

MR WOOD'S

Classroom Philosophy, Rules & Expectations 2016/17

Office Hours: I will be available Monday thru Thursday from 3:00 to 4:00 / Friday til 3:30 (in room 112) or by appointment for student or parent, for questions that might arise in course or classroom.

**The Buddha came down from the mountain,
The wise man asked, "Are you a god?"
"Are you a man?"
The Buddha said, "I am Awake."**

In the end, this is what it's all about. Are we really awake to the events of this world? Do we get it; our role in the world, out on the street with our friends, at home with our families, or sitting at these desks at Oakridge High School? Are we really awake? You and me? If we are, then the obvious next step, "Is what do we plan to do about it?" What role will we play in making this a better planet? How do we insure that we take on the responsibilities that being a citizen in the richest country on the face of the planet in the history of the world, entails. What does that mean to you and to me?

For me it means that I provide an environment in this classroom where everybody has the opportunity to succeed. I'll do my best to present a curriculum where you are inspired to seek the truth, wherever that route may lead. I will make sure that you are intellectually challenged. I intend to force you to stretch your parameters – to think past the limits of how you thought before, to foster discussion and to provide you assignments that will force you to bring your thinking, whatever the course, into the real world. I will also be available every night after school and by phone and by email, to help insure that if you really want to succeed, you have that chance.

Your responsibility also stretches beyond your individual needs. The key to learning is to question; the success of your search depends on how well you listen. For that to happen, everybody in this classroom must feel free to share his or her opinion without inhibition. However, that "freedom of expression" comes at a cost. You absolutely must respect all others' rights to think and to share whatever they feel necessary to explore the issues of the day. This kind of inquiry takes not only a value for the rigors of education, but also for one another's belief systems. Consequently, our studies will force you to roll up your sleeves and dig in, sometimes into uncharted waters. You'll have to keep an open mind and understand that our goal is not to work towards any test but to grow academically and intellectually. That takes scholarly sweat and emotional discipline. In the process, we will not waste time on drama that leads in any other direction. If you cannot adhere to guidelines that allow such learning possible, your behavior here will not be welcomed; nor will any such detrimental actions be tolerated.

Finally, each of us must take our studies outside of this classroom and carry our wakefulness into action. Because we live in a nation that has such an influence in all corners of the globe, we have a responsibility to learn all that we can about the world; an obligation to consider all options, not to merely accept a limited version of somebody else's interpretation. In this social media driven age we need to perform due diligence, to separate fact from fiction, to look hard at reality before leaping to just anybody's analysis.

Ultimately the onus is on all of us; in this nation, with free public education, you can go and be and do whatever you truly desire. Don't take that opportunity lightly. Most teens living in the world today go to bed at night hungry. Many live under the constant watch of death and disease and war. They don't have all the wonderful opportunities and great responsibilities that await you.

Welcome. Our task is vital. The possibilities are endless. And the time is certainly now.

BASIC GUIDELINES FOR ROOM 112

1 - BE PREPARED...

Course Text. Separate Spiral notebook. Writing utensil. Every single day. We will work off of chrome books a majority of the time. However your text is significant...have it with you daily. A spiral bound notebook (or three ringed binder) used only for your particular Social Studies class will help you to stay organized; it is required. Finally, I do not expect you ask to borrow anybody's pen or pencil. And I do not provide them. Personal daily preparation is a necessity to long-term success.

2 - RESPECT FOR OTHERS...

Listening is key to learning; for you and for me. I anticipate that you will conduct yourself with maturity in this classroom, that you will raise your hand before expressing yourself, and that you will focus your attention, both verbal and non verbal, on the individual who has the floor.

That means NO PHONES. That means eyes on target – ears tuned in – mind engaged.

3 – ODD's & END's THAT MATTER...

- **Dismissal** - The bell does not dismiss you. That is my job. We will work through the bell in this class...I will let you know when it is time to go.
- **Tardies / Hall Passes** – Being on time in life is significant. Your fifth tardy (and each there after per semester) will result in an office referral. You get three hall passes per semester. You must have your passbook to go...release will be at the discretion of the teacher. I do not allow you to take a tardy to go to your locker or to go to the restroom.
- **Please and Thank you** – I use both. I hope for the same from each of you. Telling anybody to “Shut up” for whatever reason is not an option.
- **Cheating** – I will not attempt to determine who copied who. If I find it happening, from paper to paper or student from Internet, any involved student will earn a zero. Parents will be informed. Office will be notified. Second time in the same course will result in a zero credit for the course.
- **Cell phones and such** – Unless requested for an assignment please leave your phone in your locker. Texting in class violates school policy and removes you from the moment. It is absolutely disrespectful to me and to your fellow classmates. If you are on your cell during class you'll receive an office referral. If you carry your cell, please set it to airplane mode. If it inadvertently rings, just turn it off...that's not a problem for me, if it doesn't become a habitual situation. If you'd like to bring a laptop to work on, you may do so and store it in my classroom during the class day.

If you are accessing your cell phone during a test (for any reason) you may earn a zero for that test and be referred to the office for violating school policy.

4 – REMEMBER OUR MISSION...

Life is difficult; even here in the first world challenges are numerous. In order to “make it” in today's society – to raise a family, own a home and have career, you need valuable human capital. Your experience in high school is vital to these ends. I take my education mission seriously; my standards for you will be high.

However, my role in this process and your parents' influence on your outcomes are secondary to your individual efforts. In the end this education thing is up to YOU! That means everything in this classroom; the atmosphere, my lessons, your approach to learning, all of it is directed to providing each individual student an equal opportunity to excel. No individual's personal agenda will be permitted to interfere with the opportunity of all to learn. I will insure a wide avenue to achievement for those who strive to succeed. Conversely, I will limit the interference of those who don't respect their classmates. Remember when it comes to public education your right to self-expression stops when it interferes with your classmate's right to learn. Listen. Be mindful. Be kind. Work. And stay AWAKE!

GRADES:

• SCHOOLGY / BLOG WORK

Schoology will serve as a basis of organization in all of my courses. In addition, several Assignments will be linked on my school blog – [The buddha Said I am Awake](#). Weekly Lesson Plans, course objectives, and individual assignments will be updated on the Schoology sight daily. Make sure that you stay tuned. Schoology is almost identical in format to Blackboard, which is in use throughout colleges and universities around the country. The sooner you grow accustomed to this valuable learning tool, the better you will be able to organize and ultimately find success in the academic world.

Since so much of your work will be online it is significant that you have home online access. If you don't have adequate access, you will need to let me know. We will work to provide you an adequate alternative.

• LATE WORK

I do not accept late work! If you are in school and you have an assignment due – the due date is your responsibility...that is called accountability. You may turn in your assignment at the end of the day - two grades down. However, if the assignment is not in on the day it is due, you will receive zero credit. Excused absences have a two day grace period according to school rules - unexcused absences will not receive the extension, so make sure your parents get your excused absence turned into the attendance office promptly.

WAYS TO BUMP YOUR MARKING PERIOD GRADE:

+2% to +20% - Speeches of Martin Luther King Jr.

At the front of the room in binders you will find complete transcripts and audio reproductions of ten speeches of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. You may come in after school and listen to these speeches. You only need to listen and write a short evaluation to earn 2% per speech up to 20% extra credit for semester grade.

+5% Class Participation

- I keep track of A's and F's on the seating chart. In order to get an A all you have to do is raise your hand and volunteer the correct answer. You get an F if you talk out of turn, or interrupt when another student has the floor. A's & F's accumulate through out the Marking Period. If at the end of the Marking Period you have at least 15 A's and a ratio of 3 to 1 A's to F's your grade goes up 5%. You may earn a 5% bump all four MPs.

+2% For Being Mindful / [Documentary Screenagers](#)

We have a mindfulness challenge in today's society. Our excessive reliance on cell phones, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and other social media, draws us from the moment. Successful education depends upon full focus of this moment. In order to encourage you to remain mindful, anytime that you are found on a cell phone in class you'll lose 2% (in addition to office referral) on your MP grade. If in the course of a MP you are not cited, nor found on social media sites during chrome book work, you will have an opportunity to earn a 2% bump up on your MP grade. Specific guidelines for this 2% to follow.

+Variable Extra Credit Opportunities

I provide all students a creative route to Extra Credit. If you have an idea that you'd like to run with – let me know. That work must involve rigor and imagination. I Come in after school. We can work together on something significant. Be assured that I treat this kind of extra credit as a learning experience, not as a grade saving measure. None of these options are available within the final two weeks of a marking period grade. So, plan accordingly.

A Final Thought on grades...

A challenging education is significant for your success in today's world. In an effort to raise graduation rates, public schools have significantly lowered their standards. In some classrooms today, you are provided chance after chance after chance to pass. After all of that, if you still don't pass, you can run down to the counseling office and enroll in E 20-20 to earn the credit. The only behavior being learned from such practice is that accountability does not exist in the real world. And that's just not the case.

So, while I provide several credible ways in which to raise your grade, I will not hand you credit. You have the responsibility to earn it. Providing an environment where you don't have second and third and fourth chances, prepares you for the realities of life past high school. And while I want you to succeed in the classroom and beyond, I want that success to be real. In the end, I do a good job of bringing the real world into the classroom. I believe that my students receive an excellent education that prepares them well for college, the work place, and beyond.

Your grade however, is a product totally of your design and the effort that you do or do not put into the classroom.

Finally, a couple of years ago a situation ensued that precipitated me requesting past students for letters of support. I was provided 135 letters from past students and parents – the purpose was not to place them in this introductory letter, however, I think if you read below you will have a better idea of who I am and what I expect of you in the classroom.

Any questions please feel free to ask. Any comments please feel free to share.

Sincerely - Bob Wood / bobwoodmsu@gmail.com / (616) 402-8668

- [Sarah Pennell](#) – OHS c/o 2013
- [Randy Lavassuer](#) – OHS c/o 2013
- [Cassy Vandermolen](#) – OHS c/o 2005
- [Elizabeth Kepner](#) – OHS c/o 2001
- [Gladys Mosher](#) – Parent of Angelina Mosher c/o 2010