

# CLASSROOM POLICIES & EXPECTATIONS

J. A. Stanford, Jr. ♣ Palm Springs High School ♣ Palm Springs Unified School District

<p><b>WHAT SHOULD I DO WITH THIS DOCUMENT?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BEST PLACE TO KEEP IT: At home</li> <li>• NEXT BEST PLACE TO KEEP IT: In your binder</li> <li>• Please don't lose it. After your parent or guardian reads it, fill out the SIGNATURE PAGE and return that to the teacher (<b>required to pass in September</b>).</li> </ul>
<p><b>HOW DO I CONTACT THE TEACHER?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FASTEST WAY: E-mail me at <a href="mailto:askstanford@gmail.com">askstanford@gmail.com</a>. I check it often throughout the day, and most evenings.</li> <li>• NEXT FASTEST WAY: Send a written note with the envelope; I will respond and send a note back to you the same day.</li> <li>• SLOWEST WAY: Call the school and leave a message at 760.778.0400. I will not answer during class time and I will need 1 to 3 working days to return your call. I don't make myself available by phone in the evenings or on weekends.</li> </ul>
<p><b>WHERE IS THE CLASS BLOG?</b></p>	<p><a href="http://askstanford.wordpress.com">http://askstanford.wordpress.com</a>          I ask students to complete one assignment per week at this site.          I make a classroom computer available in the morning before school and most days at lunch.</p>
<p><b>WHAT IS YOUR TEACHING STYLE?</b></p>	<p>My instructional style is reflected in the goals I have for my students:          Goals for Students Preparing to Compete in a Globalized Marketplace</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Students will learn to write well. My greatest strength is teaching students to write. My methods include (1) requiring students to write 20-30 essays per year; (2) requiring students to revise 5-6 times per year; (3) requiring students to learn to score essays and score one another's work; (4) requiring students to conference with me about their writing if they find they're failing to improve.</li> </ol>
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Students will learn how to think. This means more discussion and less lecture. I do not believe students benefit from 50 minutes of lecture, day after day. Most students learn best when they talk, when they read, when they write, and especially when they teach others. Most students retain little when they're made to sit and listen.</li> </ol>
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Students will learn to behave like responsible college students. Although limiting my lecture time does not prepare students for the long lectures they're sure to experience in college, I still expect students at this level to behave like college students who are able to advocate for themselves, and able to work extensively outside class time. If I award passing grades to students unable to succeed in college, I'm not doing my job.</li> </ol>
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Students will learn how to complete coursework online. This includes reading, submitting work, interacting on blogs and message boards---skills most colleges and many high-paying employers will expect students to have mastered. Students without computer or Internet access at home will not be disadvantaged if they work with the teacher to use one of many available school computers.</li> </ol>

	<p>5. Students able to pass this course will be able to pass the A.P. test. Each Advanced Placement exam (for both English and Social Science) consists of a challenging multiple choice section and a series of essays. The points earned from the essays and the multiple choice section combine to form an A.P. exam score ranging from 1 to 5. "3" is considered passing. Understand that the exam is a norm-referenced test designed to produce passing scores or better for 60% of the students who opt to take the test. It is also designed to produce few 5s and few 1s. The most common score earned by a student taking the test is a "2." In my opinion, that score is unacceptable, because it reflects a lack of focus during the test, or it reflects a lack of effort by the student during the school year, or it reflects a lack of communication between student and teacher about the student's lack of progress, or it reflects an overinflated grading system. Students used to earning an easy "A" just because they're "smart" and playing the game of school comes naturally to them will be unable to earn even a "C" in this course without spending approximately 2 hours per weeknight (10 hours per week) reading and writing.</p>
<p><b>WHAT ARE WE DOING IN CLASS?</b></p>	<p>Some days are fairly predictable.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Tuesdays</b> = “Ketchup Meetings” after school (unless the teacher is absent for some reason)</li> <li>• Monthly deadlines always fall on Tuesdays as well</li> <li>• <b>Wednesdays</b> = Writing workshops are required to pass. Plan to make these up if you’re absent, or risk failing the course</li> </ul> <p>On other days, I employ some of the following instructional strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mini-lesson / discussion or small group activity</li> <li>• Mini-lesson / whole class discussion or activity</li> <li>• Contest</li> <li>• Quiz / test / timed essay (although essays will normally fall on Wednesdays)</li> <li>• Direct instruction: debriefing a test or analyzing a text</li> </ul>
<p><b>WHAT ARE THE REQUIRED MATERIALS?</b></p>	<p><b>Required, every day:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pencil</li> <li>• Pen</li> <li>• Highlighter</li> <li>• 3-ring binder / folder</li> <li>• Spiral notebook</li> </ul> <p>Optional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Glue and scissors are helpful</li> <li>• Loose-leaf lined paper if you don’t want to use the teacher’s scratch paper</li> </ul> <p><b>If your family cannot afford to provide the required materials,</b> see the counselor or see me privately, outside of class, and I will handle the situation.</p> <p><b>Replacement handouts:</b> You may serve detention or pay a part of your grade for a replacement handout, should you lose or damage the original handout given to you. Due to the crisis in the state budget, schools cannot afford to make more than one photocopy per student. I expect to spend between \$2,000 and \$8,000 of my own money during the school year on materials and photocopies, and am unwilling to spend more due to student negligence. You would feel the same if you were me.</p>

<p><b>WHAT IS THE HOMEWORK?</b></p>	<p>I assign homework <b>every school night</b>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 60-90 minutes of outside reading (AP students must select books from a list or seek pre-approval for outside reading). Reading is the single most important thing a student can do to improve his overall academic abilities. Students who read more do better in school--it's a proven fact. Students avoid reading, and students who watch more television do worse in school. Reading is the #1 indicator of academic success--even more than socioeconomic status.</li> <li>• 1 other assignment based on the day's lesson. See the classroom blog for more information.</li> <li>• On some nights, I expect students to work on a larger assignment or project.</li> <li>• Remember that enrollment in Advanced Placement courses is <i>optional</i>.</li> </ul>
<p><b>HOW DO I EARN THE GRADE I WANT?</b></p>	<p>Each semester consists of four grades, one per month.</p> <p>Each monthly grade consists of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Three pass/fail items, <b>all required to pass</b>: (1) outside reading, (2) essay writing, and (3) essay revision. If the student chooses to neglect <b>any</b> of these three items, I cannot issue a passing grade. Details for each of these three items appear online at <a href="http://askstanford.wordpress.com">http://askstanford.wordpress.com</a>, and will be discussed at length in class. Students will be unable to credibly claim they didn't understand, or never heard about the policy early in each grading period.</li> <li>• Points are also <b>required to pass</b>: to earn a C, students must earn 6 points. To earn a B, students must earn 12 points. To earn an A, students must earn 18 points.</li> </ul> <p>I am also providing, in paper form and online, a detailed explanation of the grading policy. <b>If the student or the family has any questions or concerns</b>, these should be addressed early in the term.</p>
<p><b>HOW DO I EARN POINTS?</b></p>	<p>Students in my class enjoy the freedom to decide how they will earn points. Look at the Grade Policy handout for your class, or online at <a href="http://askstanford.wordpress.com">http://askstanford.wordpress.com</a>, to view your options.</p> <p>Most of the ways students earn points involve mastering California's English / Language Arts standards, or mastering the art of becoming a responsible, organized adult.</p>
<p><b>HOW IS MY SEMESTER GRADE DECIDED?</b></p>	<p>Look at the Grade Policy handout for your class, or online at <a href="http://askstanford.wordpress.com">http://askstanford.wordpress.com</a>, to see how the four monthly grades combine to form a final semester grade.</p>
<p><b>WHAT DO THE MONTHLY PROGRESS REPORTS MEAN?</b></p>	<p>Each semester the family will receive four report cards: the first progress report, the end-of-quarter grade, the second progress report, and the final semester grade. <b>Only the last report card is recorded in the student's transcript.</b> I use these notification tools differently than some teachers. In my class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• October progress report = student's September grade</li> <li>• November end-of-quarter progress report = student's October grade</li> <li>• December progress report = student's November grade</li> <li>• January report card = student's final semester grade (includes all 4 months)</li> <li>• March progress report = student's February grade</li> <li>• April end-of-quarter progress report = student's March grade</li> <li>• May progress report = student's April grade</li> <li>• June report card = student's final semester grade (includes all 4 months)</li> </ul> <p>All points, required items, and past monthly grades are available online in Zangle. See the PSHS attendance office for a Zangle login.</p>

<p><b>WHAT DOES THE GRADE IN ZANGLE MEAN?</b></p>	<p>In <b>Zangle</b>, the online system parents can use to view their student's grade, you will see whether or not your student has completed the three items required to pass for the current month, and you will see how many points your students has accumulated so far in the current month. I will update Zangle as often as possible but expect some delay in getting scores entered. If there's any question, please e-mail me at <a href="mailto:askstanford@gmail.com">askstanford@gmail.com</a>.</p>
<p><b>WHAT IS THE LATE WORK POLICY?</b></p>	<p>I value quality over punctuality; however, I do not see any reason why a student cannot inform me ahead of time that she will be unable to meet a deadline. I will grant a reasonable extension to anyone who requests it <b>before</b> the assignment's due date, unless the due date is the Monthly Deadline. A student may request an extension in writing or via email at <a href="mailto:askstanford@gmail.com">askstanford@gmail.com</a>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Late work before the Monthly Deadline, whether the student is absent or present on the due date, whether the absence is excused or not</b> = -1 point per item</li> <li>• <b>Late work after the Monthly Deadline, whether the student is absent or present on the due date, whether the absence is excused or not</b> = the work counts for next month's grade</li> </ul> <p>You'll notice that a deadline remains fixed <b>EVEN IF</b> the student is absent and the absence is excused. The reasons for this are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Students may not have to be present for certain assignments; in those cases, a friend or family member can deliver the work if the student is absent.</li> <li>2. ALL monthly deadlines will be announced at the beginning of the school year and posted online at <a href="http://askstanford.wordpress.com">http://askstanford.wordpress.com</a>. Other deadlines will be announced and posted as early as possible. Students are not required to turn in work on a deadline; they can turn work in early. Procrastination involves risk. Students wishing to avoid the risk of suffering a penalty will simply turn the work in early.</li> <li>3. Some parents will call the school and inform the attendance office that their student is sick when in fact they are trying to give their student more time to complete an assignment. This is unfair to the families who try to teach their children to live their lives with a sense of integrity. In extreme situations, I'm happy to work with a family, but if the situation's truly extreme, a deadline in a high school class will surely seem trivial.</li> <li>4. Extracurricular activities involving last-minute performances or playoff appearances do not warrant exceptions. Responsible students will think ahead and learn how to manage their time by creating contingencies for themselves.</li> </ol>
<p><b>WHAT IS THE TARDY POLICY?</b></p>	<p>A student is considered on time in my class if his backside is connected to a chair <b>before</b> the tardy bell starts to ring. Time is precious, and I'm serious about using all of it to do the best job I can.</p>
<p><b>WHAT IF I NEED TO LEAVE THE CLASSROOM?</b></p>	<p>Each student will be given an out pass card with two out passes per month. Students needing more can ask their families to communicate with me. Students who choose not to use those out passes will be rewarded.</p>
<p><b>WHAT ARE THE GOALS OF THIS CLASSROOM?</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Accept responsibility for your choices.</li> <li>2. Respect others.</li> <li>3. Cooperate with each other.</li> <li>4. Do your best work.</li> </ol>

<p><b>WHAT ARE THE RULES OF THIS CLASSROOM?</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I will criticize ideas, not people.*</li> <li>2. I will respect property that does not belong to me.</li> <li>3. When someone is speaking to the class, I will remain quiet and look at that person.</li> <li>4. During silent reading and tests, I will refrain from contributing to any disruption.</li> </ol> <p><i>*Teacher's note: I respect the right of all people to feel safe in my classroom. This means no one enjoys the unfair privilege of trying to control the beliefs or lifestyles of anyone else, and no one may disrupt the learning environment. Whenever appropriate, I encourage students to be public about their beliefs and opinions, and I strive to teach them how to communicate those beliefs and opinions in a way that spurs discussion and understanding rather than conflict and hostility. We needn't agree in order to get along.</i></p>
<p><b>WHAT RULES EXIST FOR THE TEACHER?</b></p>	<p>I will follow all the rules above, and:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I will come to class prepared to teach.</li> <li>2. I will be able to tell you why we are doing something.</li> <li>3. If you allow it, I will always deal with you directly and treat you like an adult.</li> <li>4. I will offer a procedure for suggestions and complaints and I will respond to all such messages, if they are signed and if the procedure is properly followed so that class is not disrupted.</li> </ol>
<p><b>WHAT IS THE DISCIPLINE POLICY FOR THIS CLASSROOM?</b></p>	<p>You've been in school for close to a decade or more. You know how to behave in school. When you make a poor choice, I want you to predict my reaction with 100% accuracy.</p> <p><b>Without exception, any threat of violence--including a joke--must be reported to administration.</b></p> <p><b>School rule violations</b>, including cheating and plagiarism, will be dealt with according to school policy. Please refer to the student handbook and familiarize yourself with school rules.</p> <p><b>Violations of the California State Student Fairness and Violence Act of 2000 (AB 537)</b> will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. Unwelcome sexual acts or sexual language, threats of violence, defiance, and other severe behavioral problems will result in immediate referral to administration. If you need it, I can teach you the difference between a hostile act and an honest expression of personal opinion.</p> <p><b>Chronic disruptiveness:</b> I will use the following system:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. First violation of any classroom rule: I will warn you, and you may be asked to write about the rule violation</li> <li>2. Second violation of any classroom rule: I will hold you after class and I may ask you to write about the rule violation</li> <li>3. Third violation of any rule: I may change your seat, I may contact home, and I may issue a detention</li> <li>4. Fourth violation of any rule: I will conference with you and I will contact home</li> <li>5. Fifth violation of any rule: I will remove you from the learning environment and contact home</li> </ol> <p>I may suspend the progression if you can go for more than a calendar month without a violation.</p>
<p><b>WHAT IF I HAVE A PROBLEM?</b></p>	<p>Please e-mail the teacher at <a href="mailto:askstanford@gmail.com">askstanford@gmail.com</a>. If something about the class bothers you, please don't wait. Let's discuss it.</p>

Let's have a great year together!

Sincerely,

**J. A. Stanford, Jr.**

B.A. History / Russian Language, The University of Montana, 1993

M.I.T. (Master in Teaching), University of Washington, 2000



