

**MVLA**  
**2018-19**  
**COURSE INFORMATION SHEET**

**Course Title:** Philosophy in Literature

**School:** Mountain View High School

**UC/CSU requirement:** Yes, "b"

**Textbook and/or other learning resources:** "This, I Believe" excerpts, *The Little Prince*, *The Stranger*, *The Cider House Rules*, *Siddhartha*, a variety of articles, excerpts from original documents, films, TED talks

**Student Learning Outcomes:**

Philosophy in Literature is a college-preparatory senior English class in which we study the development and ideas of Philosophy through analysis of literature. Through a sequence of rigorous instructional units, students in this yearlong course develop advanced proficiencies in argument, informative/explanatory and narrative reading, writing and speaking and listening. All students complete a Senior Thesis that involves in-depth inquiry and college-level research skills. In-class discussions to develop skills in Socratic discussion and collaborative learning are an essential component of the class.

**Assessment and Grading ([BP 5121](#) / [AR 5121](#)):** To ensure that every student has an equal opportunity to demonstrate their learning, the course instructors implement aligned grading practices and common assessments with the same frequency.

1. Grading categories and their percentage weights:

Semester grades will be determined from assessments of a student's ability to demonstrate proficiency in achieving the course standards. Those standards and the weight of each in the calculation of the final semester grade are as follows:

Semester One:

- Reading & Research = 30%
- Writing & Language = 30%
- Listening & Speaking = 30%
- Work Habits = 10%

Semester Two:

- Senior Thesis Reading & Research = 15%
- Senior Thesis Writing & Language = 15%
- Senior Thesis Listening & Speaking = 15%
- Senior Thesis Work Habits = 5%
- Reading & Research other than senior thesis = 15%
- Writing & Language other than senior thesis = 15%
- Listening & Speaking other than senior thesis = 15%
- Work Habits other than senior thesis = 5%

NOTE: Completion of the senior thesis project is a graduation requirement

2. Achievement evidence collected within each grading category:

The following Common Core standards will be addressed and assessed in this course:

- **Reading & Research standards**—through wide and deep reading of literature and nonfiction, students gain a reservoir of literary and cultural knowledge, references and images; the ability to evaluate intricate arguments and the capacity to surmount the challenges posed by complex texts  
Assessed through: Research logs, portfolios, reading assessments for key texts
- **Writing & Language**—for students, writing is a key means for asserting and defending claims, showing what they know about a subject and conveying what they have experienced, imagined, thought and felt. To be college and career-ready writers, students must take task, purpose and audience into careful consideration  
Assessed through: Narrative essay (September), Research response (December), Senior thesis (February), Film analysis (April), Literary response (May), Synthesis project (June)
- **Listening & Speaking**—students must be able to contribute appropriately in a variety of structured conversations built around important content. High school graduates will depend heavily on their ability to listen attentively, to build on others' meritorious ideas while expressing their own clearly and persuasively.  
Assessed through: Presentation of narrative essay; Formal and informal groupwork throughout the year, Socratic seminars, senior thesis project presentation

### 3. Grading scales:

The following scale will be used for determining semester grades.

A- 90 to 92%	A 93 to 96%	A+ 97 to 100%
B- 80 to 82%	B 83 to 86%	B+ 87 to 89%
C- 70 to 72%	C 73 to 76%	C+ 77 to 79%
D- 60 to 62%	D 63 to 66%	D+ 67 to 69%
F 50 to 59%		

### 4. Homework/outside of class practices ([AR 6154](#)):

Students in Philosophy in Literature can expect an average of 30 minutes of homework four times each week. Independent research time varies during the Senior Thesis unit in January/February

### 5. Excused absence make up practices ([Education Code 48205\(b\)](#)):

Students in this class have access to materials on Google Classroom to help them stay current from anywhere in the world. Absent students are expected to review these materials, then see their teacher the day they return to get clarification and arrange any make-up work.

### 6. Academic integrity violation practices ([LAHS Academic Integrity Policy](#) / [MVHS Academic Integrity Policy](#)):

Students will regularly be expected to collaborate in this course to earn full listening and speaking credit through formal and informal group work. These instances of instructor-led collaboration will not be considered violations of Academic Integrity. For instances of student initiated collaboration (cheating, copying another student's work or plagiarizing), strict adherence to the school's Academic Integrity Policy will be expected.

7. Late work practices:

Turning work in on time is highly recommended as it affords time for teacher feedback and student revision of work. On-time assignments result in more learning and higher grades because students have the opportunity to practice skills and can use or expand on what is learned for homework in class. Additionally, on time work allows students to stay up to date on content that is used in class discussions. Students are permitted to turn in late work for proficiency grades, but will lose points in the “Work Habits” category of the grade.

8. Revision practices:

Because making and correcting mistakes is part of any learning process, students are encouraged to take advantage of the teacher’s revision opportunities. Students may revise assignments and assessments (except semester finals) in an attempt to achieve higher proficiency.

9. Extra credit practices:

There are no opportunities for extra credit in this class.

10. Additional grading practices:

There are no additional grading practices for this course.

**Instructors’ email addresses:**

[amy.beare@mvla.net](mailto:amy.beare@mvla.net) [carla.gomez@mvla.net](mailto:carla.gomez@mvla.net)

**Additional information:**

Since the senior year leads chronologically to students’ beginning of independence and responsibility for the direction of their lives, we encourage students to practice self advocacy and strong communication skills in this class. To that end, emails about absences, questions, concerns and challenges should come from students rather than parents. We hope parents will partner with us to help teach students these skills so they may thrive in the world outside of high school.