



GENERAL DESCRIPTION

“Reading maketh a full man; conference a ready man; and writing an exact man.” -Sir Frances Bacon

Sir Francis Bacon aptly captures the essence of the MCA Great Books Curriculum, which immerses students in the greatest works of philosophy and literature from our Western tradition. Through engaging in-class discussions, we delve into the ideas presented in these literary masterpieces, sharing our perspectives in class, and refining our thoughts in written essays. As we explore the ideas of the past, we aim to understand their impact on our world today, guided by the principle of II Corinthians 10:5 – “taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ.”

Great Books III is a level IV class and the continuation of MCA’s Great Books curriculum. We will read works that reflect the progression of modern literature and philosophy, with our primary focus being from the seventeenth to early twentieth centuries.

COURSE PURPOSE

The main goal of Great Books IV is to develop students as a readers, writers, listeners, thinkers and communicators by introducing them to the great ideas of Western literature.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- To expose students to the great ideas of Western Civilization.
- To examine these great ideas in such a way that leads the student into a better understanding of themselves and of the world.
- To develop the student as a reader, writer, listener, thinker, and communicator.
- To enhance the ability to graciously communicate with others through the written and spoken word.
- Students will write six to seven papers (4 Thesis/2-3 Exposition) throughout the year. Papers will be graded according to structure, content, and grammar.

REQUIRED READING

Works may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- *Summa Theologica* by Thomas Aquinas (selections)
- *Inferno* by Dante Alighieri
- *The Prince* by Niccolo Machiavelli
- *Hamlet* by William Shakespeare
- *Julius Caesar* by William Shakespeare
- *Purgatorio* by Dante Alighieri
- *Meditations* by Rene Descartes (selections)
- *Leviathan* by Thomas Hobbes (selections)
- *2nd Treatise of Government* by John Locke (selections)
- *Paradise Lost* by John Milton

GRADING

- **Reading – 35%**

(Daily reading quizzes, questions, or other assignments.)

- **Writing – 35%**

(Thesis papers and exposition papers.)

- **Contribution Grade – 30%**

- ☐ *Contribution Grades primarily assesses four areas: a student's **preparation** for class, his **attitude** towards learning, his **contribution** towards learning during class-time, and his level of **engagement** during the class conversation.*
- ☐ *A student's **respectfulness** towards God, his tutor, and peers is a prerequisite for a good Contribution Grade.*
- ☐ *Daily Contribution grades will be given for every hour of class. Typically, students are expected to earn 10 points per hour, but the tutor may adjust these values to better reflect the nature of the class time. Daily Contribution grades are not revisable.*
- ☐ *Additional Contribution Grades such as Grammar Quizzes, Engagement Notes, etc. may be assigned as needed. All additional Contribution Grades are revisable for 70% of the original value, unless the tutor specifies otherwise.*

Grades will be posted on FACTS Family Portal at least weekly for short assignments, and in two weeks for tests and papers.

REVISION POLICY

- All non-contribution assignments can be revised unless otherwise stated.
- Revisions completed correctly and submitted by the revision deadline will result in an additional 70% of deducted points being added to the original score.
- Unless otherwise noted, revisions for reading assignments are due 2 weeks from the original due date of the assignment.
- Unless otherwise noted, revisions for the final drafts for Thesis and Exposition Papers are due 1 month from their original due date.
- Revisions for major papers will require the student to submit 1.) the grade sheet 2.) the student's original final copy 3.) the revised copy w/ highlighted changes.

TURN IT IN SYSTEM

Turnitin is an internet-based service and tool that promotes academic integrity and original thought from students. Turnitin screens for similarity (plagiarism) and detects unauthorized A.I. usage in writing.

To better ensure academic integrity and original thought, tutors may ask students to either submit their classwork through Turnitin directly or to email them a digital copy of their classwork, for the tutor to upload through Turnitin screenings.

Tutors may use the feedback Turnitin provides to help them make a more-informed determination about the integrity and originality of the student's work.

MCA Schoolwide Policies

MCA ATTENDANCE POLICY

Absence: Parents must inform the school if their student will be absent for any reason. Call the Front Office or email attendance@mcaknights.org prior to the absence or on the morning of the absence. If a student is absent without prior notification by a parent, the school will call the parent to determine the validity of the absence. Call the office, 432-694-0995, or email attendance@mcaknights.org.

In the event an Upper School student is absent for more than one-fourth (1/4) of the class sessions during a semester, the student's parents must meet with the tutor and Head Administrator to determine whether the student will receive credit for the class. Additional and/or make-up work may be required.

Tardy Policy: Tardies will be marked at the discretion of the individual tutors. Students or parents should contact the individual tutors to report reasons for tardies as soon as possible.

Missed Assignment Due Date Guidelines: In the event of an absence, a due date extension will be given. The extension will not exceed the number of school days missed during the absence. Due dates will be established by the teacher or class tutor. Students must complete all work assigned during their absence. However, the teachers or tutors may, at their discretion, excuse the students from any portion of the assignments missed. Students will receive full credit for submitting assigned work. Note: It is the **student's responsibility** to find out what work was assigned. In the case of extended illness, it is recommended that the student or parents contact the tutors directly to find out what assignments were or will be missed.

MCA HONESTY POLICY

All students are assumed to be exhibiting the godly fruit of self-control. We anticipate working with students who are characterized by joy, honesty, and diligence. For this reason, upon enrollment, we require that each student affirm that he or she will maintain the highest standards of honesty and behavior in all work done for Midland Classical Academy. All students will be asked to sign the following.

Pledge of Academic Honesty

I have read and understand the Midland Classical Academy Code of Conduct. I pledge my honor, with God as my witness, to commit myself to the practice and preservation of these standards of academic honesty as long as I am a student of the academy.

As such, the following actions are considered serious violations of our Honesty Policy.

1. Directly copying someone else's work visually, orally, electronically or otherwise.
2. Use of disallowed devices on assignments such as notes, smartphones, books, etc.
3. Getting test questions or essential information from another student who has already completed an assignment that will later be taken, such as a test or quiz.
4. Any other activity that the tutor has explicitly described as cheating.

MCA MASTERY WITH HONORS (MH)

Midland Classical Academy offers honors credit, referred to as "Mastery with Honor", but we offer no "honors" classes.

Mastery with Honor credit for a class is given to those students who

- receive a minimum grade of 92.5 at the end of each semester
- receive a minimum participation grade of 85 at the end of each semester
- demonstrate character befitting an honor student (1 Corinthians 10:31)
- complete a tutor-approved, 20+ hour project that advances the student's knowledge or skills in the subject while serving either the school or the community in some capacity.

As a student fulfills these requirements in a class at MCA they receive a Mastery with Honor designated by an "MH" for the class. Mastery with Honor applications and a nominal fee are due at the end of October. The projects themselves are due at the end of March with two scheduled check-points in between the application and final deadline.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (A.I.) POLICY

Artificial Intelligence programs are tools that can be used beneficially or harmfully. To the extent that MCA uses these A.I. tools, we desire to use them and instruct our students to use them beneficially. It requires the classical virtue of "Wisdom" to discern the difference between what is beneficial and what is harmful.

Among MCA's core values is "Engaging Minds". Everything we do, including our use of A.I. needs to be in harmony with this value and to cultivate within students the skill of being able to "think for themselves".

MCA offers the following principles for tutors & students to follow as they navigate A.I. in their academic domains. MCA tutors will create and clearly communicate their own instructions for A.I. usage in their classrooms and for their assignments. Students should practice integrity, honesty, and humility in their use of A.I. as in all their work.

Principle 1: *Why to use A.I.* - A.I. should only be used by a student to equip them to better understand the material and to learn in a way that facilitates their critical thinking skills.

Principle 2: *When to use A.I.* - Tutors will explicitly and clearly communicate which assignments a student may or may not use A.I. tools to assist in their learning.

Principle 3: *How to use A.I.* - Tutors will explicitly and clearly communicate the method in which it is acceptable and not acceptable for the student to use A.I. tools.