

DEBATE I SYLLABUS

2023-2024

R. Nassif, Instructor

Classroom: 6054

Conference Period: 1st period

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Course Description

This course serves as an introduction to the world of competitive speech and debate. Throughout this course, the student will learn the basics of various speech and debate events, develop their public speaking and argumentation skills, and discover proper research protocols, all while working in a team environment.

Organization

The course will, by necessity, have a fluid organizational structure dependent on the needs of the individual and the team as a whole at any given time. Instruction will at most times be either instructor- or peer-led, with frequent and required performative evaluations throughout. Besides argumentation and public speaking, knowledge and understanding of current events will be a focal point throughout the course as well, with weekly opportunity for students to showcase their knowledge of the world around them. Assessments will be a blend of knowledge-based tests, projects, and performances (both live in class as well as recorded).

Objectives

After successful completion of the course, the learner will:

1. Gain confidence in their public speaking abilities;
2. Understand and be able to perform proper research techniques;
3. Be able to, of their own accord, keep current on important events in their city, state, country, and world; and,
4. Compete and succeed at local, state, and national speech and debate tournaments.

Grading

Grades will be earned as follows:

- Minor (in-class participation, research checks, speech outlines, etc. – quizzes count as two minor grades): 35%
- Major: (concept tests, projects, speeches, tournament participation, etc.): 60%
- District-required Reading/Writing Component: 5%

(over)

Class Policies

- Per district policy, students have the number of days they are absent to make up their work. Also per district policy, late work will be accepted up to two days after the due date at a maximum score of 75%; any work three days or more late will receive a zero.
- **You must bring your charged laptop to class EVERY SINGLE DAY.** This is absolutely vital, as the vast majority of our work is done online!
- CLHS policy dictates that classrooms are cellphone-free zones. Students, you are expected to keep your cellphone in your pocket, backpack, purse, etc. and should not have it out without permission during class.
- Academic dishonesty can and will have grave consequences. Any instance of academic dishonesty will result in various penalties as described by the district in its Academic Honor Code. For daily assignments, this can include a zero on the assignment with no ability to retake. For major assignments, this can include a zero on the assignment with no ability to retake, reporting on your transcript for college applications, In School Suspension, and loss of exam exemptions.
- You are expected to write your assignments in your own words – assignments that are obviously generated by an AI (such as ChatGPT) will receive no credit. Failure to adhere to this expectation is considered academic dishonesty and will be treated as such.
- **Participation in a minimum of two tournaments, in addition to the CLHS-hosted tournament the first weekend of December, is a requirement of anyone taking this class.** Failure to do so will result in a zero for a major grade during the 2nd nine weeks (for the CLHS-hosted tournament) and/or 4th nine weeks grading period (for competitive tournament participation).
- There will be frequent opportunities for the student to speak in front of their classmates during the course of the year; this is not optional, but every effort will be taken to ensure the student is comfortable in this environment.
- At times, topics debated in class or at tournaments may be controversial in nature. Regardless of a student's personal beliefs or opinions, the beliefs and opinions of others should be respected in-class and out.
- Much like an athletic or fine arts class prepares students to participate in games, concerts, etc. so too does the debate class prepare students to participate in the CLHS Speech & Debate team. As such, all policies from the CLHS Speech & Debate team handbook, available online, also apply in-class where applicable.