any work that has been plagiarized and discovered past this deadline.

Academic Integrity Policy

- All students are expected to follow our school's Academic Integrity policy for all parts of this project. Students are to follow the class rules on the use of any and all study aids including any Artificial Intelligence tools such as ChatGPT, Co-Pilot, Grammarly, and other generative AI. Failure to adhere to all the rules set by the instructor and the guidelines for a given assignment will be considered as academic integrity violation and will result in disciplinary consequences ([see MVHS Parent/Student Handbook Page 25](#)).
- Academic integrity violations on Senior Thesis are considered a Category B offense if this is a first time offense. If this is a second or multiple offense, it will be considered a Category C offense ([see MVHS Parent/Student Handbook Page 25](#)).
- See below for additional information about Artificial Intelligence.

11. LMS Used: Google Classroom or Canvas

Instructors' email addresses:

Jeanette Craff: Jeanette.craff@mvla.net
 Kristen Drolshagen: kristen.drolshagen@mvla.net
 Lisa Gallo: lisa.gallo@mvla.net
 Persephone Hintlian persephone.hintlian@mvla.net
 Guadalupe Medina: guadalupe.medina@mvla.net

Additional information:

Since the senior year leads chronologically to students' beginning of independence and responsibility for the direction of their lives, we encourage students to practice self advocacy and strong communication skills in this class. To that end, emails about absences, questions, concerns and challenges should come from students rather than parents. We hope parents will partner with us to help teach students these skills so they may thrive in the world outside of high school.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE:

1. Originality: Produce original work. AI should not write or generate content for you.
2. Prohibited use of AI for content generation: The use of any AI tools, including but not limited to AI chatbots and large language models (such as ChatGPT, Claude, Grammarly, or similar tools), to generate content, complete assignments, or produce any part of your work is strictly prohibited. This includes using AI to write essays, solve problems, or generate ideas. Using AI-generated content and presenting it as your own is a form of plagiarism. These tools should not be used as a substitute for your own thinking, writing, or problem-solving.
3. Restricted AI use for editing: The use of AI writing assistants like Grammarly AI for generating or extensively editing content is not permitted. Content creation and significant rewrites should be your own work.
4. Show your work: For all assignments, you must demonstrate your thought process and work progression. Credit will only be given when work is shown.

5. Process documentation: Maintain a visible work history in Google Docs or other approved platforms for all assignments.

6. All students will submit work to Turnitin.com, a district-approved tool, to help instructors determine originality of writing.

Turnitin.com's [end-user license agreement](#) states:

- The score and/or feedback received through [Turnitin.com] should be considered as one piece of evidence about a student's writing ability. When a score is being used for an important decision about a student's performance, instructors should review and evaluate the score and/or feedback to ensure the appropriate decision about placement, performance and plagiarism. [Instructors] will agree to exercise independent professional judgment in, and to assume sole and exclusive responsibility for, determining the actual existence of plagiarism in a submitted paper with the acknowledgement and understanding that the Originality Reports are only tools for detecting textual similarities between compared works and do not determine conclusively the existence of plagiarism, which determination is a matter of professional judgment of the Instructor and Institution.
- The final decision on whether any misconduct has occurred rests with the reviewer/instructor. Instructors should use the originality index and Artificial Intelligence percentage as a means to start a formative conversation with their student and/or use it to examine the submitted assignment in greater detail according to their school's policies.

7. If the instructor announces an **explicit exception** to the AI policy for a specific assignment that has been designed with AI use in mind, be sure to follow the guidelines of:

- **Transparency:** Be open about any AI or technology tools used in your work.
- **Cite AI assistance:** If AI tools are used for any part of your work, cite them appropriately.

MLA Citation Format: ChatGPT. "Title of Conversation." OpenAI Conversations, Date of Access, [Insert URL of this conversation].

Model:

ChatGPT. "Three Specific Suggestions to Strengthen and Improve Personal Narrative Writing." OpenAI Conversations, 28 Aug. 2023, <https://chat.openai.com/c/50427ccc-13df-401f-af99-02b91c65f370> .

8. Learning focus: Use technology to enhance your learning, not replace it.

9. In-class integrity: During in-class assignments, only use approved tools and resources. You may only use AI when your teacher specifically mentions you may do so.

10. Second language translation: When working on assignments in a language other than English, the use of AI translation tools (such as Google Translate, DeepL, or similar) for translating entire sentences or paragraphs is not permitted. These tools should only be used for individual words or short phrases to aid in vocabulary comprehension. The goal is to

develop your language skills, not rely on AI for translation. If you need assistance, consult your teacher or use approved language learning resources.

11. Ask when unsure: If you're not certain about the appropriate use of AI or technology for an assignment, ask for clarification.