

Welcome to *The Critical Current!*

This summer, you will be learning how to think critically through current events! We are so excited to work with you as help you develop into a stronger writer, reader, speaker, and thinker. By the time you start the new school year in the fall, you should feel confident about your knowledge of current events and your ability to read rigorous texts, write news stories, and think about global events with the knowledge you gain from this course. We have attached a NEW calendar to this syllabus. Please make sure you show your parents because there are many changes to the times and dates!

What are we going to do?

Tuesdays-Thursdays

- **Current Event Review + Discussion:** We will discuss the happenings around our community and world with the entire class. It is important to read newspapers or news websites to know what is going on in the world we live in. You can do this on your own time or through this class.
- **Lecture and Reflection on Weebly:** There will be a total of 9 lectures throughout the course of 5 weeks. The topics are listed below. Your teacher will teach you about a topic and you will then be able to write your reflection about the topic on your own blog. Each student will be maintaining his or her own blog.
- **Student Online Newspaper: *The Current*** - You will be working in groups (news desks) with a 9th grade student mentors who will serve as your editors. You will be writing your own news stories, which will be published on our online newspaper by the end of the summer.

Field Trip Fridays

- **OC Register:** We will be visiting the offices of our local Orange County newspaper! Learn about what a news office looks like and what journalists really do on a daily basis.
- **The Nixon Library:** We will learn about the intersection of journalism and politics during the days leading up to the field trip to The Nixon library.
- **The Los Angeles Times:** We will be visiting both the offices (headquarters) and the printing facility of a world-class newspaper that is right in the heart of Los Angeles. This field trip will take all day long, as we will be visiting two places and the location is quite far.
- **USC Annenberg School of Journalism:** We will be touring the campus and [most likely] visiting the Annenberg School of Journalism. This field trip is designated only for students who are 8th/9th graders.

Write, Read, and Speak!

- **You will be producing three types of content for this class:**
 - **Personal blogs** through weebly.com, where you will be writing daily reflections and responses to prompts based on the lecture.
 - **Newsarticles written by you** (local, national, international, editorial, entertainment) for our online student newspaper, *The Current*
 - **Multimedia Content** (video and photography) for the online student newspaper, *The Current*

THE CRITICAL CURRENT - *lecture series*

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| <i>lecture1</i> - What is news and media literacy? | <i>language of the discipline</i> |
| <i>lecture 2</i> - Origins: Freedom of the Press as the Foundation for Democracy | <i>origins</i> |
| <i>lecture3</i> - Journalists: Purveyors of Information | <i>contribution</i> |
| <i>lecture4</i> - Fact-Checking | <i>details</i> |
| <i>lecture5</i> - The Panama Papers and Whistle-blowers in journalism | <i>impact</i> |
| <i>lecture6</i> - Journalism and Mistakes | <i>rules</i> |
| <i>lecture7</i> - Photojournalism | <i>convergence</i> |
| <i>lecture8</i> - Political Cartoons | <i>paradox</i> |
| <i>lecture9</i> - New Journalism | <i>parallels</i> |