**Curriculum**

**Advanced Placement English Literature and Composition**

**Course Overview**

This course is designed for Senior students of superior ability who wish to take the AP Examination in English Literature and Composition. As in the English 12 course, students study the key British and World Literature writers, but in greater depth. They meticulously explore major concepts and themes associated with an individual’s role in society. They are grounded in the specific skills required for the AP examination, particularly through writing short, analytical essays of poetry, prose, and drama. Strong emphasis is placed on careful and close reading. Students are expected to conduct research, compile assiduous notes, establish their own points of view, and explore the parallels between the literature and their own lives.

**Department Standards**

Students will:  
1. develop critical thinking skills that will encourage them to make connections between literature and both their own lives and other academic disciplines;  
2. develop an appreciation for literature through the comprehension and analysis of various genres;  
3. communicate their understanding and ideas effectively in a variety of written forms;  
4. articulate organized ideas through a variety of oral activities;  
5. expand and strengthen their vocabularies to enhance their ability to understand and communicate;  
6. and learn and apply the standard conventions of the English language in both speaking and writing.

**Benchmarks**:

1 Students will appreciate the evolution of literary motives, motifs, and styles through the close analysis of poetry, epic poetry, short stories, novel, and plays.

1 Students will examine the chronological development of literary themes and movements of British literary works as they reflect the cultural issues, language, and values of the era in which they were composed.

1 Students will respond to British literary works in ways that challenge them to explicate the stylistic conventions and deeper meanings of the texts.

1 Students will interpret texts rigorously using the skills of close reading to identify literary and rhetorical devices writers use to create meaning.

3, 4 Students will write coherent, effective essays that analyze the style and content of literary and other texts under specific time constraints.

1, 3 Students will express – in both written and oral form – reflective and debatable arguments by using evidence from works of literary merit.

2 Students will refine active reading skills to identify, integrate, and interpret relevant textual and episodic evidence.

2, 3 Students will research and respond to contemporary critical analyses of texts and negotiate arguments from secondary sources in their own interpretations.

3, 4 Students will continue to incorporate sophisticated diction and syntax to create a unique voice with which to express themselves precisely and concisely.

5 Students will expand and strengthen their use and understanding of an increasingly varied vocabulary that enhances the ability to communicate meaning effectively in multiple contexts.

**Performance Indicators**

- students will identify and analyze local literary devices in terms of how they create global meaning

- students will develop, justify, and support debatable theses using a judiciously chosen range of textual evidence

- students will demonstrate knowledge of denotative and connotative meanings of new words and use them appropriately (throughout the year)

- students will follow the rules of MLA grammar and utilize a variety of sentence structures (throughout the year)

- students will situate a character within the larger conflicts of the play as well as universal themes

- students will use their understanding of plot to support, oppose, or qualify a given argument

- students will use literary techniques to convey meaning

- students will analyze rhetorical strategies in a persuasive essay

- students will demonstrate cumulative understanding of course skills and content in a timed examination

- students will compare writers’ varying perspectives on common themes

- students will situate and analyze fictional texts within their cultural and historic contexts

- students will research a critical trend as it applies to a text and synthesize the material in written and oral forms

- students will examine how genre shapes literature and how literature expands generic boundaries

- students will situate and analyze fictional texts within their cultural and historic contexts

- students will develop critical analyses of prose and poetry

- students will demonstrate interpretive and analytical reading abilities as well as powers of written expression in both internally and externally assessed exams

- students will synthesize and evaluate cumulative information learned and skills developed over the course of the year

**Assessments**

-Formalist analysis and persuasive essays related to themes and social contexts of texts

- Written contextualization and explication of short passages (*Beowulf*)

- Research essay involving new historicist approach to cultural contexts of Shakespeare

- Short writing assignments exploring technical and mechanical aspects of persuasive writing and abductive reasoning

- Close reading critical essay exploring the shifting connotation of language in Milton's Paradise Lost through a feminist critical perspective

- Close reading critical essay exploring the dynamic and didactic balance of heterodoxy and orthodoxy in understanding religious and scientific perspectives in Milton's Paradise Lost

- Research essay and presentation exploring the historical and critical contexts of Romantic poetry as related to particular author or school of thought

- Presentation of characters, tales, and cultural background in *Canterbury Tales*

- Major Works Data Sheets for all major texts as means of developing and deepening fuller understandings of each text useful for exam preparation.

- written work reflecting grammatical accuracy and variety (throughout the year)

- Creative satirical essay

- Metaphysical poetry project

- semester examination covering all of the literature studied in the First Semester

- timed comparative essay on Romantic concepts of the sublime

- bibliographic essay and presentation of an important trend in critical analyses as it pertains to a Victorian novel

- objective test covering literary terms (techniques, devices, genres, periods)

- timed argumentative essay on literary responses to Modernity

- Mock AP Exam

- Actual AP Exam

- Final cumulative project (synthesis, reflection, and evaluation of AP Literature)

**Core Topics**

- the Romantic / Gothic novel

- Jacobean Tragedy

- the Anglo-Saxon epic tradition

- the development of literary epic

- grammar / writing skills (throughout the year)

- Elizabethan Comedy

- literary epic

- Metaphysical conceits

- Enlightenment satire and rhetoric

- Romantic poetry

- Victorian Bildungsroman and poetry

- Significant 21st century literary theory

- Modernist poetry and short prose

- Modernist / post colonial novel

- Post Modern Novel

**Specific Content**

**Semester 1: “Monsters and Man”**

- How Stoker represents a myriad of social fears in Dracula

- Syncretic collisions of culture and time in Beowulf

- *Othello*: Stereotypes, and the Monsters Within

- *Restoration London*: Social Contexts for Milton’s Paradise Lost

- Milton’s ‘Hell Within:’ Sin, Satan, and the Human Condition

- Romantic Poetry: Monsters and Creation, Light and Inspiration

- Mary Shelley: Monstrous Birth: Feminist perspectives and gender reversals

- Monstrous Sexuality: Christina Rossetti & Goblin Market

- Psychological Monsters: Freud and *Heart of Darkness*

**Semester 2: “The Individual in Society”**

- Monstrous Perception & Social Norms: Heathcliff in *Wuthering Heights*

*-* Modernity & Social Class in Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales*

*-* Metaphysical Poetry: Making Public Private Desires

- The Outsider’s Journey In: Lost Drops of Water in *Comedy of Errors*

- Satire: Rhetoric and Social Progress of the English Enlightenment

**-** Romantic Irony, Point of View, and Understanding the “Other”: Austen & *Pride & Prejudice*

- Victorian Poetry: Tempered Romanticism & Social Progress

- The Project of Modernity: Joyce, Eliot, Woolf, Auden, Lawrence, Beckett

-Post-Modernism & Contemporary Fiction: Atwood, Mitchell,

**Resources**

2015-2016 Summer Reading: *Dracula* and *Cloud Atlas*

*Beowulf*

Selections from Shakespeare’s Sonnets

*Othello*

Selections from Metaphysical, Cavalier and Restoration Poetry

Selections from *Pepys’ Diary*

Selections from *Diary of A Plague Year*

Selections from *Poems 1645*

*Paradise Lost*

Romantic Poetry

*Frankenstein*

*Goblin Market*

*Heart of Darkness*

Contemporary monster films

*Wuthering Heights*

Selections from *The Canterbury Tales*

*Comedy of Errors*

Enlightenment essays (Satire)

*Pride & Prejudice*

Modernist poetry and short prose

Selections from *Dubliners*

*Cloud Atlas*

*Postmodern Poetry, Essays, Short Stories*