

Policies and Procedures for The Denim Beret *Before Great Books Come Groundwork: A Preparatory Literature Course*

Last updated: 4/18

Welcome to *The Denim Beret!* Below is some information you will need as I begin working with your student(s) this year. Please contact me if you have any questions.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Teacher: Cheri Blomquist
Email: cblomquist@denimberet.com (preferred method of contact)
Phone: (720) 999-1658 (cell)
MOUNTAIN TIME ZONE

NOTE: All stated times in my communications will be in Mountain time to prevent me from making calculation mistakes. Please know your time difference.

AVAILABILITY:

Open Monday-Friday; closed Saturdays, Sundays, and major holidays

Weekly office hours for immediate student assistance (video chat or instant message chat):

- Friday – 8:00-9:00 a.m.
- Monday—1:00-2:00 p.m.
- Wednesday—1:00-2:00 p.m.

NOTE: All times above given in Mountain time.

If your student cannot contact me during my weekly office hours, I can help through email anytime. If that isn't sufficient, we can try to set up a video chat appointment.

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS: You will need to have a dependable computer (Chromebooks okay), printer, webcam, microphone, and scanner (phone okay). Your student will also need easy and frequent access to a Google account and Gmail address. This account and address should be ones to which both the parent and student have access. This is to help ensure internet safety and transparency.

The Google apps that students will use include Classroom (central platform for all work), Gmail (email), Drive (word processing and document exchange), and Hangout (video chat and instant messaging).

The link for opening a Google account and Gmail address is <https://accounts.google.com/signup?hl=en>

PAYMENT POLICY: Tuition for each course must be paid by the due date given on the invoice. All parents will receive invoices immediately following registration with their totals clearly detailed and with payment instructions provided. Because The Denim Beret is such a small business and therefore must keep its bookkeeping simple, I request that payment be made in full by the due date. In case of need, however, I will allow payments to be made in two equal installments by mid-term.

REFUND POLICY: If you need to withdraw for any reason and would like a refund, it must be requested by Friday, August 31. Before the end of that day, students may drop the class for a full refund less the registration fee and \$10/each class attended. After week one, no refunds will be given.

TEACHER-STUDENT CONTACT POLICY: I will do my best to ensure that parents are aware of all teacher-student interaction. If a student communicates with me through his or her own email address, I will always copy the parent in my reply, unless it is very brief and minor (such as for a quick technical question).

If you discover that I have neglected to follow the teacher-student contact policy, *please* call my attention to it. Safety and transparency are important components of all online instruction with minors, just as they are in physical settings.

STUDENT DEADLINES: All literature students will be expected to submit completed assignments by the due date. Late work causes problems for both the teacher and student alike and is strongly discouraged. I do not give late-work penalties; however, I do give occasional hard deadlines, after which I will not accept late work.

DEADLINE EXTENSIONS: Sometimes students need an extension due to illness, vacation, and other conflicts. I understand such conflicts and will work with you to meet your needs; however, it is important to understand that the class will continue with or without your student (unless too many students are absent). Because making up missed classes is often a challenge for students, I encourage absent students to meet their deadlines and to stay current with the class lesson through independent study as much as possible.

When students miss a class, I will send an email with a summary of the lesson and any materials they need to catch up. All students may contact me during my live office hours if they need help with an assignment; however, I will not re-teach a missed lesson during these hours.

WHAT TO DO IF I DON'T RESPOND TO YOUR EMAILS: When you enroll in *The Denim Beret*, you are supporting a private microbusiness with all the limitations that may entail. It is important that you know, therefore, that I will never ignore your emails or phone calls. If I don't respond to you in a timely manner, please assume that something went wrong and try again.

Because I do not employ a staff and realize that something may suddenly happen to me or my technical capabilities, I have provided you with a secondary email address:

etblomquist@gmail.com

This email address should be used only if I do not respond to either email or my cell number after you have tried to contact me a couple of times.

THE PARENT'S ROLE IN THE LEARNING PROCESS: Although I may be your student's teacher for this course, your support is important. As your student works with me, one of the best ways you can assist is to look over completed assignments to make sure your student has followed all instructions. Another important way you can help is to drop me notes on occasion to let me know how your student is doing. I have learned that many students will not ask for help or express feelings of stress or confusion, even if I ask them pointed questions. With that in mind, I trust parents to alert me if anything is wrong.

HOW MUCH TO HELP: Most parents understandably want their students to turn in nothing less than excellent work. However, it is important that you refrain from helping your student so much on an assignment that I cannot get a clear idea of the student's true abilities. If I think that your student is more advanced than he (or she) really is, I may inadvertently challenge him more than is realistic and may also neglect to provide help when it is truly needed.

PRIVACY POLICY: When I receive positive feedback, I often like to quote it on my website. I also like to use student work as models on occasion. If at some point I want to use any quotes or models from you or your student, I will ask you for permission to do this. I also do not sell or give student or parent information to third parties.

GRADING POLICY: For this course I use a grading system of my own, because of the subjective nature of most of the assignments. Although it appears to parallel the traditional letter-grade system and does sometimes, many times it does not. For example, a "GM" doesn't necessarily mean "A," and "AM" doesn't necessarily mean "B." The grades should therefore be understood at face value:

GM = goal mastery (Your student has shown the skill mastery I am looking for.)

AM = almost-there mastery (Your student shows an understanding of the skill/material but is not yet applying it as well as I'd like to see.)

MM = mid-level mastery (Your student shows some understanding of the skill/material but isn't yet able to apply it consistently.)

LM = low-level mastery (Your student shows a little understanding of the skill/material but doesn't understand how to apply it.)

NP = skill not present (Your student does not use the skill/material at all in the assignment.)

NA = not applicable