

Theory of Knowledge 2022 Syllabus

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Course Description:

Throughout this course, you are invited to go on a journey in which you critically evaluate yourself as a “knower” and “thinker” within your community of “knowers”. You will explore knowledge questions related to a range of themes and look at 5 areas of knowledge: History, Human Sciences, Mathematics, Natural Sciences and the Arts. You will make links between various areas of knowledge while evaluating the boundaries that confine them. You will learn more about the methods we employ to gather knowledge in different disciplines and discover perspectives as well as shifts within cognitive paradigms. Throughout the course, you will also explore the ethical implications that come with the possession of and search for knowledge.

What makes TOK different from other IB courses is that you will think about knowledge and what it means to know rather than learn new knowledge. To do so, you will come across a range of fairly abstract concepts. Thinking about these concepts can be a little different from what you are used to. Exploring TOK concepts may push you to the edge of your comfort zone which may be difficult at times but eventually rewarding. The following concepts will help you explore the notion of knowledge: **evidence, certainty, truth, interpretation, power, justification, explanation, objectivity, perspective, culture, values and responsibility.**

Course Aims:

- To encourage students to reflect on the central question, “How do we know that?” and to recognize the value of asking that question
- To expose students to ambiguity, uncertainty and questions with multiple plausible answers
- To equip students to effectively navigate and make sense of the world, and help prepare them to encounter novel and complex situations
- To encourage students to be more aware of their own perspectives and to reflect critically on their own beliefs and assumptions
- To engage students with multiple perspectives, foster open-mindedness and develop intercultural understanding

- To encourage students to make connections between academic disciplines by exploring underlying concepts and by identifying similarities and differences in the methods of inquiry used in different areas of knowledge
- To prompt students to consider the importance of values, responsibilities and ethical concerns relating to the production, acquisition, application and communication of knowledge

Units/Topics: The TOK curriculum is made up of three deeply interconnected parts:

- **The core theme - Knowledge and the knower**
- **Optional themes - Knowledge and technology and Knowledge and politics**
- **Areas of Knowledge: History, Human Sciences, Natural Sciences, Mathematics, and the Arts**

Texts/Resources: A variety of texts will be used throughout the course including the Kognity online textbook, essays, articles, academic journals, books, film, music, poetry, etc. Students will need to come to class everyday with a notebook, folder, personal journal and pen/pencil.

Grading:

- [RHS 8 point grading scale](#) used in formative assessments.
- IB Assessment Criteria used in summative assessments.
- 20 formative/80 summative grade breakdown
- 2-1-0 homework checks & other smaller assignments (mostly for completion or practice, not measurement or growth per se) 2= complete; 1= partially; 0= incomplete
- All Summative assessments are required to pass the class.

TOK Assessments:

- **The TOK exhibition** - assesses the ability of students to show how TOK manifests in the world around us. The exhibition is an internal assessment.
- **The TOK essay** - engages students in a more formal and sustained piece of writing in response to a title focused on the areas of knowledge. The essay must be a maximum of 1600 words and must be on one of the six prescribed titles issued by the IB. It is an external assessment.

Due Dates:

All assignments will have a due date. Students are expected to ask for an extension if unable to meet the deadline.

Academic Honesty Policy:

Students engaged in dishonesty will be penalized on the assignment, may be given the opportunity to resubmit the assignment for credit, and they will be reported to their dean for disciplinary action and Administration if applicable.

Academic Dishonesty includes, but is not limited to:

- cheating on assignments or tests
- plagiarizing (misrepresenting as one's own anything done by another)
- submitting the same or substantially similar papers or creative work for more than one course without consent of all instructors concerned.
- depriving another of necessary course materials
- sabotaging another's work
- colluding to support malpractice by another student
- To avoid plagiarism, words and ideas used to support one's argument **MUST** be acknowledged in all journals, papers and presentations.

In our class, you are required to use MLA or Chicago citation style. Passages that are quoted verbatim must be enclosed within quotation marks and the author must be acknowledged. Electronic media (websites, etc.) must be treated the same way as books and journals, and the sources of all photographs, maps, illustrations, etc. must also be acknowledged if not your own work.

My goal is to facilitate a student centered class. In order for that to happen, we all need to work together to create a positive, respectful, collaborative community. I look forward to working with you and please contact me at any time with questions, concerns or assistance.