Hello families and students!

This week we continue to work on our Integrated Africa Essay. **The essay outline is due this Wednesday evening**; therefore, we have decided to **move our virtual office hours** to the middle of the week, for this week (Tuesday from 10-11 AM and Wednesday from 1-2 PM) so that students can have an opportunity to talk to us about their outline before they submit it.

We have a few loose ends on grading that we are now ready to address.

**Grades:** As you’re aware, students who are engaging in the content will not receive a lower grade than what they held at the school closure: Midterm 3. MT3 grades can be found by going into Skyward and looking for MT3.

On Friday May 15th, “Quarter 3” grades will be posted by the Skyward system. These grades will reflect the MT3 grade plus any late work that was submitted since the school closure, and work that was collected at school in the week prior to school closure. There are a few grades we will be entering this week to square everything away.

If your Quarter 3 grade is higher than your MT3 grade, it will become your new “baseline grade.” If it is lower, your MT3 grade will remain your “baseline grade.”

Students who are NOT engaging in content can be given an incomplete and will not earn credit for this Semester.

**Engagement:** We do not expect the work that students turn in during this time to be perfect, or that students will totally master all concepts; however, we are looking to ensure that the work is complete. Students who do not engage at all and/or do not turn in critical assignments during a unit will be given an incomplete at the end of Semester 2, regardless of their “baseline grade”. Also, if a student is continuously turning in work that is unfinished, or does not meet the basic requirements, we will need to have a conversation around this, and he or she could receive an incomplete.

The culminating **integrated Africa essay** will still be graded on the Humanities rubric, and students will still be able to get general feedback on where they are in their skill development, but they will not be receiving the fine-tuning level of feedback we would normally give. To ease the stress many students are feeling about their grade due to the short amount of time they were suggested to spend on this assignment, we are increasing the point values associated with each category.

* Meets Standard: 90-100%
* Approaching Standard: 80-89%
* Below Standard: Up to 79% (grade depends on the paper being on-topic, and the student making a genuine effort).

We believe that by maintaining our rubric categories and raising the point values associated with these categories, students will be able to get accurate feedback without being punished pointwise for the current situation. These changes are being made in a similar way across the 9th grade humanities teachers.

**Late Work:** Finally, we want to encourage students by being flexible during this time. If you are feeling overwhelmed or find yourself unable to make a due date, **you need to reach out and let us know that you need an extended due date.** Many of our students have already done this and have been doing a great job of advocating for themselves and letting us know what they need.

We have a **new policy** around extended due dates to offer maximum flexibility while also ensuring that students do not procrastinate and attempt to turn in every assignment extremely late (which will only harm their learning and create stress.) Please look at the chart below to see why it is important to reach out to ask for an extension.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Assignment is not turned in by the due date** | **Assignment is then turned in Late** |
| **Did not reach out** for help or request an extension (we never hear from you about the assignment) | Zero in the gradebook | Zero is replaced with a “No Count”, so it is no longer decreasing your grade, but it cannot increase your grade either. |
| **Did reach out** for help or request an extension | “Blank” in the gradebook | “Blank” is replaced with your earned grade |

**Keep in mind, turning in completed work is a requirement for engagement. Without any submitted, completed work, you are in danger of receiving an incomplete, regardless of your “baseline grade.”**

Below is the activities and assignments for the week. As always, you are certainly not limited to the schedule in the task list, but please know that the expectation is that you would spend 250 minutes a week on our block class and complete assignments by the due dates. Please reach out if you are having difficulties with technology so we can get you access to the materials!

**9th Humanities Block Tasks: May 11th - 15th**

**Monday, May 11**

* Outline work time (50 min)

**Tuesday, May 12**

* Outline work time (50 min)
* Optional: Come to our office hours on Teams today from 10-11 AM to ask questions and check in about the essay.

**Wednesday, May 13**

* Outline work time (50 min)
* **Outline is due to Teams at 10 PM tonight.**
* Optional: Come to our office hours on Teams today from 1-2 PM to ask questions and check in about the essay.

**Thursday, May 14**

* Watch our Outline Feedback video (approx 20 min) *This video will be based on things we noticed in all of your outlines and will offer some tips and suggestions on how to improve your essay.*
* Review your outline and begin revising it (remaining time)

**Friday, May 15**

* Watch our Turning Outline into Paragraphs lesson video (25 min)
* Rough draft work time (25 min)