***World Religions and Philosophy***

Flagstaff Arts & Leadership Academy

2017 – 2018 Couse Syllabus

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**Course Scope:**

The purpose of this course is to explore the major religions and philosophies that have shaped culture, societies and the globalization process over the past 3 thousand years. This course will address the fundamentals of these major belief systems, as well as the innate curiosity and desire for meaning and purpose experienced universally by the human species. This class will be discussion based, focused primarily upon the analysis of the following: Socio-political effects of religions and philosophy, moral and religious absolutism vs. relativism, and the effects of science on spirituality in the modern world.

**Course Academic Goals:**

This course will aim to give students a comprehensive understanding of the World’s major religions and philosophies, which have shaped modern societies and cultures. This understanding will be approached both through studying specific religious doctrine of the worlds major faiths, and through a broader study of the utility and effects of religion across time and space. In the second semester, we will focus on non-deistic philosophy and alternative moral structures to dogmatic religion. This course will serve to give students a fuller perspective on the roots of the current human condition, as well as encourage students to examine themselves and the world around them in a more critical manner.

**Course Character Goals:**

Throughout the duration of this course, our classroom community will be approaching a wide breadth of topics, of which, there may be differences of opinion, and some heated debate. Students are expected at all times to maintain respect for fellow students and their opinions, as well as maintaining the FALA standards of behavior outlined in the student handbook. Our classroom should be a secure, tolerant, and encouraging environment for all students. In order to maintain this, all students will be expected to speak in turn, refrain from holding side conversations, maintain a constructive attitude toward the learning process, and follow directions promptly. Other class guidelines will be selected by the classroom as a whole to better your learning environment as the group sees fit. We will focus in this course on developing FALA’s habit of 1) The Common Good, by creating a safe, welcoming learning community in our classroom; 2) Connection and Collaboration through approaching a wide array of beliefs and practices across time and space and identifying their underlying patterns which connect to events and conditions in modern society 5) Critical Inquiry by approaching new ideas and our own previously held beliefs and perspectives with healthy skepticism, an open-mind, and an analytical approach to new material.

**Textbooks:**

Philosophy: The Basics By: Nigel Warburton

World Religions By: Michael D. Coogan

**Student Supplies:**

Students are expected to maintain the following supplies:

Writing Utensils

Notebook or Binder dedicated to this course

Philosophy: The Basics By: Nigel Warburton

**Attendance/Tardy Policy:**

**See Student Handbook PG 16 – 22 for more detailed information including but not limited to, Loss of Credit, Performance attendance expectations, absences and tardiness.**

**FALA Attendance and Tardy Policy**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Short-term consequences**  **(Quarterly)** | **Long-term consequences**  **(Per Semester)** |
| **FALA Excused Absences** | None | None |
| **Excused Absences** | No initial consequences | **5 cumulative absences** (excused or unexcused) in any given class  - Warning Letter & Counselor meeting  **8 cumulative absences** (excused or unexcused) in any given class  - Warning Letter & must attend tutoring if grades are affected. |
| **Unexcused Absences** | Detention, in-school suspension | **10 cumulative absences** (excused or unexcused) in any given class  - Warning Letter & Parent/Dean Meeting  **11 cumulative absences** (excused or unexcused) in any given class  - loss of credit |
| **FALA Excused Tardiness** | None | None |
| **Excused Tardiness** | 1st and 2nd tardy: Warning  3rd tardy: Letter sent home  4th tardy: Lunch Detention & Parent Notification  5th tardy: Lunch Detention & Parent Meeting  6th tardy: Lunch Detention  7th tardy: Suspension (in-school)  8th tardy: Considered Habitually Tardy. Further  disciplinary action. | Potential loss of credit due to inadequate Instructional seat minutes  according to the State of Arizona. |
| **Unexcused Tardiness** |  |

**Grading Points and Scale:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Letter Grade** | **Numerical Average** | **Grade Point Value** |
| A+ | 99-100 | 4.0 |
| A | 93-98 | 4.0 |
| A- | 90-92 | 3.67 |
| B+ | 87-89 | 3.33 |
| B | 83-86 | 3.0 |
| B- | 80-82 | 2.67 |
| C+ | 77-79 | 2.33 |
| C | 73-76 | 2.0 |
| C- | 70-72 | 1.67 |
| D+ | 67-69 | 1.33 |
| D | 63-66 | 1.00 |
| D- | 60-62 | 0.67 |
| F | Less than 60 | 0.0 |

**Description of Grading Practices:**

**Examples of Formal and Informal Assessments**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Formal Assessment – 60% or more** | **Informal Assessments – 40% or less** |
| Final exams and midterms  Standards-based tests and quizzes  Culminating projects  Essays (all types)  Lab reports  Presentations  Performances  Other demonstrations of proficiency | Small projects (formative)  Practice tests/quizzes  Checking for understanding activities  Homework  Drafts  Practice work  Classwork  Student involvement/participation  Class activities  Journals  Warm-ups |

\*Semester grades will be weighted evenly (50/50). Final exam and/or benchmarks will be included in the formal assessments category.

**Participation Criteria:**

Your in-class participation in discussions, active listening, and group work is pivotal to your success in our classroom. This class is an elective and as such will not be homework intensive. Your grade, therefore, will be highly affected by active participation or the lack thereof.

In class discussions will be a major part of this class. Be prepared each class with a list of at least 3 questions, and 3 comments on the material in readings or the previous class. This will help you to not feel nervous participating, and will give you time to really consider the material and take away meaningful information and experiences from each class.

**Make-up Work Policy:**

Unexcused Absence- No Makeup work accepted

**If you have an Excused or FALA Excused Absence it is your responsibility to get the makeup work from me on your first day back to class.** You will then have till the following class period (a total of 2 class periods after the absence) to submit make up work for full credit.

**Redo’s/Retakes Policy:**

* Formal Assessments: Retakes must be arranged within one week of having received your grade for a formal assignment. In order to arrange a retake, you must first set up a time to meet with me and discuss your assignment. You will then be given a due date/ retake appointment within that week timeframe. The retake assignment or test WILL differ from the original. If you miss your retake deadline, no retake will be accepted. There will be no extension of retake deadlines. **Exceptions: If your formal assignment is initially late, you lose your opportunity for a retake.**
* Informal Assessments: No Retakes

**Social Studies Department Late Work Policies:**

**Any assignment that is not submitted at the start of class as a hard copy is considered late.**

Informal Assignments: No late work will be accepted.

Formal Assignments: You may submit a Formal assignment up to 1 week late. 10 percentage points will be deducted for each day late **INCLUDING WEEKEND DAYS AND DAYS WE DO NOT HAVE CLASS.** That means you will have to email or drop off your assignment in hard copy form over the weekend or on a day we don’t have class in order to stop late points from being deducted.

**Extra Credit:**

None.

**Cell phones:** Cellphones are a very powerful tool. However, they are also a huge distraction in the classroom, which both hurts student performance and limits the discussion, and engagement, which is necessary to a successful, and engaging social studies classroom. Furthermore, when up to 50% of teens feel “addicted to their phone” (see CNN article below) it is hard to get students off their device. I hope to balance between phones as a tool and phones as a distraction with the following policy

* Students may have their phones out for the first five minutes of class until I finish going over assignment due date. This is so you can take down due dates in your phone, check my website or your grade, and is you absolutely must text your parents or friends do it now. At the end of the five minute period, your phone must be inside of your backpack, completely out of view.
* If I see your phone at any point during the rest of the class period, I will confiscate it. It does not matter if it is simply sitting on the desk or in your lap, it may not be visible during class.
* At my discretion during group work or independent work, I may allow you to retrieve your phones. Please be respectful of your peers and stay engaged . I reserve the right to ask you to store your phone if you abuse this privilege.
* For more information on this issue I encourage you to read the following:
  + <http://www.cnn.com/2016/05/03/health/teens-cell-phone-addiction-parents/>

<http://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2016/04/do-smartphones-have-a-place-in-the-classroom/480231/?utm_source=SFFB>