

2020 -2021 Creative Writing Department Handbook



Kinder High School for the
Performing and Visual Arts

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MISSION

The mission of Kinder HSPVA’s Creative Writing Department is to give students a strong foundation of writing craft and literary history so that they can develop their unique voices. Additionally, we aim to give students the skills they need to produce and publish their work using technology, performance, or traditional pen and paper, all while nurturing an appreciation for the arts in all its forms. We give students the space to work independently and collaboratively, allowing them to develop skills that help them become productive, responsible citizens at Kinde HSPVA and beyond.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The Creative Writing Department students are expected to adhere to the following policies and procedures:

Tardies

Students are expected to arrive in class on time, prepared to work. Breaks are for the bathroom, going to a locker, small snack or drink. Students should be in their classrooms when the bell rings. Students may receive a detention if they have three or more tardies.

Grading

Creative Writing uses the points system for grades. This means that each assignment is given a certain number of points and the students earn some or all those points for their grades. At any point, students can determine their course average by dividing the number of points they've earned by the number of points available.

Late Work

Students will receive a 50% penalty for late assignments.

No late assignments may be accepted after the Wednesday before the end of the Six Weeks Grading Cycle. The deadline is intended to provide teachers with a protected period of time to complete all grading and posting of grades prior to the cycle deadline.

Academic Dishonesty

When plagiarism, copying, or other form of academic dishonesty is discovered, a student is allowed to retake the assignment, but receives a standard deduction thus lowering the maximum grade possible (Ex: retake grade to be no higher than 70) OR teacher may decide to average original grade with reassessment grade).

Teachers may also lower the student's conduct grade at their discretion.

A teacher can refer the student to the assistant principal for a disciplinary consequence.

Absences

It is of utmost importance that your child be in school each day. It is easy to fall behind in coursework, and a class discussion is almost impossible to repeat. Because classes are three hours long, a student misses the equivalence of two class periods with each day they miss.

There are times when illness or a family emergency will keep students at home. A student will have one school day per day absent to turn in any missed assignments or homework. It is the student's responsibility to talk to the teacher about any missed assignments. Regular late penalties will accrue after this grace period. If an assignment was given before the absences, the student will be required to submit it upon return- this includes reading check quizzes, major projects etc. As with anything, please talk to the teacher with any questions or concerns.

Electronics

Students may bring their laptops or tablets to school for research or writing purposes only, and these are to be used at the discretion of the teacher. Absolutely no texting, games, or social media allowed. If a student is off-task when using an electronic device, their device may be confiscated. We ask that all students keep their phones in their pockets or in their backpacks at all times- including during announcements. Student should be "present" in their classes, and the constant temptation of phones takes them away from what is happening in the classroom. If a student has their phone out, the instructor may take the phone and give it to the administration. The student will then need to buy it back for \$15.

Students will regularly use school computers for writing and research. Students may NEVER download anything to a computer without permission. Students should not add anything or change wallpaper on the computer. Students should never save their work to a hard drive on a computer, unless they have gotten consent from an instructor. Surfing the web, checking social media, or otherwise being off-task at the computers will result in a lower participation and productivity grade.

Please see our additional Technology Guidelines for specifics for use with HSPVA equipment.

Printing and Copies

Students will often need a class set of copies of his or her work to distribute for workshop. They may print one- and ONLY ONE- copy of their work in the classroom or library. If additional copies are needed, students must give the work to a faculty member at least 24 hours in advance of when they need the copies. Students should not use the copy machine in the office without permission.

Letters of Recommendation

- Students need Letter of Recommendation for a variety of reasons, and we are happy to provide them. Please use the following guidelines to ensure that the letter is written by its deadline
- Give your instructor two weeks notice to write this letter.
- Give your instructor a copy of your resume, or a list of activities and accomplishments. This will help to fill in the details and help the instructor to write a letter tailored to each individual student.
- If a letter needs to be snail-mailed, please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope with your resume. If it needs to be emailed or submitted through a particular website, please send that information to the instructor by email.
- If the organization is sending a link to the faculty member, please double-check that it has been received as HISD email frequently blocks this type of mail.

Supplies

Students are expected to be prepared each day for class. Failure to do so may negatively affect their P and P grade. The following supplies are standard for all students in the Creative Writing Department, but students will likely need additional supplies as specified by individual instructors.

Please see the guidelines set by each instructor for each classes' need. If at any point, a student is unable to procure supplies because of financial or other hardships, they should speak to a faculty member or a counselor as soon as possible so that someone can help.

Fee

Though HSPVA is a public institution, the need for private support is unquestionable. The Creative Writing Department has a \$100 supply fee that the department uses to buy class sets of books, project supplies, technology, etc. Because of the extraordinary circumstances of this school term, we are asking for \$50 fee for the fall and will ask for \$50 in the spring should we need it.

We ask that students pay this fee by October 2, 2020. This may be paid through School Pay (<https://www.schoolpay.com/>). If you are unable to pay this fee for any reason, please contact Judith Switek (jswitek@houstonisd.org) or Rebecca Johnson, counselor for Creative Writing (Rebecca.Johnson@houstonisd.org).

Food and Drink

Students may bring food and drinks in bottles or cups with a lid into the classroom if the instructor permits it. Be sensible with snacks - nuts, granola bars, chocolate. Nothing that requires utensils or a microwave.

If a student has any life-threatening allergy, we ask that they bring this to our attention so that we may take measure to provide a safe environment.

Signing In and Signing Out

We ask that all students sign in and out each time they leave the room. There are sign out sheets at each doorway. Failure to do so may result in a detention.

Adult Themes and Content

Please know that our faculty takes the sensitive nature of developing students seriously, and we make every effort to honor parental discretion in all of our classes and activities. The students will read a variety of poems, stories, plays, and essays in their creative writing courses. Each selection is chosen with much thought and to demonstrate a particular literary element or theme. If we are aware of any mature content in a reading, film, or exhibit, we will make every effort to notify parents at least a week in advance and will provide an alternative assignment when requested to do so.

VIRTUAL CLASSES

The Creative Writing Department's virtual classes will mirror in-person classes as closely as possible. We will follow the same schedule and have the same high expectations for all our students. Our norms will be that all students attend live classes with cameras on, prepared to participate. If any student is working through a hardship that prevents full engagement, we ask that they speak with a member of the Creative Writing faculty as soon as possible so that we may assist in any way needed. We cannot stress this enough: communication is key. We will all get through these days with grace, flexibility, and kindness.

During virtual classes, the Creative Writing Department will follow HISD's and HSPVA's guidelines as follows:

Attendance Policy

- ADA time is 9:00 AM
- Students are expected to attend all scheduled class meetings via Microsoft Teams (on time and with a recommendation of video function activated) as well as submit assigned work by due dates via the HUB.
- Parents of students who have not been counted present by 3:30 pm for Average Daily Attendance (ADA) will receive a phone call/e-mail by 6:00 pm that same day. Students may recover that daily attendance by logging on to the HUB course and completing/working on HUB assignments by 11:59 pm that same day.
- If a student misses a class period, a note with a reason must be e-mailed by a parent or guardian to the Attendance Clerk (Mrs. Norman: jnorman6@houstonisd.org) within the three-day HISD attendance policy to change the absence from unexcused to excused. A student must be present for a least half the instructional time of the period to be considered present.
- Students must attend at least 90% of each of their classes to receive credit.

Student Demonstration of Engagement

Students will demonstrate their engagement in three primary ways:

- Logging on to and participating (Strongly recommended with video feature on) in live class meetings at the designated class times,
- Completing and submitting coursework via the HUB by assigned due dates, and
- Another form of interaction, such as separate meeting with teacher beyond class meeting or logging minutes completing an online assignment.

TECHNOLOGY GUIDELINES

Basic Rules

- Students may use technology for Creative Writing assignments only. This includes but is not limited to computers, cameras, and printers.
- No food or drink allowed when using technology. Not even water.
- No Internet for anything other than creative writing assignments.
- Technology must be used in designated spaces, unless authorized by an instructor.
- Students may not download anything or change the appearance of the computer without permission of a faculty member.

In-Class Check-Out

- Check out equipment in the first ten minutes of work time.
- Never leave computer unattended. Take care of your needs before you check out the computer.
- Check computers back in during the last ten minutes of class (unless student is required to leave the class for some reason ie: leaving school, etc).
- If a student has a pressing need or is called to the office, that student is responsible for bringing their laptop to the instructor before leaving. Please do not ask a friend to “watch it” while you are away.

Overnight Check-out

- Check-out is on a first come, first served basis.
- Students may check out equipment after school from 3:35 to 3:45. It is helpful if you inform a faculty member during the day that you intend to check-out equipment.
- Cameras can be checked out in the library; laptops in C-11.
- Students must return the equipment before school, between 7:30 and 7:45.
- Students must return equipment to a faculty member; students may not leave equipment on a desk or table in the library or in C-11. Leaving equipment unattended may result in detention and/or temporary loss of privileges.
- Students must have a specific reason or assignment for check-out. Students may not check out equipment for assignments in their academic classes.
- Students may not check- out equipment over extended school holidays such as Winter or Spring Break.

Failure to comply with these rules will result in a detention. Excessive infractions may result in a temporary loss of privileges.

STUDIO TIME GUIDELINES

The purpose of Studio Time is to give students the opportunity to work on their writing and other art area projects during school hours. We too frequently see students abuse this privilege. We will continue to include Studio Time in our curriculum for as long as we see students using it appropriately; we will reconsider its value if we find ourselves consistently having to redirect students who are off task. Make good choices. If nothing else, grab a book and read, as nothing will make you a better writer than being a good reader.

Students should use this time for independent discovery.

Students may:

- work on any creative writing assignment
- write in their journals
- read anything (so long as it is not homework for an academic class)
- use a computer to learn more about a particular software for the production of their work (this includes but is not limited to the Adobe Suite)
- practice bookbinding
- letterpress (with faculty permission)
- listen to music with headphones
- retake any Creative Writing assignment

Students may not:

- work on assignments for academic classes
- sleep
- watch you tube or any other movies/TV etc
- talk excessively to other students
- use their phone without permission from faculty

Additional Guidelines:

- Students who are missing more than one assignment in their classes or who are failing any class- art or academic must work in the corner classroom until its completed.
- No group work, nor sitting in groups. If you'd like to workshop with a partner, please ask permission first.
- Students may sit in any classroom. The Living Room is for silent work only. Students may only work in the technology room if they need to use a computer. All doors will remain open, permission is given by faculty. The Creative Writing office is for private conferences only.

VIRTUAL STUDIO TIME

Students will sign in to a Teams meeting for attendance. After that check-in, students are free to work on whatever creative projects or Creative Writing assignments they have.

Grades

Students will receive the following grades for Virtual Studio Time:

- Weekly Intention: What are your plans for the week? What will you read? What is your goal? (10 points)
- Submission of work accomplished: please upload the writing or a photo of the work accomplished or a reading log that follows the template provided in the HUB. (20 points Monday/Wednesday)

SENIOR SHOW GUIDELINES

The privilege of having a Creative Writing Senior Show is expected to be earned by each student in the department. Participation in a senior show is required to be eligible for "Art Area Certification". The following are the requirements to have a Creative Writing Department Sanctioned "Senior Show".

Each Prospective Senior Show Recipient will:

Be a student in Kinder HSPVA's Creative Writing Department for their entire junior and senior years.

Be on grade level.

Have all financial and clerical records cleared by the January of their senior year

Have earned all graduation requirements, except for those enrolled in for the spring semester of the senior year at Kinder HSPVA. This means that if they fail a required core class during the fall semester of your senior year, they may not have a Senior Show.

Have attendance consistent with Kinder HSPVA policies. Excessive tardies and absences during senior year may result in the loss of the Senior Show.

Not be placed on Art Area, Disciplinary, or Academic Probation during senior year.

Not violate any previously negotiated growth plan.

Not receive a "P" or a "U" six-weeks conduct grade during their junior or senior years.

Not receive a six-weeks average below a "70" or semester average below a "77" in any art area class in their junior or senior years.

Have a sufficient amount of work that is of quality to be included in a senior show (to be determined by Creative Writing faculty)

Submit a Senior Show Proposal by the deadline as specified by the Creative Writing faculty.

Failure to meet any of the requirements may result in the loss of the Senior Show. Not having a Senior Show will result in the loss of "Art Area Department Certification" and may result in a failing Final Exam grade.

If a student loses a Senior Show, it is sometimes possible to re-earn it. The student will consult with the Creative Writing Department faculty to determine if a plan is possible.

Additional Information:

Senior Show groups are required to see a Creative Writing faculty member to fill-out an online Technology Request Form a minimum of TWO WEEKS before the Senior Show. Failure to do so may result in some technology not being available.

The following documents are required at the time of the official run-through that takes place during Studio Time one week before the show:

1. An Artist or Writer's Statement
2. A list of artifacts for your senior table
3. All text that you are presenting
4. Any films that you are showing
5. A list of artists who are participating in your show
6. Introductions for your group members

Points will be deducted if your show is not complete at the time of the run-through. This includes any films you want to in your show and all final drafts. Please be prepared- as a group- to run through from beginning to end as though it is your actual show. If your show uses actors, musicians, dancers, etc, simply read the parts without those participants as best you can.

Please clean your spaces - including your altars - the night of your show. You may want to consider asking juniors to be your "crew" to help. If you have props for which you may need additional time to move, please get permission prior to the night of your show.

Please attend to technology issues before the day of your run-through. We will work with the Theatre Department to insert your show into Q Lab prior to the run-through so that your show can run smoothly.

The following documents are optional:

- A program for your show
- Fliers to advertise your show
- Buttons, stickers etc to promote your show.
- Chapbooks, postcards, bookmarks of your creative work.

The Creative Writing Department will:

- Print 100 Programs for your show (if the senior show participants). Please send the programs to the Creative Writing Faculty a minimum of TWO WEEKS prior to the show.
- Print 10 color fliers to promote the Senior Show.
- Give each show participant the materials make 20 buttons to hand out.
- Give senior show participants supplies for students to complete chapbooks or other samples of work to be handed out at the show, subject to approval by the Creative Writing faculty.

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*The Creative Writing Department cannot reimburse students for any materials.

Please Note: All materials are subject to approval by the Creative Writing faculty and Kinder HSPVA administration.

ART AREA CERTIFICATION AND HONORS

Because of the high artistic and rigorous academic standards students must meet for admission to and graduation from HSPVA, the Houston Independent School District grants HSPVA the privilege of bestowing a special recognition (Art Area Certification) on those students who meet specified standards that exceed normal graduation requirements.

ART AREA CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

In order to qualify for Creative Writing Department "Certification", a student must:

- Be a student in the Creative Writing Department of HSPVA for their entire junior and senior years.
- Not be placed on Art Area or Disciplinary Probation or an Art Area or Disciplinary Growth Plan during their senior year.
- Not violate any previously negotiated Growth Plan.
- Meet ALL required graduation credit, except those enrolled in at HSPVA during the Spring semester senior year.
- Not receive a 6 weeks "P" or a "U" Conduct Grade in Creative Writing during their junior or senior years.
- Have attendance consistent with HISD Policies and not have excessive absences or "tardies" during their senior year in all classes (Art & Academic).
- Qualify, be awarded, and participate in an approved and sanctioned senior show, and must meet all of the requirements of that exhibition.
- Not receive a six-weeks average below a "70" or semester average below a "77" in any art area class in their junior or senior years.

Art Area Honors

It is tradition at Kinder HSPVA to recognize the students who hold the highest Art-only GPA in each Art Area. Our Art Area Honors policy is as follows:

- Art Area Honors, like HISD Academic Honors, will be based on the senior midyear transcript which is available in late January.
- To be eligible for Art Area Honors, the student must have been a student at Kinder HSPVA for all 4 years.
- To be eligible for Art Area Honors, the student must have participated in the same Art Area for at least the final 3 years.
- Using the numerical grades in all Art classes required for the Art Area certificate, the Art GPA will be calculated to 6 decimal places.

- Students in each Art Area whose Art GPAs are in the highest 15% will be recognized as earning Art Area Honors.
- From among the previously mentioned highest 15%, students in each Art Area whose Art GPAs are in the highest 5% will be recognized as earning Art Area Highest Honors.
- As is HISD policy with Academic Honors, if the calculation using the percent results in a fraction (e.g. 15% of 28 Vocal seniors = 4.2 Honors students from among Vocal seniors), the number of students included will be the next whole number (e.g. 4.2 -> 5).
- Regalia for Art Area Honors includes red cord(s) to be worn at graduation. a. Single red cord for Art Area Honors b. Double red cord tied together for Art Area Highest Honors
- Honorees will keep their cords after graduation.