**Syllabus**

**Teacher:** Ms. Woods

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**Course Description:** Controversial issues arise in aspects of personal, social, public and professional life in modern society. Debate and argumentation are widely used to make decisions and reduce conflict. Debate I and II are designed to give students the skills and expertise to develop sound critical thinking and sharpen communication skills. The student will learn how to analyze issues, know the difference between propositions of value and policy, develop logical thinking skill, utilize different research sources, construct arguments, and learn effective oral communication skills. This class is intended to prepare students to engage in extracurricular debate tournaments in the district, regional, and state debate tournaments. This course requires teacher approval. Prior experience in public speaking is encouraged but not required. Emphasis will be in preparing for UIL Debate Tournaments in contest.

**Grading Policy:**

* Grades will be based on paper and digital tests and quizzes, TOURNAMENTS, and class participation.
* Unexcused late assignments will lose 5 percentage points per day.
* Assignments more than 2 weeks late **will not** be accepted. You will receive a zero.
* Assignments turned in after the student 6-week deadline **will not** be accepted. You will receive a zero.

**Types of Assignments:**

* Research assignments: Research is an ESSENTIAL part of debate. In order to be great, you must know what you are talking about. You must be able to support your claims with evidence.
* In-class assignments: Students will take part in various exercises meant to teach and improve communication and other necessary skills.
* Projects: Projects will include the construction of an affirmative case for this year’s Policy Debate resolution and the construction of LD Cases and other positions.
* In-class speeches and debates: Speeches will be given, and debates will be held in class. All students will be expected to participate.
* Tests: Students will be assessed on their understanding of the debate activities that are taught in class (CX Debate, LD Debate, Extemporaneous Speaking, Student Congress, etc.).

\*\*Being in this class means you are a member of the HHS Speech and Debate Team. With that in mind, you are required to attend AT LEAST 3 tournaments in the fall semester and compete at the district level of UIL. These will all count as test grades.\*\*

**Supplies:** Pens, 3-ring binder, notebook paper, highlighters, USB flash drive, journal, charged school-provided Chromebook

**Rules, Expectations, and Guidelines:**

* Follow instructions
* Be on time and prepared for class, tournaments, and outside prep
* No cell phones, headphones, smartwatches, or other personal electronic devices unless approved by the school
* Actively participate in discussions and activities
* Keep language appropriate and respectful
* Try your best
* Keep an open mind
* Treat everyone with respect regardless of race, gender, political stance, etc.
* **Be passing every class**. Because being in this class means you are part of the debate team, you must be passing in order to participate in tournaments.
* **Clothing**: You are expected to represent our school, our team, and yourselves well, both inside and outside of class. While competing in or observing rounds at tournaments, you are expected to be in business casual attire. We will go more in depth on this in class. **If you are unable to get appropriate tournament clothes, you must let me know as soon as possible before any tournament.** Anytime you are with the team, whether you are in a round or not, you are expected to follow school dress code.
* Attendance Policy: Please be in class. If you know you will be absent, get the homework/classwork ahead of time. **This is the expectation I have of you in your other classes if you miss school for debate.** If you become ill or have an unfortunate happening that is beyond your control, please get the homework either by emailing me or by getting it as soon as you come back.
* Bathroom Breaks: Go **before** you get to class. You get 3 in-class bathroom passes per 6 weeks if you must leave during class. You will have the opportunity to receive bonus points at the end of each 6 weeks by turning in unused bathroom passes.

The most important thing in my class is to be respectful. This means you are expected to respect me, your classmates, any space we use, my time, and the time of your classmates. If you need clarification on what is considered respectful and disrespectful, feel free to (respectfully) ask.

**Parent Information Sheet**

**After reading and reviewing the course syllabus, please complete and return the Parent Information Sheet to Ms. Woods.**

**I have read and understand Ms. Woods’ syllabus. I will adhere to the standards put forth for me in class.**

**Student’s Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Parent/Guardian Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Parent/Guardian Phone:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Parent/Guardian email:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Questions or Comments:**

**Things you would like Ms. Woods to know about your child:**

Student Signature:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_