

# El Monte Union High School District

## COURSE OUTLINE

High School DISTRICT

Title: ACADEMIC DECATHLON P ("P" PENDING UC APPROVAL)

|  | This course meets graduation requirements:  | Department/Cluster Approval | Date |
|--|---|-----------------------------|------|
| Transitional* _____ Eng. Cluster Only) |   |                             |      |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> English            | _____                       |      |
| Sheltered (SDAIE)*__ Bilingual*_____   | <input type="checkbox"/> Fine Arts          | _____                       |      |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> Foreign Language   | _____                       |      |
| AP**_____ Honors**_____                | <input type="checkbox"/> Health & Safety    | _____                       |      |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> Math               | _____                       |      |
| Department: English                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Physical Education | _____                       |      |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> Science            | _____                       |      |
| Grade Level (s): 9 -12                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Social Science     | _____                       |      |
| Semester ( ) Year ( X )                | (X) Elective                                |                             |      |
| Framework                              |   |                             |      |

\*Instructional materials appropriate for English language learners are required.

\*\*For AP/Honors course attach a page describing how this course is above and beyond a regular course. Also, explain why this course is the equivalent of a college level class.

**1. Prerequisite (s):** None

**2. Short description of course, which may also be used in the registration manual:**

An academically rigorous opportunity extended to all students who have demonstrated exceptional scholarship in and outside of the classroom. Through teacher nominations, performance on Advanced Placement and SBAC exams, cumulative GPAs, and possible interviews, a minimum of nine (9) students are selected to compete yearly. In turn, they become "Renaissance Scholars" through the exploration and investigation of a rotating theme surrounding ten (10) pre-designated fields (art, science, history, math, economics, music, essay, speech, interview, language & literature).

**Course Goals:**

Academic Decathlon is designed to help students increase their knowledge and refine their skills in effective writing, reading, and speaking. Students will work toward mastery of grammar, punctuation, usage, and the writing process. This course will teach students how to create well-structured and varied sentences; develop coherent paragraphs and more complex essays. In addition they will sharpen their critical reading skills in order to take control of their reading. Furthermore, students will practice effective listening and speaking skills in order to build proficiency both in and outside the classroom. Thus, this course aims to strengthen students' language and literature skills in order to meet with success for the Academic Decathlon competition.

**3. Describe how this course integrates the schools ESLRS (Expected School-wide Learning Results):**

These may be replaced with specific site ESLRS.

**Academic Achiever:** Academic Decathlon students will apply critical academic skills in reading, writing, speaking, listening and computing skills. All academic achievers will apply these skills in completing assigned tasks in research projects and classroom presentations leading to a comprehensive foundation in educational pursuits.

**Critical Thinkers:** Academic Decathlon students will incorporate problem-solving skills in analyzing and solving complex technology related concepts.

**Proficient Technology Users:** Academic Decathlon students will utilize computers and access networks in many aspects of their education.

**Ethical and Respectful Citizens:** Academic Decathlon students will be immersed in competitions outside of the school and will involve interaction with other schools, city officials and dignitaries. In each of these situations they will represent our school district and learn the role of the respectful citizen. Inside of the class students will also learn social media responsibility and ethics as they pertain to the use of the Internet, and students will work in groups across gender and cultural groups to demonstrate acceptance and respect of individual and cultural differences.

**Healthy Individuals:** Academic Decathlon students will understand the importance of living a healthy lifestyle and learn to balance work and their personal lives by planning for their competition.

**4. Describe the additional efforts/teaching techniques/methodology to be used to meet the needs of English language learners:****Lectures**

As with any class, your coaches will be serving as your teachers as well. Lectures vary in length, depending on the time given and the subject material. It is expected that you take notes, as it will aid you when assignments and homework is given. Should you have any questions at any time, ask them, as it would be beneficial to your other teammates as well. There is no such thing as a stupid question. So feel free to ask away. This class will meet A – G requirement as an elective (G).

### ***Discussion***

Learning material is best reinforced by application, so discussions shall be held. Topic questions for the meeting will be presented either before the practice or at the beginning of the practice, and you are expected to be prepared to engage in the discussion. Discussion is almost exclusively team driven, with coaches acting as moderators at most. One member of the team will be assigned to lead the discussion at a time, posing their own questions to the group. Members of the team will take turns with this process, repeating the cycle throughout the season.

### ***Student Presentations***

A person learns by teaching. Thus, all members of the team will frequently be assigned to teach a lesson to everyone else. This will be done individually or in small groups, depending on the subject matter. Mandatory expectations include visual aids such as power points with graphics and text. You are not limited to the amount of work that you wish to invest in the project, but understand that quality must be high to ensure that the team gets the most out of your lesson.

### ***Quizzes and In-Class Assignments***

Ever so often, an assignment or quiz shall be given. Whether you are told in advance or not of a coming test is up to the discretion of your coach. Understand that these tests and exams are not given maliciously; rather it is to hold you accountable for the reading and studying that is assigned to you. All tests vary in length and format, depending on the subject.

### ***Mock Competition Events***

On some practices, we will be holding mock events that will be seen on the day of competition. Speeches, interviews, essay writing, and the Super Quiz make up the bulk of these mock events. During the initial phases, these mock events are meant for learning purposes, as we will provide pointers and offer suggestions to help you improve. However, as the competition draws closer, these mock events will become much more serious and frequent, to help you polish and refine your speaking skills and essay writing.

### ***Games and Competitions***

Academic Decathlon would be torture if it was only hard work and studying. We believe that learning can be achieved in other ways, and that sometimes, you just need a breather. So, on several practice meetings, the team will engage in games designed to help you learn, but also to let you have fun as well. Modified versions of Jeopardy, Name that Tune, Charades, and Pictionary will be played, as well as others games you suggest. Also, you are encouraged to design your own games for the team as well.

### **5. Describe the interdepartmental articulation process for this course:**

All teachers stress the same concepts, skills, knowledge, and values necessary to become a successful Academic Decathlete across the curriculum. The nature of this course will reinforce core competencies of ten different subjects including English, Math, Science and Social Studies as well as other departments.

### **6. Describe how this course will integrate academic and vocational concepts, possibly through connecting activities. Describe how this course will address work-based learning/school to career concepts:**

**SUPER QUIZ:** The Super Quiz™ will focus on changing topics each year. For example, one past year's topic was Geology and the super quiz included a case study on the Dust Bowl. The Super Quiz Resource Guide included readings on such topics as rock formation, the geological time scale, the hydrologic cycle and groundwater, the causes of the Dust Bowl, plate tectonics, and fossil fuel resources.

**LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE:** The language and literature curriculum includes critical reading, one novel, two interviews, one essay, two short stories, and two poems. The featured novels in the past have been *The Grapes of Wrath* by John Steinbeck, *Doctor Zhivago* by Boris Pasternak, *Tale of Two Cities* by Charles Dickens, *Heart of Darkness* of Joseph Conrad.

Students will produce multiple essays and short constructed responses, which analyze and evaluate various aspects of language and literature, including, but not limited to: author's purpose, diction, theme, literary techniques, and allusions.

**ART:** The art curriculum covers art fundamentals and focuses on art in the era of the studied unit. For instance for the Great Depression theme basic art was studied along with architecture of the 1930s will also be covered including The Empire State Building and Hoover Dam.

Students will produce an essay and multiple short constructed responses, which include a critical analysis of various works of art, evaluations of art movements, and appraisals of art history.

**MUSIC:** The music curriculum covers basic elements of music theory and will focus on composers and selections from the era of the unit being studied.

Students will complete assessments with multiple-choice questions to gauge their depth of understanding and demonstrate their scope of content mastery. Students will also complete short constructed responses analyzing music in the areas of rhythm, cadence, tonality, etc.

**SOCIAL SCIENCE:** The social science curriculum reflects the history of the theme for the year. Last year the curriculum focused on the Great Depression, Franklin Delano Roosevelt and the New Deal. The economic depression of the golden twenties including Ponzi schemes, sharecroppers, the crisis of land and capital, and the Mississippi Flood of 1931.

Students will complete assessments with multiple-choice questions to gauge their depth of understanding and demonstrate their scope of content mastery. Students will also complete an essay on the cause and effect of a particular event in history relating to the topic of study.

**ECONOMICS:** The economics curriculum covers fundamental economic concepts, microeconomics, and macroeconomics. The economics curriculum will also include a thematic section focused on the topic of the year.

Students will complete assessments with multiple-choice questions to gauge their depth of understanding and demonstrate their scope of content mastery. Students will also complete an essay discussing factors leading to the economic growth or decline of a particular element relating to the topic of study for the year.

**MATHEMATICS:** The mathematics curriculum will cover topics in the fields of general mathematics, algebra, geometry, trigonometry, and differential calculus.

Students will complete assessments with multiple-choice questions to gauge their depth of understanding and demonstrate their scope of content mastery.

**SPEECH:** The speech curriculum requires students to formulate thoughtful judgments about oral communication, deliver focused and coherent presentations that convey clear perspectives and demonstrate solid reasoning, and practice good critical listening skills. Students will learn to use gestures, tone, and vocabulary appropriate to the audience and purpose.

Students will produce a formal speech on a topic of their choice and will also perform various short impromptu speeches on assigned topics.

## **7. Materials of Instruction:**

A. Textbook(s) and Core Reading(s):

All assigned USAD materials

B. Supplemental Materials and Resources:

(1) Outside full-length novel that rotates every year

C. Tools, Equipment, Technology, Manipulatives, Audio-Visual:

Television

DVD Player

Overhead Projector

Computers

Printers

Poster Boards

Color Pencils and Markers

### **8. A. Objectives of Course:**

- 1) Identify and incorporate *the traits* of good writing.
- 2) Write for a variety of audiences and purposes, especially literary analysis.
- 3) Utilize literary terms.
- 4) Maintain an organized notebook.
- 5) Integrate research according to M.L.A.
- 6) Build sound writing habits, develop a writing style, and increase vocabulary.
- 7) Practice the SQ3R technique for critical reading.
- 8) Develop strategies for summarizing and paraphrasing.
- 9) Implement all levels of thinking: recalling, understanding, applying, analyzing, synthesizing and evaluating.
- 10) Organize, express and present ideas using appropriate voice to maintain maximum attention for both prepared and impromptu speeches.

### **B. Evaluation / Assessment / Rubrics:**

Classroom-based Instructional Tasks= 40%

Formative Assessment= 20%

Summative Assessment= 20%

Homework=10%

Final Exam= 10%

### **C. Minimal Attainment:**

Students are expected to achieve 50% minimum grade in all assignments, tests, and projects.