**Gifted & Talented Seminar III**

**Course Syllabus**

**Tracey Palmer**

**Course Description**

This course will introduce students to the study of philosophy and ethics. Students will study both Eastern and Western philosophers by analyzing ideas and concepts that are basic to human experience – happiness, virtue, knowledge, time, matter, freedom, purpose. The intellectual processes involved in understanding philosophical concepts and position enhance the student’s ability to think critically. To study philosophy properly requires skill in formulating ideas, recognizing conclusions of arguments, and assessing the strength of the reasoning that leads to those conclusions.

In addition to an overview of key philosophical ideas, students will be engaged in the study of ethics by reviewing current issues and studying the elements of arguments. The goals of this unit are: 1) to introduce you to some of the major issues with contemporary moral problems; 2) to encourage you to critically examine your own beliefs as well as the beliefs of others; 3) to provide the opportunity to discuss, both in class and in a more sustained written form, your ideas and arguments concerning important issues in ethics.

**Course Objectives**

1. To achieve a comprehension of major philosophers and their theories
2. To begin the development of an understanding of elements of arguments
3. To relate his/her study of ethics to modern life
4. To conduct in-depth research in areas of personal interest as well as an area of ethical/philosophical importance

**Materials**

Andrea, Alfred J. and James H. Overfield., editors. *The Human Record Sources of Global History.* 6th ed. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2009. Print

De Saint-Exupery, Antoine. *The Little Prince.* New York: Harcourt, 1943. Print.

Kishlansky, Mark A. , editor. *Sources of World History Readings for World Civilization.* 2nd ed. Belmont: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1999. Print.

Rottenberg, Annette T. *Elements of Arguments.* New York: St Martin’s Press, 2003. Print.

**Unit 1 – College & Career**

* Character Traits and Related Career Interests
* Develop College Plan & Portfolio
* Interpersonal/Communication Skills
* College Financial Literacy

**Unit 2 – Introduction to Philosophy**

* Reading and Discussion of *The Little Prince*
* Overview of Eastern vs. Western Philosophy
* Examination of Specific Philosophers

**Unit 3 – Analysis of Theories**

* Writing a Historiography
* Conducting Research on Experts Use of Philosophical Theories

**Unit 4 – Ethics**

* Introduction to Elements in Arguments
* Contemporary Issues Debates
* Writing Argumentative Essays

**Unit 5 – Proposals for Senior Year**

* Review of Initiatives
* Summer Reading Selection
* Action Plans
* Leadership Applications

**Assignments:**

Discussion Groups – Students will be assigned various readings throughout the year and are expected to prepare and participate in the group discussions.

Annotated Bibliographies – students will conduct research using assigned sources and complete a 25-source bibliography per unit.

Readings – weekly readings with various activities to complete

Presentations – students will be assigned presentations on philosophy and participate in debates

Argumentative Essay on Ethical Issue

Historiography on Philosopher