

BAA Masterworks 10

Island Pacific School

Developed by: Dr. Ted Spear

Date Developed: September 1995

School Name: Island Pacific School

Principal's Name: Michael Simmonds

BAA Approval Date: January 4, 2010

Prerequisite(s): None

Course Name: BAA Masterworks 10

Grade Level of Course: 10

Number of Course Credits: 4

Hours of Instruction: 120 hours

Course Code: YMIS 10

BAA Signature: David McCullum, Board Chair

Course Synopsis:

Masterworks 10 is a course that requires that students conduct in-depth, self-directed, independent studies that are informed by topics of personal interest. Topics vary widely between students, but what is common to each project is that a highly focused level of scholarship, academic inquiry, and creativity underpin original questions asked by students about the world in which they live. They are guided through the process by expert advisors—leaders in their respective fields—who sit on their external advisory committees. Working collaboratively with school faculty members, external advisory committees guide students through a course that puts students at the centre of their learning. **Masterworks 10** culminates with a public presentation and defense by students of their work in June. The entire school and extended school community attends.

Rationale:

The purpose of the Masterworks (MW) program is to have students conduct a serious exploration of a topic of personal interest to them. Through the study students will gain a better understanding of both the process and product of serious academic inquiry. By completing a Masterwork candidates will: (1) produce a piece of work that surpasses their previous accomplishments; (2) employ research, writing, and oral presentation skills in a challenging assignment that means something to them; (3) gain a deeper understanding of their topic of interest; (4) investigate and then express *their own* interest and understanding of the topic; (5) present their findings in a public forum and answer questions relating to their topic; and (6) learn something of what is involved in pursuing a subject in depth.

Organizational Structure:

Students will work with an Advisory Committee consisting of one faculty advisor and two external advisors throughout the school year. The MW program has three components:

A. Research, Discovery, and Framing of Topic

- Students spend the summer and first 4-6 weeks of the school year investigating topics of interest. They conduct preliminary research that will help them narrow their investigations down to a manageable subject for a paper.
- A MW may take the form of either a research paper or an original artistic work or works accompanied by written commentary. In either case, candidates must declare their general area of interest by the end of September and submit a formal proposal to their faculty advisor before the end of October.
- The formal proposal is meant to encourage students to present something beyond an idea. Students should give a good overview of the subject, and identify why their personal topic matters, not only to themselves, but to others as well. Formal proposals answer three salient questions: (1) What are the defining characteristics of the topic?; (2) Why should *we* care about this topic or what is its significance?; (3) Why do *you* care about this topic?; (4) What format will the project take (i.e.) documentary film, essay, original creative work, etc.
- A draft outline of the MW paper and an annotated list of sources must accompany the proposal. In order to complete the proposal, candidates will need to make use of external resources such as the school and public libraries and the Internet. They will also need to draw on the support and expertise of their advisors.

B. Extended Paper

- Regardless of the what final form the MW project takes (film, short story, original artistic composition, etc.) all students must produce a written paper of no less than 10, and no more than 30 typed pages. The standard for written work follows the MLA style guide.

C. Oral Presentation and Public Defense

- All students must prepare and present in a public forum an oral presentation of not less than 20 but not more than 30 minutes. Like the paper itself, this oral presentation must address the three questions presented in the "*Research, Discovery and Framing of Topics*" section.
- Following their presentation, each candidate must be prepared to answer questions from their advisors and the public in response to their oral presentation. Candidates will be expected to answer questions for no less than 10 and no more than 20 minutes.

Learning Outcomes:

It is expected that students will:

- Conduct an in-depth literature review of the proposed topic that includes web-based, published journals, books, newspaper articles, and/or personal interviews as sources;
- Be able to critically assess primary, secondary, and tertiary sources;
- Be able to properly cite references;
- Submit revised iterations of their written work in progress to members of the advisory committee;
- Write a formal research paper that documents their learning and knowledge gained from completing the process;
- Prepare an oral presentation that takes the form of PowerPoint or other acceptable mode of communication as deemed by members of the advisory committee;
- Reflect on the Masterworks process;
- Be able to answer questions posed by members of the advisory committee and general public about the student work presented.

Instructional Components:

The nature of the course is that students are guided through a self-directed independent study but they are clearly not left to their own devices throughout the yearlong project. Specifically these include: (1) reading, (2) listening, (3) speaking, (4) independent and directed research, (5) reflection, (5) critical analysis, (6) group work; (7) modelling; (8) mentoring; (9) brainstorming; (10) creativity; (11) direct instruction; (12) writing; (13) documenting; and (14) MLA referencing.

Assessment of Components:

Students will be assessed according to the following criteria:

Criteria A. Planning & Development (maximum 20%)

- Students should be aware that it is essential to define a clear goal before starting detailed research and work. The goal is positioned within the formal proposal that is submitted by the student.

Criteria B. Collection of information/resources (maximum 20%)

- This criterion allows the student to demonstrate the ability to collect relevant information from a variety of sources and to compile a bibliography of sources used in the project. Students should select sufficient information and appropriate resources to substantiate all arguments and/or to support the project. Students should also acknowledge their sources of information clearly in the body of their text through clear referencing

Criterion C: Organization of the written work (maximum 20%)

- This criterion focuses on the presentation of the written work (including title page, contents page and page numbering, overall neatness, the appropriate use of graphs, diagrams and tables, where appropriate). It also assesses the internal structure and

coherence of the work.

Criterion D: Analysis of process and outcome (maximum 20%)

- Evidence of students' achievement in this criterion will be found in the conclusion and also in the body of the structured piece of writing. Students are expected to describe, and reflect on, the stages of development of the personal project and the thought processes followed. Students should reflect on the ways in which the personal project has fulfilled the initial goal

Criterion E: Personal engagement (maximum 20%)

- This criterion focuses on an overall assessment of students' engagement and application of approaches to learning skills during the planning and development stages of the personal project. Qualities such as organization and commitment to the task should be considered. By their very nature these are difficult to quantify and the assessment should take into account the context in which the personal project was undertaken. The assessment should also take account of working behaviours such as the amount of encouragement required by students, the interaction between students and supervisors, the attention to deadlines and procedures, as well as the appropriate use of supporting documentation such as log books and/or process journals when necessary.

Learning Resources – To be determined by the student, faculty member, and members of the advisory committee.