2017-2018 COURSE SYLLABUS AND POLICIES
JOURNALISM/YEARBOOK

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COMMUNICATION POLICY
Please use our BFCS email addresses to communicate with us. Be sure to label all messages with a brief subject description. We urge you to contact us as soon as you have a question or a concern via email. Please don’t wait until the last minute to ask for help with an assignment in case we are unable to get back to you right away.

SYLLABUS NOTE
Each student is responsible for knowing the information outlined in this course syllabus. Please keep a copy of this document and refer to it regularly. Information may be subject to change; students will be notified by the instructors of any changes in course requirements or policies, and changes will be posted on the class Weebly site.

EDITORIAL POLICY
- The Charger Voice, the official student newspaper of Benjamin Franklin High School; its online edition, chargervoice.com; and the BFHS yearbook, Like No Other, have been established as forums for student expression and as a voice in the uninhibited, free and open discussion of issues.
- Content of The Charger Voice and Like No Other, therefore, represents only the views of the student staff and not school officials.
- The Charger Voice, Like No Other, and its staff are protected by, and bound to, the principles of the First Amendment and other protections and limitations afforded by the Constitution and the various court decisions implementing those principles.
- As a forum for student expression, The Charger Voice and Like No Other will not be reviewed or restrained prior to publication.
- The Charger Voice, Like No Other, and its staff will strive not to publish any material determined by student editors or the student editorial board to be unprotected; that is, material that is libelous, obscene, material disruptive of the school process, an unwarranted invasion of privacy, a violation of copyright or electronic manipulations changing the essential truth of the photo or illustration will not be published.
- With this in mind, student journalists have the sole right to determine the content of the official student publication. By not interfering with The Charger Voice and Like No Other, school officials are therefore not liable for content. The Charger Voice and Like No Other advisors will not act as censor.
- In case questions arise over specific copy as defined within this policy, the advice of a practicing communications attorney would be sought.
- The Charger Voice and Like No Other editorial board as a whole will be responsible for determining editorial opinions, which represent the opinions of a majority of the editorial board. No single member of The Charger Voice or Like No Other can be held responsible for editorial content decisions.
- The Charger Voice and Like No Other are tools in learning the process of journalism, and operates as a learning laboratory.
- As a forum for student expression, The Charger Voice will publish all letters to the editor, provided they are 300 words or less and contain the author’s name and student ID number. We reserve the right to withhold a letter or column and return it for more information if we determine it contains items of unprotected speech as defined by this policy. Letters will be edited for spelling and grammar and checked for verification.
Should a letter contain errors in fact, excessive grammatical errors or be too long, it will be returned to the author for resubmission.

- The Charger Voice and Like No Other editorial board reserves the right to accept or reject any ad.
- The Charger Voice and Like No Other may cover the deaths of current students and past and present staff and faculty as the editorial board is made aware of them. We reserve the right to decide not to cover a death based on relevance, timeliness and circumstances decided on by the editorial board. In cases the editorial board decides not to cover death, letters to the editor regarding that death will be printed.
- The Charger Voice and Like No Other staff will follow the guidelines established in the NSPA Model Code of Ethics for High School Journalists.

PUBLICATIONS GUIDELINES

A. The Charger Voice and Like No Other shall be free of profanity, vulgarity and words that have acquired undesirable meanings, as judged by the generally accepted standards of the community.
B. The Charger Voice and Like No Other shall contain no statements derisive of any race, religion, sex or national origin.
C. The Charger Voice and Like No Other shall show no disrespect for law enforcement or the generally accepted ethics of the community.
D. The Charger Voice and Like No Other shall not advocate illegal acts of any kind or disruption of the school environment.
E. The Charger Voice and Like No Other shall avoid editorial material that encourages cheating.
F. The Charger Voice and Like No Other shall avoid any potential invasion of privacy in releasing personal information about students, staff or community members.
G. Expressions of opinion in an article on controversial subjects must be clearly identified as such by means of direct or indirect quotes or by means of a byline. Except for standing columns or occasional news analyses, articles of this nature should be reserved for The Charger Voice editorial page or other pages clearly labeled as opinion.
H. Unsigned editorials are to appear only on the designated The Charger Voice editorial page and are to represent a majority opinion of the editorial board. When an editorial represents the opinion of the writer only, it shall be signed. All editorials are to conform to acceptable standards of journalistic accuracy and integrity.
I. Letters to the editor of The Charger Voice are to be signed when submitted to the editorial board. Names may be withheld from publication only with the approval of the editorial board who shall consider the following criteria when making their determination:
   a. Whether the statements are true, as researched by the editors;
   b. Whether publication of the letter may result in repercussions of a serious nature for the author or other(s);
   c. Whether the value of the letter out-weighs the fact that generally a letter carrying no signature carries less credibility than one that is signed.

The Charger Voice reserves the right to edit letters for length, accuracy and repetition. Publication of letters is subject to the laws of libel and defamation, obscenity, incitement and copyright. Publication of letters will be determined by a majority vote of the editorial board.
J. To maintain independence and integrity, the publications shall not become involved in, or take sides with, any rivalries or jealousies within the school. No person or organization is to be permitted to use the publication to his or her own ends - be that the editor, a staff member, the adviser, a teacher, the administration, an organization, or someone outside the school.

K. Items that may be deemed by editorial board or the advisors to be a violation of libel, slander, right to privacy, or copyright law will not be published.

L. Advertisements that do not conform to these Publications Guidelines or Board Policy will be refused.

M. Items of a controversial nature will be discussed by the editorial board.

N. An error of fact in any newspaper edition will require a labeled statement of correction in the following newspaper edition if deemed appropriate or feasible according to space limitation.

O. If a student or staff member dies during the course of the school year, we will cover the story with an obituary in the next issue (when possible) and/or online and any related newsworthy stories stemming from the death (scholarships, court cases, changes in policy, etc.) as they occur.

P. If a student or staff member takes his/her own life, the suicide or manner of death will not be released without family consent (unless the suicide itself was a newsworthy event).

GENERAL CLASSROOM POLICIES
Although this class comes with freedom not normally awarded in other classes, rules are necessary to ensure a smooth-running production class. Students are expected to adhere to the following rules:

1) Do not abuse or take advantage of any of the freedoms provided in this class.
2) Stay in the classroom unless you are conducting publications business.
3) Help out other staff members who may need it.
4) Fulfill all of the responsibilities of this class, including advertising/fundraising.
5) **No food or drinks in the lab at any time.** This is a non-negotiable.
6) If you take it out, put it back. This especially goes for any equipment.
7) Visitors disrupt the working environment. Please do not have your friends “hang out” in the classroom or use any of the facilities during class time. Even with occasional visitors, it is only common courtesy to ask permission first.

The consequence for breaking any of the above rules ranges from revocation of privileges to removal from the class.

PROFESSIONAL ETHICS AND INTEGRITY
As a member of the Benjamin Franklin High School publications staff, you are a member of the media. As such, you must adhere to a code of ethics.

- Do not plagiarize.
- Do not make up quotes, even with “permission” from the subject.
- Do not misrepresent yourself. Make sure people you are talking to know you are a member of the media.
- Do not take images from the Internet.

RESPECT LEADERSHIP
Respect the leadership roles of your peers. If an editor asks you to complete a task, you should do so. The editors were chosen because of his or her dedication and leadership. Editors have experience and know what needs to be completed to have a successful student newspaper and yearbook. Your willingness and cooperation to finish tasks completely and correctly will reflect on your daily grade.

ATTENDANCE POLICY
Producing a publication is a team effort. When one member of the staff is absent it affects the production of the publication as a whole. Consequently, daily attendance is required. You must show up on time and remain in class to be considered present. Attendance may be taken randomly throughout the hour. If you are not present when attendance is taken, and your whereabouts cannot be accounted for, you will be marked absent.

Deadlines are considered long-term assignments as defined by school policy. Therefore, if you are absent (excused or unexcused) during deadline week and you fail to turn in your assignments on the day they are due, you will lose credit for those assignments. If you know you are going to be absent during deadline week, please inform your editor in advance. If you are absent as a result of illness or other emergency, please contact the editor or the instructors to make alternate arrangements for your stories/pages/photos.

**COMPUTER USAGE**
These rules apply to all computers in the publications area, including personal devices. Failure to follow these rules will result in a revocation of privileges. Please understand that the main purpose of these rules is to keep the computers in the best working condition possible.

1) Please do not drink at the computers. You can leave your water nearby, but don’t put it next to the computers. One spill and the computer is gone.

2) If your computer is missing a necessary font, a necessary program, or something else critical is going on, please write the computer number and issue down on a sticky note and put it on my desk. I will try to solve the problem later in the day.

3) Follow the “ask three before you ask me” rule. If you are having a computer issue, ask three experienced staff members if they know how to fix the problem. If the problem still exists, then ask one of the instructors.

4) Do not download **anything** onto the computers without prior permission.

5) Do not play computer games during class. There are two reasons for this: 1) It implies you have nothing else to do, and sometimes that builds resentment; 2) Games can wreak havoc with the computers, and I’m trying to keep them in the best working order possible.

6) **Please do not use Photo Booth.**

This is just a random pet peeve: please do not change the desktop images.

**CONFIDENTIALITY AND EQUIPMENT USE**
In this class you will have access to a number of passwords and information that the rest of the student body does not. It is your responsibility to see that this information does not leave the room. This includes student phone numbers, information we are working on for stories, projects we have in the works, etc.

You also have access to a lot of equipment in this classroom; this equipment is not for personal use. Additionally, you must sign out and are responsible for any equipment you take out of the classroom. Consequently, if the equipment is lost, stolen, broken or otherwise damaged in your possession, you will be financially responsible for replacement.

**GRADING**
Since this is a production class, you will earn your grade based on the amount of work you do. Work more, earn a higher grade. Want to take it easy? Earn a reflective grade. Grading Rubrics for every type of assignment have been created; if at any time you want to see a blank rubric so you understand the grading criteria, just ask your instructors.

We will be using Trello to keep track of the amount of work done by each staff member. Consequently, it is VERY important to make sure you stay updated with Trello. Every assignment you take must be included in Trello or you won’t receive credit for it. It will be the responsibility of the editors in chief, online editor in
chief and the managing editor to ensure assignments are placed in Trello. However, all staff members will have the ability to add story ideas. An app for smartphones and iPad is available for download.

Even if an assignment is completed, there are two ways you can lose points: 1) failing to meet deadline, and 2) not putting forth the effort we know you are capable of.

At the end of each quarter, the letter grade you earn will be based on total points earned. Since you are accruing points throughout the quarter, it may appear as if you are failing at progress report time; if at any time during the year you need a progress report (athletics, clubs, field trips, parents, etc.), we will sign that you are passing unless you are seriously failing at that time.

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<tr>
<th>GRADING SCALE:</th>
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<tr>
<td>100 – 90 points A</td>
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<tr>
<td>89 – 80 points B</td>
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<tr>
<td>79 – 70 points C</td>
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<td>69 – 60 points D</td>
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<td>59 points - Below F</td>
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ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND PLAGIARISM
Academic integrity is not just an educational matter but a moral one as well. A major aspect of a classical education is instruction on growing in character and our goal of becoming a virtuous person. With this in mind, BFHS takes very seriously the willful misrepresentation of another student’s work as their own. This includes, but is not limited to, plagiarism (intentional or unintentional), cheating on exams and copying the work of other students. Every effort will be made by the teacher to discern intentional plagiarism from unintentional plagiarism. In the case of the latter, remediation will take place between student and teacher in order to review how to properly cite others’ work. This is not a punitive measure, rather an opportunity for the student to understand and correct his/her citation skills. On the other hand, intentional plagiarism and cheating will be dealt with severely including a zero on the assignment, suspension, removal from extra-curricular activities or leadership positions held in the school and, in the case of repeat offenders, expulsion.

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS
Participation is required of all students, at any and all times. Apathy is not accepted. You will find the instructors hold all students accountable, and expect:

- Positive language at all time (this instructor has a ZERO tolerance policy for discriminatory language)
- Contribution to class discussions
- Appropriate input and involvement in group tasks
- Preparedness for minor tasks that build towards larger tasks
- Appropriate, professional, respectful behavior during engaging discussion and class activity
- Respect for the opinions and property of each of your classmates

PUBLICATIONS PARENT CONTRACT
Please initial each of the items below and complete the information below. This form must be completed and returned by Thursday, July 27, 2017.
_____ Plagiarism
I understand that if my child plagiarizes or fabricates any information intended for publication, he/she will be removed from the staff with a grade of F.

_____ Professional Ethics
I understand that if my child behaves unprofessionally or abuses his/her position on the staff, he/she will be suspended from the staff.

_____ Equipment
I understand that if any equipment is lost, stolen or broken while in my child’s possession, I am responsible for its repair/replacement.

_____ Grading
I understand that my child will be evaluated according to a non-traditional grading system. My child must accrue enough points throughout the quarter to earn the desired grade.

_____ Participation
I understand that it is my child’s responsibility to take assignments; s/he will not simply be handed them. Therefore, your child’s grade will be reflective of his/her participation in the class.

STUDENT NAME ________________________________________

STUDENT SIGNATURE ___________________________________ Date ____________

PARENT/GUARDIAN _____________________________________ Date ____________

PARENT EMAIL ________________________________ PHONE # (___)__________
PUBLICATIONS STAFF CONTRACT

Please initial each of the items below and complete the information below. This form must be completed and returned by Thursday, July 27, 2017.

_____ Plagiarism
I understand that if I plagiarize or fabricate any information intended for publication, I will be removed the staff with a grade of F.

_____ Professional Ethics
I understand that if I behave unprofessionally or abuse my position on the staff, I will be suspended from the staff.

_____ Equipment
I understand that if any equipment is lost, stolen or broken while in my possession, I am responsible for its repair/replacement.

_____ Grading
I understand that I will be evaluated according to a non-traditional grading system. I must accrue enough points throughout the quarter to earn the desired grade.

_____ Participation
I understand that it is my responsibility to take assignments; I will not simply be handed them. Therefore, my grade will be reflective of my participation in the class.

STUDENT NAME ________________________________________

STUDENT SIGNATURE ________________________________ Date ____________