

MEMORANDUM

To: Incoming 9th grade Teachers and Counselors
From: The 9th grade Honors Humanities Team
Re: Registration for the 9th Honors Humanities Block

For registration, please read to all 9th Graders and then post. Thank you!

For next year, as 9th graders, you may choose to meet your 9th grade Social Studies and Language Arts requirements by taking the 9th Honors Humanities Block (as opposed to the standard 9th Humanities Block). If you are considering this choice, you ought to consider several factors:

- The 9th Honors Humanities Block is designed to help you practice and develop critical thinking skills for success in advanced courses throughout high school. It is not just the same class as 9th but with more work. Instead, Honors Humanities is a deep dive into a variety of important social justice issues including culture, civics, religion, race, gender, and human rights.
- The curriculum regularly asks students to work **together** to research, analyze, discuss and present. Students should have a strong interest in working with others and share responsibility for their own learning, as well as a desire to explore different ideas and perspectives.
- Students will be expected to complete substantial weekly homework assignments (some weeks more than others) and will be regularly assessed with in-class and at-home writing tasks, presentations, graded discussion, simulations, and projects.
- Students considering the course need to be ready to push their skills in analytical thinking, reading challenging texts, writing detailed and well-organized essays, and discussing historical and literary topics meaningfully—they also need to realize that doing these things doesn't just require strong academic skills, but maturity as well.

If, after hearing more about the class and having their questions answered, students want to apply for the 9th Honors Humanities Block, they will need to take the following steps:

1. Acquire the parent permission form and have it read and signed by your parents
2. Return the parent permission form to Cleo Rohn at EHS D221, or in the office's mailroom

EHS 9th Honors Humanities Block: Note to Parents/Guardians

This form is designed to help you with your decision to enroll in the 9th Honors Humanities Block, as opposed to the standard 9th grade World Studies block. If you choose the Honors Humanities Block for 9th grade year, here are the considerations we would like you to be aware of:

- This year long course is designed with an integrated approach to reading, writing, speaking, listening, and higher-level thinking skills. In this course we will explore and connect literature and writing to the concepts of societies, cultures and social justice while analyzing continuities and change over time.
- The 9th Honors Humanities Block is designed to help you practice and develop critical thinking skills for success in advanced courses throughout high school. It is not necessarily the same curriculum as 9th with “extra” or “more” work. We will explore a variety of important social justice issues including culture, population, religion, race, gender, and human rights.
- Students may face a more challenging workload than they have ever previously faced in history and literature classes. Homework assignments will depend on the unit and lesson, but may include writing, research, reading 15-20 pages of historical text, and can be up to 2 hours per night. Students write numerous essays and shorter papers, research and present information frequently, participate frequently in graded class discussions, and semi-frequently give solo or group presentations to the class.
- The curriculum regularly asks students to work together to research, analyze, discuss and present. Students should have a strong interest in working with others and share responsibility for their own learning, as well as a desire to explore different ideas and perspectives.
- The long-range culminating project for the class is for each group to produce a short video documentary that explores social topics of interest, the characteristics of activism and a variety of literary genres and themes. This will be done over the 2nd semester in groups.
- The philosophy of the class, and the reason that a student should seriously consider taking it, is that this increased workload and these higher standards will help prepare students for the truly rigorous challenges of later advanced courses in history and literature. In the end, it is our belief that the work students have done benefits them because it helps them develop the skills they will need in college and beyond.

I have read the above, and am ready to devote the time and energy needed to succeed in this course:

Student Signature: _____

I have read the above, and support this student’s decision to take on the challenges associated with this course:
Parent/Guardian

Signature: _____

Please supply the following information:

Student Name: _____

Student’s 8th grade History/Literature grades: _____