



August 2016

Dear Parent or Guardian:

My name is Ms. Annette Sirio, and I will be teaching your child *Research II*, a course designed to teach students strong skills in research methodology and writing for the purpose of argument. The expectation of this course, through my teaching, guidance and support, will be for students to complete an independent project that provides them the opportunity to engage in personal research on a topic of their own choice. I am honored and excited to have the opportunity to help guide your child through this important stage in their academic development which should be helpful to them in both the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme and in their future higher education pursuits. The research paper they will complete is meant to promote high-level research and writing skills, intellectual discovery and creativity. It is a 4,000 word essay that requires extensive research on the part of the student outside of class (approximately 40 hours of research is the standard expectation). As such, students will be expected to manage their time in such a way that their research for this paper is included in their daily homework routine.

Please read through the specific guidelines below to help ensure the success of your child in this class.

### **Grading Policy:**

\*I will post your student's grade (using their student id# for confidentiality) every two weeks so that there are no surprises prior to the issuance of report cards.

\*Grades follow the PPS guidelines – 0-59% E; 60-69% D; 70–79% C; 80-89% B; 90-100% A.

\*Grading Breakdown:

Participation/Notebook (Formative Assessment): 20%

**Chart Points:** Students will have the opportunity to earn **four** points each day for coming to class prepared and participating in class activities (this includes daily warm-ups and exit tickets, participation in whole and small group discussions, in-class research, cooperative group work, and taking notes). Students will **lose two points** for the following reasons: tardy/failure to complete warm-up in a timely manner, no notebook or folder, no pencil and for disrupting class. Students **lose all four points** for unexcused absences, doing work for another class, head down, off-task behavior, and/or caught with headphones in his/her ear(s). If a student has an excused absence, no chart points will be given until all of the work is made up.

Classwork (Formative Assessment): 25%

Students' work in class will be graded. This includes responses to readings, work handed in related to group and individual activities.

Writing (Formative and Summative Assessments): 20%

Students will be expected to meet deadlines related to different components of the Research Paper due in intervals throughout the semester.

Culminating Unit Assessments/Quizzes & Tests (Summative Assessments): 25%

By the end of the semester, a rough draft of the Research Paper is required.



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Homework: 10%

Homework will consist mostly of activities related to the research process such as creating a research question, the use of paraphrasing, citing sources, writing an annotated bibliography, etc.

No opportunities exist for extra credit assignments.

### Expectations and Preparedness:

- \*I expect all students to treat each other and their teacher with respect and dignity.
- \*Research Notebook: Students must have a Research-specific notebook with them EVERY day (no multi-subject notebooks).
- \*Research Folder: Students must have a Research-specific pocket folder. All handouts must be placed in this folder and be available upon request by the teacher.
- \*Flash Drive: Students must have a flash drive for saving work.
- \*Coming to Class Prepared: In addition to the Research notebook, pocket folder and flash drive, students are expected to bring a pen/pencil and a highlighter to class each day. Failure to do so will result in a loss of daily Chart Points.
- \*Warm-up: Students will be given a warm-up to do each day they enter class. The first thing a student should do upon entering my room is to get out their notebook and complete the warm-up.

### Late Work Policy:

- \* **I will not accept late essays.**
- \* Homework will be marked **5%** off for each day it is late.
- \* I will not accept any work **one** week after its due date.

As your child is in the 11<sup>th</sup> grade, it is important for them to develop the maturity necessary to communicate with their teachers to ensure their success. Students should make a concerted effort to consult with me during QRT to pursue any extra help they may need. Students AND parents are encouraged to send me an e-mail (the best way to contact me) at [asirio1@pghboe.net](mailto:asirio1@pghboe.net) with any questions or concerns. You may also call my voicemail at (412) 529-7996, and I will return your call as soon as possible.

I look forward to this challenging semester in your student's academic career.

Sincerely,

**Ms. Annette Sirio**

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_, Ms. Aisha Robinson, Director





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*Students and Parents: Please complete the following page and return it to Ms. Sirio; keep the first page of this letter for your records. Thank you.*

Dear Parents and Guardians:

Please sign to indicate you have read the above letter and the “Academic Honesty” guidelines below, and please provide contact information. Students should return this page to Ms. Sirio, as it is their first “homework” assignment of the semester. Thank you very much.

Academic Honesty:

*“The student is ultimately responsible for ensuring that his or her essay is authentic, with the work or ideas of others fully and correctly acknowledged. Additionally, it is the responsibility of a supervisor to confirm that, for each student he or she has supervised, to the best of his or her knowledge, the version of the extended essay submitted for assessment is the authentic work of the student.*

*Both plagiarism and collusion are forms of malpractice that incur a penalty. The same piece of work, or two versions of the same work, cannot be submitted to meet the requirements of both the extended essay and another assessment component of a subject contributing to the diploma or an additional certificate.” (IB Guide)*

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Contact information:

Student name, print please \_\_\_\_\_

Student signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/guardian name, print please \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/guardian signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/guardian e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number(s) {day} \_\_\_\_\_ {evening} \_\_\_\_\_





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*Return this page to Ms. Sirio. Thank you.*

