Course Syllabus:
AP Seminar

1. Course Description
AP Seminar is a foundational course that engages students in cross-curricular conversations that explore the complexities of academic and real-world topics and issues by analyzing divergent perspectives. Using an inquiry framework, students practice reading and analyzing a wide range of texts representing many disciplines. Students learn to synthesize information from multiple sources, develop their own perspectives in written essays, and design and deliver oral and visual presentations, both individually and as part of a team. Ultimately, the course aims to equip students with the power to analyze and evaluate information with accuracy and precision in order to craft and communicate evidence-based arguments.

2. Instructional Philosophy
As we engage in thoughtful inquiry together as a class, it is imperative that each student bring their full energy, commitment and willingness to listen, engage, question, think critically, challenge and be challenged, and ultimately to grow. It is only through thoughtful, engaged and critical practice that we are able to work beyond our pre-conceived ideas to deepen our understanding of the world around us and our role within it.

3. Curricular Requirements:
✓ Students will explore the complexities of one or more themes by making connections within, between and/or among multiple cross-curricular areas and by exploring multiple perspectives and lenses (e.g., cultural and social, artistic and philosophical, political and historical, environmental, economic, scientific, futuristic, ethical) related to those themes.
✓ Students will develop and apply discrete skills identified in the learning objectives of the enduring understandings within the following five big ideas:
  o Question and Explore
  o Understand and Analyze
  o Evaluate Multiple Perspectives
  o Synthesize Ideas
  o Team, Transform & Transmit
✓ Students will gain a rich appreciation and understanding of issues through the following activities:
  o Reading articles and research studies;
  o Reading foundational, literary and philosophical texts;
  o Viewing and listening to speeches, broadcasts, and/or personal accounts;
  o And experiencing artistic works and performances.
✓ Students will develop an understanding of ethical research practices and the AP Capstone™ Policy on Plagiarism and Falsification or Fabrication of Information.
✓ Students will work collaboratively with a team to identify, investigate, analyze, and evaluate a real-world or academic problem or issue; consider and evaluate alternatives or options; propose one or more solutions or resolutions; and present and defend the argument for their solutions through a multimedia presentation.
✓ Students will work independently to identify a research question based on provided stimulus material; research the issue; analyze, evaluate, and select evidence to develop an argument; present and defend a conclusion; and produce a multimedia presentation to be delivered to their peers.

4. Tentative Major Units of Study (Please note the order of these units may vary)

Semester One

Unit 1: Language & Communication
Learning Objectives:
  Question & Explore: 1.1 A: Contextualizing and identifying the complexities of a problem or issue.
  Understand & Analyze: 5.2 A: Providing individual contributions to overall collaborative effort to accomplish a task or goal.
  Understand & Analyze: 5.2 B: Fostering constructive team climate, resolving conflicts, and facilitating the contributions of all team members to address complex open-ended problems.


Supplementary Texts:
Bliss, Chris. “Comedy is Translation.” Youtube, uploaded by TED, 21 Feb. 2012. (Lecture/Ted Talk)

Activities:
Team Building: Multiple activities will be facilitated that are designed to invite students to engage, interact, and learn to rely on other students in the class. Classroom community will be facilitated through games and solidified through norm setting, especially around feedback and questioning of each other.

QUEST Introduction: Students will be introduced to the QUEST model. Partners will be given a letter from the acronym and will make a poster identifying key aspects of the concept, including an image. These will be presented to the class and will hang in the room all year long.

Language Log: Students will record how their language choices change depending on their social context. Logs will be discussed and examined for students to have an initial connection to how they use language to form an identity. This activity will also be used to begin questioning through peers helping each other to dig deeper into the meaning of their language logs. Students will reflect on how their understanding of their language log evolved based on peer feedback.

Articles Jigsaw & Discussion: The three Atlantic articles will be read and jigsawed in the class. Articles will be read, annotated, and summarized and cited. These articles will be used to expand initial conversations about language and how different groups use and shape language. Questioning techniques will be employed to begin to think of the implications and connections among these articles.

Articles Jigsaw & Mini-Debate: Foundational texts will be used to practice discussing more difficult texts. These texts will be read, annotated and used to engage in a mini debate over the various theories of language acquisition. Partners will present which theory they think is true. Students will be expected to use attributive language when referencing any source used, in addition to turning in an annotated bibliography.

Assessment: Practice Team Presentation: Language Theory Present

Unit 2: Language & Education

All prior objectives as well as…
Learning Objectives:

Question & Explore: 1.1 B: Posing questions and seeking out answers that reflect multiple, divergent, or contradictory perspectives.
Question & Explore: 1.4 A: Evaluating the relevance and credibility of the source of information and data in relation to the inquiry.
Understand & Analyze: 2.1 A: Employing appropriate reading strategies and reading critically for a specific purpose.
Understand & Analyze: 2.1 B: Summarizing and explaining a text’s main idea or aim while avoiding faulty generalizations and oversimplification.
Understand & Analyze: 2.2 A: Explaining and analyzing the logic and line of reasoning of an argument.
Evaluate Multiple Perspectives: 3.1 A: Identifying, comparing, and interpreting multiple perspectives on or arguments about an issue.
Synthesize Ideas: 4.2 A: Interpreting, using and synthesizing qualitative and/or quantitative data/information from various perspectives and sources (e.g. primary, secondary, print, nonprint) to develop and support an argument.
Team, Transform & Transmit: 5.1 A: Planning and producing a cohesive academic paper, considering audience context, and purpose.

Foundational Texts:

Supplementary Texts:

Activities:
**Reading & Questioning:** What argument is Alexie making about the role of education in his life? While reading *Ways with Words* and *The Skin We Speak*, students will be asked to identify argument, reasons and evidence of each text. Students will find common themes among Heath’s & Judith Baker’s research and discuss about language in education. Themes will be discussed and evaluated by different groups, eventually used to pose questions that could be debated about language and education.

Articles of the week: Students will practice reading, annotating, summarizing and identifying main argument, claims and evidence.

**Mock EOC:** Students will be given the supplementary texts and asked to synthesize two of the articles around a single identified topic related to language and education.

**Debate:** Students will be given different sides about the debate around native language instruction in schools. They will practice formulating an argument, providing reasons and evidence. Students will be asked to do additional research about their chosen topics for the debate. For each source chosen, an evaluation will be completed using the RAVEN method. Correct citation and attribution will be practiced. Students will reflect on how the debate shaped their thinking around topics.

Assessment: Mock EOC & Debate: Native language programs in schools

**Unit 3: Language & Power**

*All prior objectives as well as…*

**Learning Objectives:**

- **Question & Explore:**
  - 1.2 A: Retrieving, questioning, organizing, and using prior knowledge about a topic.
  - 1.3 A: Accessing and managing information using effective strategies.

- **Understand & Analyze:**
  - 2.2 B: Evaluating the relevance and credibility of evidence used to support an argument, taking context into consideration.
  - 3.2 A: Evaluating objections, implications, and limitations of alternate, opposing, or competing perspectives or arguments.

- **Synthesize Ideas:**
  - 4.2 B: Providing insightful and cogent commentary that links evidence with claims.
  - 4.3 A: Adhering knowledge and ideas accurately and ethically, using an appropriate citation style.

- **Team, Transform & Transmit:**
  - 5.1 B: Adhering to established conventions of grammar, usage, style, and mechanics.
  - 5.3 A: Reflecting on and revising their own writing, thinking, and creative processes.

**Foundational Texts:**


**Supplementary Texts:**

- Activities:
  - **Frontloading/Accessing Background Knowledge:** Language & Power will be written on a large poster. Students will be asked to generate any connections they see between these two concepts, with differently shaped arrows to indicate the kind of connection that exists. Discussions about the overlap with previous Language and Education topic will be discussed.

  **Tableau:** After reading “How to Tame a Wild Tongue.” Student groups will be asked to create tableaus that represent Anzaldua’s relationship with language and power. Students will discuss each other’s tableaus. What argument are the groups making with their tableau’s about Anzaldua’s experience with language?

- **Dialectical Theatre:** After reading Toni Morrison’s Nobel Lecture, student groups will be asked to write a dialogue between Morrison and Anzaldua that explores the question: How is language used to exert and maintain power?

- **Mock PT 2:** Students will identify a personal topic out of the current or previous units. All foundational texts will be reviewed and students will be asked to identify themes that emerge. From themes, students will practice generating research questions. Students will help each other to revise and refine their research questions. From the research questions, students will identify the foundational texts that most address their topics and complete additional research, using careful evaluation and citation of sources. Students will read, annotate, discuss and use all sources to write a mock PT 1 (Individual Written Argument) that addresses their question, explains research and identifies solutions. They will present their findings to the class. Teams will be formed to help each other with the revision process of their written work and presentations.

**Assessment:** Mock PT 2
Unit 4: Team Chosen Language Topics

All prior objectives as well as...

Learning Objectives:

Question & Explore: 1.5 A: Identifying the information needed for the context of the inquiry.
Understand & Analyze: 2.2 C: Evaluating the validity of an argument.
Understand & Analyze: 2.3 A: Connecting an argument to broader issues by examining the implications of the author’s claim.
Understand & Analyze: 2.3 B: Evaluating potential resolutions, conclusions, or solutions to problems or issues raised by an argument.
Synthesize Ideas: 4.1 A: Formulating a well-reasoned argument, taking the complexities of the problem or issue into consideration.
Synthesize Ideas: 4.4 A: Extending an idea, question, process, or product to innovate or create new understandings.
Synthesize Ideas: 4.5 A: Offering resolutions, conclusions, and/or solutions based on evidence considering limitations and implications.
Team, Transform & Transmit: 5.1 C: Communicating information through appropriate media using effective techniques of design.
Team, Transform & Transmit: 5.1 D: Adapting an argument for context, purpose, and/or audience.
Team, Transform & Transmit: 5.1 E: Engaging an audience by employing effective techniques of delivery or performance.
Team, Transform & Transmit: 5.3 B: Reflecting on experiences of collaborative effort.


Lenses & Questioning: Students will each be given a lens, a poster and the focus topic of language acquisition within language theories to practice writing questions about language. Once students pose questions within their lens, students will walk around and offer advice on writing questions within that lens. Helping to narrow and pose answerable questions. After group discussion, students will be given team time to generate questions related to language. Questions will be critiqued by other teams to narrow, revise and refocus.

Team Topic Generation:
Students will be given various texts (See Supplementary texts below) to explore and as teams they will read their text, generate the following: Biggest Issue presented in text, thesis, claims and evidence. They will identify lenses around topic, and pose additional questions about topic identified. Groups will help in revising each other’s focus. Groups will then divide up lenses among group. Each student will create an annotated bibliography around the lens, deepening their understanding of their given topic. Research questions and group presentation will follow individual research. Solutions will be proposed by group in group presentation.

Supplementary Texts for Topic Generation:
Sacks, Oliver. The Man who Mistook His Wife for a Hat. Touchstone, 1998. (Scientific)

Assessment: Mock PT 1 (Annotated Bibliography will be completed by individuals within the group in place of IRR).

Semester Two

Unit 1: Students will complete Performance Task 1 for submission to the College Board.

Unit 2: Students will complete Performance Task 2 for submission to the College Board.

Unit 3: Students will review and prepare for End of Course Exam. Focusing on main idea, argument, claims, evidence and synthesis of ideas.

5. Plagiarism Policy
Participating teachers shall inform students of the consequences of plagiarism and instruct students to ethically use and acknowledge the ideas and work of others throughout their course work. The student's individual voice should be clearly
evident, and the ideas of others must be acknowledged, attributed and/or cited.

Specifically related to AP Seminar, “A student who fails to acknowledge the source or author of any and all information or evidence taken from the work of someone else through citation, attribution or reference in the body of the work, or through a bibliographic entry, will receive a score of 0 on that particular component of the AP Seminar and/or AP Research Performance Task. In AP Seminar, a team of students that fails to properly acknowledge sources or authors on the Team Multimedia Presentation will receive a group score of 0 for that component of the Team Project and Presentation.

A student who incorporates falsified or fabricated information (e.g. evidence, data, sources and/or authors) will receive a score of 0 on that particular component of the AP Seminar and/or AP Research Performance Task. In AP Seminar, a team of students that incorporates falsified or fabricated information in the Team Multimedia Presentation will receive a group score of 0 for that component of the Team Project and Presentation.