

## Expectations for AP Students

As an AP student, you have self-selected a course taught at the college level. This means that you are going to be doing work of a type and amount comparable to a freshman-level literature survey course. As you begin this course, please keep the following expectations in mind.

- 1. Keep an open mind** – Many of the texts we will study deal with strong themes. I am having you read literature from a wide selection of themes, some of which are controversial; I am treating you the same as I would college freshmen. You are not required to agree with everything you read. Remember the words of Robert Frost. “Education is the ability to listen to almost anything without losing your temper or your self-confidence.”
- 2. Complete work on time, every time**—I do not allow “late” work, nor do I offer a reduced grade for late assignments. Everything that is not turned in at the appropriate time receives a zero. You can submit a formal request to me **IN WRITING one time** per semester for an extension. This must be requested in advance BEFORE the due date. Keep in mind that college professors and instructors do not consider taking late work, EVER. It’s my job to prepare you for that world.
- 3. Be responsible** –This includes making sure you get the requisite books for in-class study before you need them, making sure you do all make-up work promptly, and making sure you are keeping up with long-range project goals and assignments.
- 4. Show maturity** –This includes leaving behind juvenile, disruptive, and disrespectful behavior, as well as being tolerant of ideas and beliefs different from your own. As seniors, you are at the jumping-off point for the adult world, and I expect you to behave as educated adults.
- 5. Leave your attitude at the door** –Your attitude can set the tone for an entire class. Choose to come to class each day and look for something new you can use, even if the work at hand is not your personal favorite. No matter what you may think of your classmates, the content of this class, or me, personally, you will show respect at all times. Remember that you signed up for this course, and do not sigh, roll your eyes, groan, or otherwise gripe when assignments are given. The assignment won’t go away, but my good humor probably will.
- 6. Prepare adequately** –Make sure you spend a proper amount of time with the assigned out of class reading and writing. Some works we will study are quite challenging and may require you to read them more than once. Failure to prepare will cause your grade to drop. Trust me.
- 7. Understand that while academically advanced students typically gravitate toward AP courses, the College Board does not require prerequisites to take any AP course.** This means that while you may be a highly advanced student, every other student in the course

is not necessarily at the same level: some may have less refined skills, while others may possess academic prowess that exceeds your own. Depending on the range of learners in our specific class, we may occasionally slow down or take more time to learn a concept or understand a challenging text. Everyone can learn from this process, and it is critical that you respect the different learners in our environment, even if you already understand something we're covering.

**8. It is important to realize I am your resource for success.** Just because this is an AP course does not mean I expect you to have all the answers and succeed without guidance or extra help. I am here to work with you one-on-one as much as needed to help you become a stronger thinker and writer. As long as you are working hard and putting forth your best effort, I will be pleased and will be available for endless help. This is one benefit of taking this college course now versus next year in actual college.

**9. Be prepared for constructive criticism** –My purpose in this class is not to stroke your ego. If you are here, you know you are likely already a skilled writer and a critical thinker, as well as an adept reader. My purpose is to sharpen and refine those skills. Be prepared to receive grades with less than a perfect score, extensive comments on your writing, and challenges to your ideas in discussion. Do not take this as a personal attack. Use this as a chance to grow.

Following these nine suggestions can help all of us have a productive and pleasant year. I have the highest of expectations for my AP students, and I know that you will live up to them. I look forward to a challenging and fun year. We will work hard, but we will also laugh a lot, and it will be worth it. With your full efforts, you will come away from the course a stronger reader, writer, and thinker, ready for what college has to offer AND the college credits you'll likely earn will allow you to skip the intro composition and literature courses required at colleges and universities.