



## *The Denim Beret Policies and Procedures: Live Courses*

The Denim Beret  
writing and literature  
for teens

Last updated: 2/19

Welcome to *The Denim Beret!* In this handbook is important information that you and your student will need throughout your study. Please read it carefully, and contact me if you have any questions.

### **FOR THE STUDENT AND PARENT**

#### CONTACT INFORMATION:

Teacher: Cheri Blomquist

Office hours: Monday-Friday; closed Saturdays, Sundays, and major holidays

Email: [cblomquist@denimberet.com](mailto:cblomquist@denimberet.com)

Phone: (720) 999-1658

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, and account for it in your calendar when we set up video chats or phone calls.

#### TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS:

Correspondence courses:

- computer
- printer
- PDF reader
- webcam
- scanner – *Note: Using a phone scanner is okay, but I do not accept .jpg submissions for the occasional hand-written assignments, because they are so difficult to grade. All scanned assignments either must be saved as PDF documents, or the .jpg must be inserted into an editable document.*

- Google account and Gmail address – *Note: Students will use Google apps for all lessons. These include Gmail (email), Drive (word processing and document exchange), Classroom (educational platform), 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>

Please note: Instruction cannot begin until this account is ready and test emails have been exchanged.

### GRADING POLICY--WRITING AND LITERATURE

I don't use traditional letter grades, unless they are requested by the parent. Because I prefer to keep parents in control of final grades and because I approach writing and literary study as arts, I focus on mastery and growth. My grading key (below) reflects this philosophy. Please don't try to translate this key into letter grades, because they don't necessarily compute that way. In other words, an "AM" is not just another way of saying "B." If you need a letter grade for reporting purposes, please let me know.

GM = goal mastery  
 AM = almost-there mastery  
 MM = mid-level mastery  
 LM = low-level mastery  
 NP = skill expected but not shown  
 N/A = not applicable

Students who receive a grade they don't like may have the option of revision. Sometimes students will need to revise more than once to achieve a satisfactory grade. Revision is a common and necessary part of The Denim Beret approach and should be viewed as an opportunity, not as a setback.

### GRADING POLICY—GRAMMAR:

Because of its objective nature, I use traditional letter grades and percentages for grammar courses, as outlined below:

A+ = 100% and above	D+ = 67-69
A = 93-99	D = 63-6
A- = 90-92	D- = 60-62
B+ = 87-89	F = 1-59
B = 83-86	
B- = 80-82	
C+ = 77-79	
C = 73-76	
C- = 70-72	

Students who receive a grade they don't like may have the option of revision for half-credit.

#### ASSIGNMENT DEADLINES:

Assignments are due by 11:59 p.m. of the deadline. Late assignments will be accepted, but grading may be delayed, and student learning may suffer.

#### CLASS START TIMES:

I do my best to start on time and end on time and am rarely late on either end. If at least two students are present at the start time, I will begin. Late students will have to catch up as best they can.

#### MISSED CLASSES:

Although I realize that occasional absences are inevitable, I don't have the technical ability to record classes at this time. I am hoping this will change eventually, but for now please be aware that if you miss a class, you must make it up through self-study. I will provide the necessary materials.

#### WHAT TO DO IF I DON'T RESPOND TO YOUR EMAILS:

When you enroll in *The Denim Beret*, you are supporting a home microbusiness with all the limitations that may entail. It is important, therefore, that you know that I will never ignore your emails, phone calls, or assignments. If I don't respond to you in a timely manner, please assume that something went wrong in cyberspace (or my memory!) and try again.

In addition, because I do not employ a staff and realize that something may suddenly happen to me or my technical capabilities, I am providing you with a secondary email address: [etblomquist@gmail.com](mailto:etblomquist@gmail.com). This address should be used only if I do not respond to you after you have tried to email and call me several times. Your subject line should be "Urgent Re: The Denim Beret."

#### TEACHER-STUDENT CONTACT POLICY:

Transparency is important at The Denim Beret. 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).

#### 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.

## FOR THE PARENT ONLY

### BILLING POLICY:

Tuition for summer intensive courses must be paid in full within eight days of the invoice date.

Tuition for semester courses may be made in either one or two installments. If parents choose to pay in a single installment, the full tuition is due within eight days of the invoice date. If parents choose to pay in two installments, payment #1 is due within eight days of the invoice date. Payment #2 is due within 60 days of the invoice date. I will give a grace period of five business days for checks that are in the mail by the course start date. I accept personal checks, cashier's checks, cash (if you are local), and credit cards through Square. Your invoice will provide payment instructions and due dates.

### DROP POLICY:

If you need to withdraw your student from the course, the following procedures will apply:

- The request needs to be made in writing.
- Refunds will only be given through week 1 of the summer intensives and week 2 of the semester courses.
- The registration fee is non-refundable.
- A drop fee equivalent to 10% of the tuition will be assessed.
- The refund will be given within 7 days of your request.
- Exceptions will be made if technical difficulties prevent your student from participating in a class more than twice. In that case, a pro-rated refund will be given at any time, and the drop fee will not be assessed.

### CANCELLATION POLICY

Summer Intensives: If your chosen class does not meet minimum enrollment by Friday, May 24, I will close registration and provide full refunds of both the registration fee and tuition within 7 days. Alternatively, you may switch to a guided independent study with grading.

Fall semester courses: If your chosen class does not meet minimum enrollment by Thursday, August 1, you may request a full refund of your registration fee and tuition at that time or you may wait until I close registration to see if any students register late. I will close registration by Friday, August 16, if minimum enrollment has not been reached. If the class does close, you will have the option of switching to the correspondence course.

### LATE PAYMENT POLICY:

Because The Denim Beret is a micro-business, I am unable to pursue late or non-payments beyond emails. For the sake of simplicity, I require payment before I begin working with your student. I will give a grace period if a check is in the mail by orientation, but the student may not join the first class until the check has been received.

### TRANSCRIPT CREDITS:

High school students may need to know how their courses will translate on a transcript. I can help parents determine this at the end of the course. No course will worth more than one credit.

### THE PARENT'S ROLE IN THE LEARNING PROCESS:

Although I may be your student's writing instructor, 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. *Incomplete assignments or assignments that do not follow instructions may be sent back for corrections.*

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, although I do my best with students, 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. Because you have the final say in your student's education, it is not a matter of cheating but of possible confusion on my part. If I think that your student is more advanced than he (or she) really is, I may inadvertently challenge him more than he is able to handle and may also neglect to help him when he really needs it.

### LITERATURE AND THE DENIM BERET:

The Denim Beret courses are secular, designed to serve all students. My world view, however, is Christian. I also take a somewhat liberal approach to literature. This means that I draw from various types of literature for my models in the writing courses, including classic and contemporary, children's and adult, fiction and non-fiction, Judeo-Christian and non-religious. When I choose religious models, I attempt to choose texts that are not inflammatory, controversial, or evangelistic, and the excerpts are chosen with a clear purpose in mind.