Mock Trial Syllabus

Course Description: This elective is an introduction to law and public speaking with a little time spent on acting. We will be primarily be studying three things: legal/court procedure, rhetoric, and public speaking. In other words, we'll be learning about how our court system works, how to use rhetoric to be more persuasive, and how to speak effectively to an audience. All of these skills are vital to a job in law, but will help in almost every other facet of your life.

The class will primarily operate via project-based learning (PBL) in small legal teams (groups), so you'll be expected to work with others, perform in front of others, and to pace yourself when presented with a new problem (case). There will be a lot of reading, because we'll be primarily working with court briefs and affidavits, but we'll work cooperatively to bring those texts to life and/or illuminate them. There should not be any homework for the class unless you are absent or don't use in-class work time effectively. If there is homework, however, it will be announced in class.

Course Objectives - Students will be able to:

· Utilize the classroom community as a shared learning environment

· Foster respect and appreciation for legal speeches and their rhetorical effectiveness

· Recognize and demonstrate proficiency in standard written English

· Develop stylistic maturity in their writing

· Write in multiple genres for a variety of audiences and purposes

· Use and show evidence of all stages of the writing process in their work

· Acquire both new court/legal vocabulary specifically and strategies for acquiring

vocabulary in general

· Speak effectively in front of an audience

· Critically read and think about evidence and texts

Technology:

 We will be using technology as much as possible, which is to say, not as often as most of

us use technology in our daily lives. Every attempt will be made to integrate technology

into the classroom experience, but frequently that will come in the form of extra or

bonus items.