



# BELLOWS FREE ACADEMY

St. Albans, Vermont

## *English Department Course Syllabus*

**Course Name:** *American Literature and Composition*

**Course ID:** 136

**Course Credits:** 1.0 - Full year course

**Instructor:** *Riegelman, Peter*

**Year/Term:** 2019-20

**Room:** A-103

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## **Course Information**

### **Description:**

*In English 136, students study a survey of American literature. Emphasis throughout is placed on helping students to continue to develop their reading and writing skills. The major areas of concentration are the literary genres of drama, the short story, and novel; the expository essay; oral reports, and a review of grammar through writing.*

*This is a “college prep” class, and as such, there are high expectations for concentration and perseverance, real reading, and the ability to work hard to understand what we are studying.*

*There is a heavy emphasis on vocabulary acquisition in this class. This is a core aspect of improving reading comprehension.*

### **Essential Questions**

- *What is the role of the individual in creating what it means to be “American?”*
- *How can the American Dream be defined and understood through literature?*

**Prerequisites:**

*Successful credit awarded for sophomore English.*

**Course Standards:**

***Students must attain proficiency in all four of the English proficiencies (PBGRs) to have credit awarded:***

- ***Reading:*** *Students can comprehend, interpret, analyze, and evaluate a wide range and level of complex literary and informational texts.*
- ***Writing:*** *Students can produce clear and coherent writing for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.*
- ***Language:*** *Students will demonstrate the ability to apply knowledge of language when writing or speaking.*
- ***Speaking and Listening:*** *Students will initiate and participate effectively in a range of discussions and/or presentations, responding thoughtfully to diverse perspectives and expressing ideas clearly and persuasively.*

**B.F.A. English Department Philosophy:** **The English Department provides opportunities for all learners to improve their literacy skills through the study of literature.**

# Standard and Course Scoring Procedures

To calculate standard scores for a reporting period, the default method would be to average the scores within a standard. The average of the proficiency is the **lowest score** a student could receive.

If the **trend** within the standard over time shows a growth of learning not represented by the average, the teacher has the right to **increase** the final standard score, **but not decrease it**.

For example, in Standard 1, the teacher might think the final score would be better represented by a score of 3.0 and the teacher could increase it (see the highlight score).

	Assignment 1	Assignment 2	Assignment 3	Assignment 4	Average	Trend
Standard 1	2.0		3.0	3.5	2.8	3.0
2	3.0	3.5		3.0	3.2	
3	2.5	3.0	3.5	3.0	3.0	
4	2.0		4.0		3.0	
				Course Score	3.0	3.1

## Trend Scoring

- We believe students should not be penalized for struggling in the process of learning. With trend scoring, student **growth and progress** is celebrated. A student's score reflects where they are at that *point in time*, while taking into account the **growth over time as a positive factor in the student's overall score**.
- Growth over time also accounts for a student's consistency in progress toward achieving proficiency.
- It is the teacher's judgement whether or not to use a scoring average or a scoring trend.

## Transferable Skills:

- ***Self-Direction***: The ability to independently see a task through to completion, meet due dates, and come to class prepared; and can communicate with the instructor ahead of time to arrange alternate due dates for extenuating circumstances.
- ***Responsible & Involved Citizenship***: Students take responsibility for personal decisions and actions; works collaboratively with others; and uses technology and digital media responsibly.

- **Informed & Integrated Thinking:** Use evidence to justify claims and arguments.

## **Required Texts and Materials**

### **1st Semester**

***Holt McDougall Literature Anthology, C. C. Edition***

***The Crucible, by Arthur Miller***

***O Pioneers, by Willa Cather***

***The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, by Mark Twain***

### **2nd Semester**

***Death of a Salesman, by Arthur Miller***

***Big Fish***

***An Occurrence on Owl Creek Bridge***

***The Great Gatsby, by F. Scott Fitzgerald***

***other selections***

## **Assessment Policy**

### ***Assessments:***

*We will utilize a number of assessment types:*

1. **Pre-Assessments**

2. Formative Assessments

3. Unit (Summative) Assessments

These will vary, with some being objective tests, some in-class essays, and some typed, “process” essays with opportunities to revise and get peer feedback

(PAR Syllabus Eng. 136)