

Syllabus for English IV Honors Fall 2025

Mr. Robles

Introduction:

This is the final English course before graduation. The purpose of this course is to model and prepare students for after high school careers and activities. For many, this means a transition for students to be responsible for their academic well-being. This course will ask students to learn not only the usual skills in a literature class (such as reading skills, analytical thinking, grammar, etc.), but also to learn skills that are necessary for success in future endeavors in adult life. These skills include public speaking, task completion, etiquette for varying situations, working within a group, and arguably the most important--communication. Please note that this is the initial syllabus for the course. I will give as much notice as possible on any major changes.

This is an honors class, and as such, students will be expected to handle a more rigorous pace and more in-depth assignments. This class will have more of a focus on literary analysis and collegiate level discussion. Outside reading and/or writing will be common. There will also be long term projects that students will have to keep up with. Do your best to not fall behind on reading and work.

Pacing for the semester:

Below is the planned pacing guide for this year. In this guide, "I can" statements are included to show you what you will be expected to be able to do in each unit. Please note that the first half of the semester is to prepare for the second half. The second half of the semester is focused on transitioning students from high school expectations to those expectations held at the collegiate level.

Disclaimer I am including the same pacing guide that I have used for this course normally. I feel it is imperative to be as explicit as possible, especially towards the beginning of the year. This is the plan that has worked for many years. I hope to be able to stay with it as much as I can, but please be expecting and understanding of necessary changes as we navigate through the semester.

Unit 1: European Literature: Middle Ages

- Beowulf and the Canterbury Tales – Excerpt from CT for common formative assessment
- I can analyze how medieval literature exhibits many tendencies rather than a single set of characteristics.
- I can note the literary elements (e.g., allegory, farce, satire, and foil) in medieval literary works and identify characteristics of medieval literary forms.
- I can explain how literary elements contribute to meaning and author intention.
- I can explain how medieval literary and artistic forms reflect the writers' and artists' philosophical views.
- I can examine the literary, social, and religious satire in Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales*.
- I can explain the role of the framed narrative in Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales*, Dante's *Inferno*, and other works.
- I can compare works of medieval literature and art, particularly their depiction of character and their focus on the otherworldly.

Unit 2: European Literature: Renaissance and Reformation

- Ben Jonson, John Donne, Sonnets, Informational Text – Meditation 17

- I can read novels, literary nonfiction, stories, plays, and poetry from the Renaissance era, observing the continuity from the Middle Ages as well as the departures.
- I can identify and investigate allusions to classical literature in Renaissance texts.
- I can explain how a concept such as symmetry or divine proportion is expressed both in literature and in art.
- I can analyze Renaissance conceptions of beauty and their literary manifestations.
- I can describe how Renaissance writers took interest in human life and the individual person.
- I can analyze the playful, satirical, irreverent aspects of Renaissance literature—in particular, the writing of Rabelais, Boccaccio, and Shakespeare.
- I can explain how literary forms and devices reflect the author's philosophical, aesthetic, or religious views.
- I can write an essay in which they (a) compare a literary work with a work of art; (b) compare a Renaissance work with a medieval work; or (c) relate a literary work to a philosophical work.

Unit 3: European Literature: Seventeenth Century

- Shakespeare: Macbeth, Much Ado About Nothing, Othello

- I can read literary and philosophical works from the seventeenth century, with particular attention to questions of reason and emotion.
- I can explain the idea of reading literature as a quest—for truth, for beauty, and for understanding.
- I can analyze two philosophical works of the seventeenth century for their treatment of an idea related to human reason.
- I can write literary and philosophical analyses with a focus on clarity and precision of expression.
- I can conduct research, online and in libraries, on a particular seventeenth-century author, work, or idea.
- I can analyze the relationship between reason and emotion as illustrated in literature of the seventeenth century.
- I can explain the use of satire as a technique to reveal authorial intent.

Mini Unit Non-fiction: European Literature: Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Century

- Jonathan Swift, Periodic Historical Documentation, Romantic Style Poets

- I can read fiction, drama, poetry, biography, and autobiography from the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.
- I can consider the relationship between art and nature in these works.
- I can observe narrative digressions, idiosyncrasies, exaggerations, and biases.
- I can consider the dual role of the narrator as a character and as a storyteller.
- I can consider the role of the supernatural in the literary works read in this unit.
- I can write a story in which they practice some of the narrative devices they have observed in this unit.
- I can explore and analyze some of the philosophical ideas in the literary texts—questions of free will, fate, human conflict, and loss.
- I can consider the difference between natural and forced language, as explained by Wordsworth.
- I can consider both the common tendencies of works of this period and the contradictions, exceptions, and outliers.
- I can participate in a seminar discussion in which a philosophical question is explored in relation to a specific text.

Unit 4: European Literature: Nineteenth Century

- Romanticism and Victorian poetry, short works, non-fiction, and novel

- I can explain the tension between art for art's sake and art as a response to social and cultural conflict, as expressed in the works of this unit.
- I can closely analyze a key passage from a novel and comment on how it illuminates the work as whole.
- I can contrast two works by a single author.
- I can observe common tendencies, contradictions, outliers, and subtleties of the romantic and Victorian periods in literature.

- I can contrast the moral conflicts of characters in two works of this unit.
- I can consider how the poetry of this period reflects both on the human psyche and on the state of civilization.
- I can analyze how the forms of the poems in this unit contribute to their meanings.
- I can explain how the works of this period show signs of early modernism.
- I can identify elements of romanticism and gothic romanticism in works of literature.

Unit 5: European Literature: Twentieth Century

• Novel – Huxley, Orwell Periodic Historical Informational Works

- I can read works of the twentieth century, focusing on the earlier decades.
- I can consider aspects of modernism (such as anxiety) in their historical context.
- I can explain both the breakdown and affirmation of form and meaning in modernist literature.
- I can analyze dystopian literature, considering the problems inherent in fashioning a perfect person or society.
- I can explain how poems in this unit reflect on poetry itself and its possibilities.
- I can examine the implications of modern versions of classical works.
- I can identify and explain the musical allusions and their meanings in twentieth-century poetical works in seminars.
- I can pursue focused questions in depth over the course of one or two class sessions.
- I can explain absurdist and existential philosophy as it applies to literature and theater.

GRADING SCALE:

Six-weeks:

Major Grade (Tests, Projects)	60%
Minor Grade (Classwork, Homework)	40%

Final Grade:

1st Six-weeks	25%
2nd Six-weeks	25%
3rd Six-Weeks	25%
Final Exam	25%

Detailed explanation of grades:

Classwork: Normally, these will count as one Minor Grade, but may count more depending on the amount of time expected for the assignment to be completed. Most of these assignments will include questions, quick evaluations, worksheets, short writings, and other short assignments.

Homework: Normally, these will count as one Minor Grade, but may count more depending on the amount of time expected or importance of the assignment. Most of the time for this class, homework will actually be classwork that has been given the night to finish if needed.

Projects: These are major grades that are extended assignments that will be worked on over a period of time. These will often be considered a part of the assessment of the unit involved. Projects will focus on the ability of students to create a product of some sort to show how they understand the selections covered.

Tests: These are major grades that will assess student knowledge in various forms. The most common forms will be multiple choice, short answer, and essay.

Prerequisite Reading Tests: These will count as $\frac{1}{4}$ of a major grade and only done in the first grading period of a semester.

Socratic Seminars: Seminars can count as a minor or major grade depending on the purpose of the seminar. The type of grade will be designated prior to the day of the seminar. While not everyone is as comfortable talking in front of others, discussion is an important element of a collegiate class. For the first seminar of the year, a minimum grade of a 70 will be given for no participation but active listening with no distractions. After the first seminar, students will need to turn in a written commentary on the subject of the seminar prior to the beginning of the discussion to get the minimum of a 70, otherwise no participation will result in a 0. More details on this will be given in class as needed.

Concerning Work on Google Docs or other Google Apps: It is expected that students turn in the document that they have been working on throughout the entirety of the assignment. Students should not just copy and paste from another document to turn in a “clean copy.” It is important to see all of the work that is done. When looking at the history, a lack of shown work suggests the usage of AI generated work or plagiarized work, both results in a 0 as explained in a section below. In the event that something happens that the student is unable to show this document, it is the student’s responsibility to communicate with the teacher about the situation prior to submitting the assignment. This can be done through the private comments on the assignment.

Concerning Extra Credit: There are times that extra-credit will be given on certain assignments throughout the year, but rarely will there be any extra assignments that are considered extra credit. These assignments, when offered, only amount to an extra 5-10 points on a major grade. It is important to know that the work in this class is important to the grade and students need to keep up with it throughout the year. **Requested extra credit will not be given.** I encourage students to pay attention to the “Communication” section of the syllabus if they feel concerned about this. Please know that I will make every effort to not give out “busy work” due to the busy nature of everyone’s lives. The other side of this means that all assignments are important.

Make-up Work: Please know that I do not expect this class to take precedence over every part of life. There are many things that can come up throughout the year. At some point whether for a field trip, sickness, or other event, a student will miss a class. The policy set by Haywood County Schools will be followed; however, it should also be noted that this course is designed to prepare students for the rigors of college. That being said, it is an expectation that when able, students should keep up with work as they are out. If you are bed-ridden, at the hospital, or dealing with an extreme circumstance, please know there is never an expectation of doing work during these times and just communicate with me (please see the communication section below). If, however, you are at home and are otherwise able to do work, I strongly encourage you to do work while you are at home. All assignments and readings will be posted on Google Classroom, so you will always have access to what you need to make up. In the event an assignment can not be made up (because you had to be in class to do it), that assignment will have that explained with possible other ways to make it up, if there are any.

Exempt Assignments: In the event that you miss class and there is not a reasonable way to make an assignment up, you will be exempt from that assignment in most normal circumstances. If you are having a situation that results in you missing three or more classes in a row (whether from health, field trips, or personal choices) and there is not already a viable way to make it up posted, then you will need to communicate with me on a way to make up the assignment. If you are missing that much class, it is important to see that you understand what was being covered in class. The grade in this case will be a 0 unless a make-up assignment is completed following Haywood County School policy. After the time has passed, then the 0 will remain.

Concerning Work That Isn't Yours: It has gone through many formats over the years. In all regards, forms of cheating are not looked highly upon. Where in the past copying work may have been the extent of possibilities, in today's world, AI generated and/or plagiarized work has also entered as ways people turn in some work and will not be accepted. I do not go out of my way to try and find every possible use, but if something is noticeable or flagged, it will be investigated. If this work is deemed not the work of the student, it will receive a 0. I will go over what is considered plagiarism within the first week of the semester. If you either missed that explanation or feel you need a reminder as the semester progresses it is the student's responsibility to ask for clarification on what is or isn't considered plagiarism. This class has been designed to prepare students for expectations at the collegiate level. While in high school we are talking about receiving a 0, turning in plagiarized or AI generated work at college or later can lead to worse consequences that can include: being expelled from the university, loss of scholarships, academic probation/suspension, and being sued.

Expectations:

This is the last required English in high school, and as such I hope not to have to deal with bad behavior at this point. You have been in school long enough to know how they should act and when. If the hope and the goal of being finished with high school at the end of the year or at least finished with required English are not enough motivation to not get in trouble, then students will be sent to the office. There is too much to do this year trying to prepare for end-of-the-year tests and for next year than to deal with disruptions in the classroom. There is a difference between a quick remark and creating a disturbance. If further explanation is needed, feel free to contact me. Colleges and jobs don't deal with misbehavior; usually students are either kicked out of classes or employment is terminated. People are expected to come in and know how to act and what to do. For that reason, I do not feel the need to list a lot of rules except for one after the next sentence. Act in a professional manner and all is taken care of.

This is an honors class. As such, there will be reading and assignments that will require time outside of the class to finish. Ample time will be given to meet the due dates of assignments. I encourage all students to use any time available within the school day to help limit time needed outside of school to do the required work.

Cell Phone Usage: Cell phones are a distraction to the learning environment. For this class, students will be required to place their cell phones into hanging pouches when they enter the classroom. Attendance will be taken by cell phones in the appropriate location (in the event you do not have a cell phone on a day, please make sure to put a slip in place of your cell phone). Cell phones must remain in pouches throughout the class period (unless an assignment is deemed appropriate to use them as an aid) and will be allowed to retrieve them at the end of class. Cell phones may be used before and after school, during class change, and at lunch.

Food and Drink: I do not mind if you bring food or drink into the classroom as long as it is not a distraction. If you make a mess, it is your job to clean it up.

Attendance:

Below is listed the updated attendance policy as stated in the Student Handbook:

Any student absent more than six (6) days, excused or unexcused, in any class in a semester will need to follow the protocol below to ensure they do not fail due to attendance.

- Students with greater than 6 absences, but less than 10 absences will need to complete make-up time for absences 7, 8 and 9 during the attendance make-up blocks provided by the school.
- Students with 10 or more absences must make up time for absences 7, 8 and 9, and complete an appeal form to be considered by the attendance appeal committee.

Make-up sessions will be offered by the school. Make-up time for these absences shall match the missed time hour-for-hour. The principal/designee may set a new guideline if extenuating circumstances can be proven.

note: The only way to make up time for this class is through the make-up sessions. I will not be able to offer other options. This will be explained in class. Please reach out if you have any questions concerning this.

Communication:

Both students and parents are encouraged to discuss any questions, confusions, or concerns with me. If there are problems, please do not wait for months to let me know; otherwise, I can't do anything about them. With the way things are now, there are any number of reasons that may arise that would cause an issue. Please know that I do aim to work with all students to ensure they can complete this course; however, if I do not know that anything is going on, I have to assume that the reason assignments or other requirements for this course aren't done is because of choice. While I can not promise the options I give to every situation will make everyone happy, my goal is to give options that are as fair as I can make while keeping the integrity of this class as intact as possible. There are many factors that come into alternate options; some factors include: frequency of requests and amount of time between notification and due dates. You will likely have a better option when I can have as much notice as possible. I have always tried to keep the most important part of this class to be the aspect of training to maturely handle situations as an adult. The past few years have added the goal of learning to function and communicate within a stressed and conflicted world. All choices have the focus of preparing students for the world after graduation. While I do not need an email for every day a student misses, if a student going to be gone for more than two days and I know about it, I can often help give advice on what to do that is necessary to not fall behind, while being able to work out what usually is a less stressful way of making up work.

Note to parents: please know that the fastest way to get up-to-date information on how your student is doing is through Google Classroom and Powerschool. If you need help getting connected to either of those, please let me know and if I cannot help you, I will make sure to get you in touch with someone who can. Most weeks, I will have updated grades by Monday morning. With my schedule outside of school hours, I often am working either Friday afternoon or coming in on Saturday or Sunday to finalize anything for the week I was unable to get to during the week.

If you need anything please let one of us know:

Mr. Robles

rrobles@haywood.k12.nc.us