



John M. Cunningham
Study Skills
Douglas County High School
2023 - 2024



I. Purpose and Objectives

I. Course Description: Study Skills is designed to equip high school students with effective strategies and techniques to enhance their learning experience, improve academic performance, and develop essential study habits. The course will focus on various study methods, time management, note-taking, critical thinking, test preparation, and goal setting to support students in becoming confident and successful learners.

II. Student objectives for this course include:

1. Develop effective study habits and time management skills.
2. Enhance note-taking techniques for better comprehension and retention.
3. Learn critical thinking and problem-solving strategies.
4. Improve reading comprehension and information processing.
5. Strengthen test-taking skills and reduce test anxiety.
6. Foster self-motivation and goal-setting for academic achievement.
7. Utilize technology tools for efficient studying and organization.
8. Cultivate a growth mindset and resilience in the face of challenges.
9. Develop a personalized study plan.

III. Grading:

Grades will be based on a combination of class participation, completion of assignments, quizzes, and projects.

Testing Protocols

In line with IB testing guidelines, during major assessments in this course, students are not allowed to have in their possession any cell phones, smart watches, or other electronic devices that can store or transmit data. If a student is found to have one of these devices in their possession during an assessment, they will be given a grade of zero for breaching this policy and will be subject to consequences relating to our Academic Integrity and Continuation Contracts. To protect exam integrity, all devices, notes, and study guides should be placed in student bookbags and moved to the front or back of the room. Only required/approved testing items should be at student desks during testing.

III. Course Content

1. Introduction to Study Skills and Learning Styles
2. Time Management and Organization
3. Effective Note-taking Techniques
4. Reading Strategies for Comprehension and Retention
5. Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving
6. Test Preparation and Test-Taking Strategies
7. Goal Setting and Motivation
8. Using Technology for Studying and Organization
9. Overcoming Procrastination and Managing Distractions
10. Developing a Growth Mindset

IV. Academic Honesty

In accordance with county policy and IB policy, students are expected to complete their own work. Plagiarism will not be tolerated, nor will any form of academic dishonesty. Violation of this policy will result in a grade of zero being assessed for that work, as well as an administrative disciplinary referral, and a referral to the IB office. Any form of academic dishonesty as defined in the Douglas County School Handbook and/or IB policies will be enforced.

Any dishonesty, including but not limited to plagiarism, collusion, outside sources during assessments, etc., will be given a grade of a Zero (0). The Zero will remain and no extra credit will add any points or remove the Zero. This Zero will also be exempt from any “drop the lowest” decision. (i.e. If you get a Zero for cheating, it is there for the rest of the year.) In addition, IB students caught cheating will be brought before the academic honesty committee for further disciplinary action. *See the IBDP student contract and code of conduct.*

V. Classroom Policies

A. Assignment Deadlines

For physical assignments that are turned in Assignments are expected to be completed and turned in on time which means that an assignment must be completely ready (typed, printed, stapled) at the beginning of the class period in which it is due. Even one minute late constitutes a late assignment. Any assignment that is late, whether it is due to it not being printed, stapled, unexcused student tardiness to class, etc..., is late and will be penalized. Assignments turned in during the same day or even the same class period after being collected will be considered late.

If absent, send a picture of the completed assignment *before* the due time, and then bring a hard copy upon return.

For digital assignments, the due date will be posted with the assignment. Timestamps for submitted work must be before the cutoff. If your work is late (even if it is by a measly little minute according to the Google Classroom or email timestamp), a late penalty of 10% per day will be applied.

All late assignments will be penalized 10 points per day late.

B. Make-Up Work

It is the responsibility of each student to complete all classwork missed due to an absence from class. **Make up work for excused absence - *All in-class quizzes, exams, and assignments must be made up within one calendar week from the last date of absence*** (extended absences may be given longer periods of time based on the teacher's decision). If the assignment was assigned before the absence, then the student will be responsible to email any assignment (including text-readable pictures before the due date and time, and a hard-copy will be expected to be turned in on the day of return) before the start of his/her class period on due date. Make-up quizzes and tests will be scheduled following the absence and should be completed within one calendar week. (Note - it is the teacher's decision for a student to take an assessment during the return class period or schedule a time outside of class; students should be prepared for either). After this one-calendar-week make-up time, any missing test or quiz may be given a grade of Zero (0). Additional time may be given if communication is made from the student to the teacher, but is at the discretion of the teacher. At the end of the week, the work will not be allowed to be made up and a Zero will be recorded. **Make-up work for an unexcused absence** may not be allowed to be made up, and a grade of a Zero (0) may stand. This also applies to in-class assignments; digital assignments are due at the beginning of class on the due date. Any work not submitted at the time of collection is considered late (see above).

There will be no make-up for presentations that are not completed on a scheduled time (unless in a dire emergency as determined by the teacher).

C. Digital Learning (if needed)

Students are expected to keep their cameras on and face visible at all times during virtual instruction. This class is a community, and I like to see all members of the community.

However, there are certain "netiquette" things I would like to emphasize:

- Be on time. I'm starting class on time - with or without you.
- Please wear proper attire.
- Please go to the bathroom before or after our class time - not in the middle. If it is an absolute emergency, please do not take your technology to the bathroom.
- Keep the chat box on our Google Meet clean. If you have questions, please ask them. However, do not post profanity or things that are not relevant to the class.
- Do not attempt to multitask. If it's class time, it's not time to listen to music or watch videos.
- Refer to the Douglas County High School "Virtual Learning Netiquette" document for other guidelines.

D. Extra Credit

Extra credit is a rare opportunity. There may be some opportunities, but students should not expect individual extra credit as make-up or replacement assignments.

E. Textbook

There is no “one place textbook” for this class. There may be assigned readings throughout the year that will be from websites, scholarly articles, posted assignments, &etc...

Reading assignments may be handed out or given through an online link. However, students must be able to access the readings each class period.

F. Classroom Rules

1. Attendance: Regular attendance is essential for optimal learning and success in this course.
2. Participation: Active participation in class discussions and activities is expected.
3. Late Work: Late assignments may be subject to a grade deduction or accepted at the instructor's discretion.
4. Academic Integrity: Students are expected to maintain high standards of honesty and academic integrity.
5. Respect: A respectful and inclusive learning environment is essential for the success of all students. Students must exercise proper *digital learning etiquette* including allowing participating while also allowing others to speak, using only appropriate language, being dressed properly for school, and being considerate of the unique challenges of a digital learning environment.
6. Tardiness: Will not be tolerated. Chronic tardiness will result in an administrative referral. Be seated and prepared to begin class when the bell rings.
7. *During Digital Learning* each student must keep his/her camera on, keep their face in frame and be actively paying attention with other tabs close and other devices away.
8. Class Disruption: There will be plenty of opportunity for each student to participate fully, to ask questions, engage in discussion and debate during the course of this class. However, all such activity will be done in an orderly and respectful manner and as directed by the instructor. ***Disruptions include distracting others or the teacher.***
9. Be Prepared to Work: Bring all required materials to class each day and be ready to discuss assigned readings and to otherwise participate fully in class.
10. Cell Phone Policy: This class will follow the DCHS cell phone color code system.
11. Food and Drink: No food, no drinks.
12. You may not go to another class to get your materials.
13. **Respect the group; do not act entitled, selfish, or oblivious.**

VI. Miscellaneous

A. Required Materials

- Pens, (Blue or Black ink for things turned in)
- Three highlighters of different colors.
- Paper (Style optional)
- Binder/notebook (for notes and handouts)
- 4 x 6 Index Cards (Lined on one side)
- Access to Google Classroom
- Course work and study materials

B. Tutoring

During traditional learning, Mr. Cunningham is generally available for tutoring on Tues., Wed., and Thurs. before school; but a student will need to make an appointment.

C. Communication

I can be reached at John.Cunningham@dcssga.org
The phone to the office is 770-651-6500

Please scan, photograph, or make a copy of this syllabus for your reference.

*****Syllabus and/or outline is subject to change***

Student Signature _____

Parent Signature _____

Signature acknowledges receipt and understudying of the syllabus, acknowledgement that it may be changed, and that a photograph, scan, or copy has been made for reference.

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