

# READINESS PROFILE & COURSE EXPECTATIONS

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## YEARBOOK

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

- By creating the school's award-winning Yearbook, students learn to master a variety of practical and valuable life skills: writing, interviewing, photography, graphic design, all of which serve as assets as students move into college and the business world. The Yearbook welcomes responsible students who take the initiative to tackle long-term assignments that ultimately comprise the Yearbook. We seek team players who are flexible and willing to devote their time and efforts to what is truly a great— and highly collaborative— group project.
- This year-long, 10-unit course officially meets on half of the school days; on the other days, students are off-roll.

### COURSE CONTENT AND EXPECTATIONS

- We have one purpose in the Yearbook class: to produce a Yearbook that the staff can be proud of and the student body appreciates. To that end, we welcome any student who is eager to contribute to something as enduring and meaningful as a high school Yearbook. Our goal is for every staff member to feel like he or she made a vital contribution to the book while being a valued and integral part of the Yearbook team.
- The primary expectation is that staff members meet their obligations. They are accountable not only to themselves but to the entire staff. They must commit to completing the work they take on in a timely fashion and do it to the highest quality they can. Unlike in a typical high school class, if a student doesn't do his work in Yearbook, he or she is not the only one affected. For every time someone doesn't follow through on their commitments in Yearbook, someone else has to pick up the pieces. In the class, we strive to create a climate of shared expectations where everyone is accountable to everyone else.
- Given that most of the interviews and photos for the Yearbook must be done outside of class, students should be able to manage their time and be available, at least some of the time, after school and/or during lunch. In some cases, students will need to attend events (sports games, club excursions, etc.) outside of the school day.
- There are no prerequisites for this course.

### MAJOR UNITS OF STUDY

- In the first month or so of the course, students are introduced to the fundamentals of Yearbook journalism: copy writing, interviewing, editing, graphic design, and photography.
- After that, we try to structure the class periods as though students were going to work instead of to school. During class time, we aim to create a professional job-like atmosphere where students show up with one primary objective: to get their work done, and to do it well. This may mean that students work in small collaborative groups, write or edit copy on their own, design layouts with partners, plan interviews, or meet as a staff.
- We have five major deadlines during the year, and in advance of each of these, the staff works late at school (9 p.m.) on two nights. This happens on a total of 10 nights from November through April.

**Please see syllabus for additional course rules and information**

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## STUDENT BACKGROUND

- While incoming staff members do not necessarily need to already possess strong skills in any particular area of Yearbook journalism, we welcome students with strengths in the areas of writing, photography, or graphic design. If, however, none of those are your strengths, we would love to have you join us anyway. The most important traits are an eagerness to commit and work hard, a willingness to learn, and an ability to get along with others.
- For students who like to create things, who like to keep moving instead of sitting still, and who like to interact with others, this is an ideal course

## WORKLOAD EXPECTATIONS

- Students work in pairs to complete two-page spreads in the Yearbook. The number of spreads that students have depends on the total number of staff members. Editors have additional responsibilities.
- The workload is very manageable, but it requires planning ahead and solid time-management skills. Yearbook consists of long-term projects. By the middle of September, students will know what their assignments for the entire year are. They will have anywhere from about a month to four or five months to complete their work. Given this, procrastination can be the enemy of the Yearbooker. If, for example, a staff member is responsible for completing the Yearbook spread on the roller hockey team, then that person must be able to work with his/her partner to decide which games they will photograph, which players on the team they will write about, and how and when this will all happen. They will be given deadlines, but it is ultimately up to plan their time in such a way that works with their own schedules and meets the deadlines.

**Please see syllabus for additional course rules and information**