**Debate – Westside High School**

Syllabus

**Teacher:** Ms. Karina Barbosa

**Email:** Karina.Barbosa@houstonisd.org

**Conference Period**: 5th period on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Fridays

**Tutorials**: After school on Mondays or during lunch on Wednesdays, or by appointment.

**Course Description**

Controversial issues arise in aspects of personal, social public, and professional life in modern society. Debate and argumentation are widely used to make decisions and reduce conflict. Students who develop skills in argumentation and debate become interested in current issues, develop sound critical thinking, and sharpen communication skills. They acquire life-long skills for intelligently approaching controversial issues.

**Lesson Plans**

The weekly learning plans will be posted each week in the current module in your Debate course on Canvas. Look for the appropriate week in the “Modules” section of the Course.Your parents will be able to view the weekly learning activities and assignments only through you, so make sure you direct them to the appropriate place on Canvas.

**Classroom Materials**

You are responsible for all of your classroom materials each day. You will need to bring the following:

* Charged school-issued laptop, ID displayed on your person, and appropriate uniform attire
* Pencil or Pen (including no. 2 pencils or blue or black pens)
* Folder specifically for Debate
* Paper for taking notes (preferably in a spiral or folder)

**Classroom Procedures**

***Entering the classroom***

I will always stand at the door before every class period. I may be assisting another student or coming from another room, so I may not be at the door right away. If I am not standing at the entrance to the classroom, please wait outside the classroom. I will always check for your ID and your laptop. If you are missing either, you are not allowed in the room without the appropriate pass.

If you do not have your school-issued ID, you must get a temporary ID. If you do not have your laptop, you must have a “No Laptop” pass. Getting these passes does not excuse you from being tardy. *No matter the reason, if the bell has rung and you are not in the room, you will not be allowed in without the appropriate pass (usually a tardy pass from your house office).* Please see my ticket policy on Canvas for a possible exception.

Once in the room, copy down the agenda from the board and begin the posted “Do Now.”

***Phones and Other Electronic Devices***

Cell phones, earbuds, and headphones should always be put away during class unless you are using them to directly interact with the class (to listen to class materials or to play Kahoot, for example). If I see your cell phone (or any other unapproved device), you have the choice between two consequences:

* Have the device confiscated (to be picked up after class, after school, or from the front office on Fridays).
* Have a discipline referral written to your dean.

You may take notes on your computer if you have found that to be an effective way for you to absorb material, but most studies suggest that hand-written notes are more effective for most people to learn and retain information.

***Promotion Tickets***

I will hand out tickets for brilliant, professional, and responsible behavior. This may be class participation, asking relevant and insightful questions, being respectful toward others, or other instances of exceeding expectations. Tickets will be handed out at my discretion, and they may be spent for bonus points on assignments, to leave the room (as described below), or other rewards as I may specify from time to time.

***Bathroom procedures (leaving the room)***

* To leave the classroom, you must spend a ticket. If you do not have a ticket, you are not allowed to leave.
* If you would like to leave the room, raise your hand and ask. If I say yes, I will write you a pass, take your ticket, and then you may leave.
* You will not be allowed out of the classroom during direct instruction or during a quiz or test.
* You may ask me what you missed during independent learning time, after class, or during tutorials.

***Classroom Behavior***

My goal is always to keep the class on task. Distractions and disruptions are handled in two stages, “Management” corrections and “Discipline” corrections.

* In the “Management correction” stage, I will ask you to change your behavior. This may include one-on-one conferences, detention or mandatory tutorials, or other management techniques I deem appropriate. This level of correction is intended to be temporary, and after the distraction has been appropriately dealt with, the class can continue in a professional manner.
* If management corrections are unsuccessful, the “Discipline” stage begins, at which time I will contact your parents and/or submit a discipline referral to your dean.

**WHS Grading Policy**

Major Grade assignments will comprise 70% of the 6-weeks average, while Minor Grade assignments will comprise 30% of the average.

Only major grade assignments are eligible for a retake, and students may earn up to a 70 after a retake--scores higher than a 70 on a retaken assignment will be entered as a 70 in the gradebook.  The retake may or may not be the same as the original assessment, but will be of similar length, rigor, and content.  In order to be eligible for a retake, the student must fulfill the following requirements:

* The student must have earned lower than a 70 on the original assessment.
* The student must come to at least two tutorial sessions with me during the grading cycle, before the retake.
* The student must submit a memorandum to me briefly explaining why he or she did not perform well on the original assessment.
* The student must complete the retake within two weeks of the original grade being posted in PowerSchool.

**Cheating and Plagiarism**

Reprinted from the Westside Honor Code, found at *westsidewolves.org*:

***Penalties for Violating the WHS Honor Code:***

If a student violates the Honor Code, he/she will receive a “0” for the school work, a “U” in conduct, and disciplinary action (including loss of Off Campus and Extracurricular Activity privileges).

See the Westside Honor Code for more details on what constitutes cheating, plagiarism, and academic fraud.

**Classwork and Homework**

You can find assignments for this class on Canvas in the related module.  Work assigned in class is expected to be submitted by 11:59 p.m. on the specified due date, or by 11:59 p.m. the day the work is assigned if no due date is given.  Students may attend tutorials for extra assistance or to complete work that was not completed in class.  Time will be provided in class to complete most assignments, but any work not completed in class should be completed by the student as homework.  The specified deadline applies regardless of how much time was given in class to complete the assignment.

If you will be absent on a due date, you can still submit the assignment on Canvas or email it to me (see “Deadlines and Late Work” below).***Deadlines and Late Work***

This class is focused on preparing you for a career after school, and the late work policy is designed to reflect that. Lack of communication and late submission of assignments are unacceptable in the professional world. Therefore, the following late-work policy will govern in this class:

* Assignments submitted after their due date will receive a late penalty unless you requested an extension in writing (to the email address I have given you) a reasonable time **before** the due date, and I approved the request in writing.  **A written request does not automatically grant an extension, only a written approval from me can do that.**  To make sure that I receive your extension request, please send it from your HISD email address.  Emails from outside of the district risk being sent to my spam box.
* The late penalty for most assignments is 20 points per business day the assignment is late.  I reserve the right to reduce this penalty based on the circumstances.
* I may make exceptions due to extenuating circumstances. If I make such an exception, that exception only applies one time, to that individual assignment. You should not expect me to accept other late work without penalty.
* If seven calendar days pass after a deadline and you have not reached out to me to let me know you will be turning in the assignment late, I will not accept it at all.
* **No assignments will ever be accepted past the end of the grading cycle in which the assignment was due.**  This may mean that you have fewer than seven "late days" to turn in an assignment for partial credit for assignments due during the last week of a grading cycle.

***Absent Work***

If you are absent the day an assignment is due, the assignment is still due. Either submit the assignment electronically as usual or contact me through email or Canvas to provide evidence the assignment has been completed. If nothing is submitted, the assignment faces the same late penalties as normal, including potentially not being accepted at all. If you are absent due to circumstances that prevented you from completing the assignment, then follow the procedure for requesting an extension (see “Deadlines and Late Work” above).

If you are absent the day something is assigned, you have one week from the day you return to complete any assignments you missed. This gives you time to see all of your teachers in tutorials and catch up on any lessons and instructions you missed.

Any absences longer than one week will be handled on an individual basis.

**Syllabus Changes**

This syllabus is subject to change. When changes occur, I will advise students through Canvas, by email, or by furnishing a new paper syllabus to the student.