

AVID JUNIOR/SENIOR SEMINAR COURSE OUTLINE

Department: English & Social Science

Grades: 11 & 12

Pre-requisite: Previous enrollment in AVID elective for at least one year

Co-requisite: Enrollment in at least one Honors, Advanced Placement, or International Baccalaureate course or in a college transferable course accepted by UC/CSU in both the 11th and 12th grade

CONTEXT FOR THE COURSE

AVID elective courses at all grade levels are designed to prepare students for entrance into four-year colleges and universities. The courses emphasize rhetorical reading, analytical writing, collaborative discussion strategies, tutorial inquiry study groups, preparation for college entrance and placement exams, college study skills and test taking strategies, note taking and research. AVID students, generally, come from groups underrepresented at our four-year colleges and universities. They are enrolled in a rigorous academic program while being given a support system in the AVID classes through tutorials, coaching in note taking, organization and study skills, analytical writing, collaborative work and college counseling. All AVID seniors are required to develop and present a portfolio representing their years of work in the AVID program as well as complete the requirements for the Seminar course.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The AVID Senior Seminar is a two- year interdisciplinary course for AVID juniors and seniors. The course is designed for those students who elect to take a course that prepares them for the rigor required for college work. Students will engage in higher levels of WIC-R (writing, inquiry, collaboration and reading) strategies than experienced in prior years of AVID. These higher-level thinking, reading, writing and oral language skills are needed to prepare students for the level of work required to produce a culminating research project at the end of the senior year.

This course is organized around the theme of "Leadership as a Catalyst for Change in Society". Students study, in depth, exceptional leaders in contemporary society, and examine the effect these individuals have had on culture, politics, education, history, science, and the arts. The course requires that students read essays, speeches, articles and letters by these leaders, as well as at least one full-length work by the leader or about the leader. In addition, each student is required to conduct a research project that is presented in the senior year. The project requires that students examine a particular leader's life and accomplishments in relation to the student's own possible career goals and aspirations. Among the leaders included in the course for in-depth study include: Leonard Bernstein, Dr. Jane Goodall, Dr. Stephen J. Gould, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Pablo Neruda, Eleanor Roosevelt, Dr. David Suzuki, and John Wooden. Students may select other leaders of equal stature with the approval of the AVID teacher.

The focus of the junior year is the survey of 8-10 recognized leaders from a variety of fields of study. Individually and in study teams, students will explore the historical period in which the leader lived, the social issues they addressed, and their contributions to society. Students will be expected to read and write extensively throughout the process, including participation in a variety of collaborative discussion and response groups. This preliminary research survey will culminate in an end- of -year essay in which students explain and provide evidence for choosing a particular leader to study in greater depth.

The level of reading, writing, inquiry, discussion and analysis experienced in the junior year will serve as the foundation for in depth research to be introduced and completed as a final project in the senior year.