September, 2016

Dear Parent or Guardian:

My name is Mr. Pete Vitti and I will be teaching your child IBDP 12 Theory of Knowledge (ToK) this year. I am honored to have the opportunity to help guide your child through this exciting and interesting course and through the rigor of the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme. ToK is a class that asks students to answer two major questions, “What do you know?” and “How do you justify what you know?” Students are given the tools to answer these questions by exploring several ways of knowing (e.g. emotion, reason, language, etc.) and areas of knowledge (e.g. math, science, history, etc.). This is a class that requires students to be analytical thinkers and to begin questioning what they “know.” I like to call the course, “Thinking is Fun!”

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

**GRADING POLICY:**

*Students and parents are encouraged to check their grade weekly on-line or by consulting the teacher so that there are no surprises prior to the issuance of report cards.*

*Grades in ToK 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, 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, cell phone usage, 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%**

- Essays and other writing assignments will be a regular activity in this class.

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

- End-of-unit culminating projects
- Internal and External Assessments (Essays, Presentations)
- Quizzes and tests

**Homework: 10%**

- Homework will consist mostly of readings to prepare for class discussions.
- The book we use is Nicolas Alchin’s *theory of knowledge*

No opportunities exist for extra credit assignments.
IBDP Assessment Criteria:
External Assessment - ToK is a required course for Diploma Program candidates. In order to earn the diploma, you will need to write a 1200-1600 word essay on a Prescribed Title (given to us by the IBDP). I WILL NOT ACCEPT LATE ESSAYS (this refers to the final draft only).

Internal Assessment – Students must give a formal presentation which applies the ToK skills they learned in class to an analysis of a real-life situation and the problems of knowledge that arise. I will grade this presentation and then send it to the IBO for final approval. I DO NOT ALLOW LATE PRESENTATIONS TO BE GIVEN. PRESENTATIONS MUST BE GIVEN AS SCHEDULED.

Academic and Behavioral Expectations:
*I expect all students to treat each other and their teacher with respect and dignity.
*ToK Binder: Students must have a ToK binder with them every day. This must be a ToK specific binder where students must include all notes and handouts. Failure to produce this binder on a daily basis with all necessary materials will result in a loss of two chart points each day.
*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 DO NOT ACCEPT LATE ESSAYS OR PRESENTATIONS (this applies to the final draft only).
*Other class work or homework will be marked 50% off if it is handed in late. I do not accept any work two weeks after its due date.

As your child enters the 12th 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 pvitti1@pghboe.net with any questions or concerns. You can also call the school at (412) 529-6363.

Sincerely,

Mr. Pete Vitti

Approved: ________________________, Principal

Students and parents, please keep the first two pages of this letter for your records.

Please sign to indicate you have read the above letter.
Student signature_______________________________________Date______________

Parent/guardian signature____________________________________Date____________

Parent/guardian e-mail________________________________________________________

Student’s e-mail:______________________________________________________________

Phone number(s) {day}__________________________________{evening}______________________________

Comments: