

# New Fairfield Public Schools

## New Course Proposal

**Directions:**

Before completing this form, please discuss this proposal with the appropriate administrator(s) in your school. Complete this proposal form thoroughly, and attach any supporting documentation that would help the Board of Education's Curriculum Sub-Committee understand this proposal better. Be sure that you adhere to all deadlines, and be certain to acquire all required signatures. To ensure that a course can be properly planned for, if it is intended for a coming school year, please complete it by October 31. All other proposals can be forwarded at any time of the year.

**Course Being Proposed**    The Power of Language: Ethics, Persuasion, and Manipulation

**Proposal submitted by**    Bonny Marsicano

**School**    New Fairfield High School

1. Indicate the department/grade level in which this course/program will run.

High School English Department

Grade 12

2. Please indicate if the new course or instructional program is a semester long or year long, and indicate the applicable grade levels. Please indicate the course level if applicable.

Semester length (½ year)

½ English Credit

3 weight

3. Please give the rationale for this proposal, and include its relationship to the past, current and future development of curricular offerings in New Fairfield.

The purpose of this course is to develop independent, critical proficiency in understanding concepts of integrity and ethics. Students will study major theoretical approaches in integrity and ethics; identify ethical dilemmas, and apply different theoretical approaches. Through the philosophical study of morality, including the theory of right and wrong behavior, the theory of

value (goodness and badness), and the theory of virtue and vice, students will be able to apply the concept of personal integrity in context. Students will critically analyze ethical questions pertaining to right and wrong, as well as matters of justice, fairness, virtue, and social responsibility. Students will explore a range of normative issues associated with the topics of this course, and move beyond the standard “matter of opinion” response to normative questions and discussions of various frameworks for thinking systematically about ethical issues. This course is designed to help students develop their abilities to read, explicate, analyze, and evaluate philosophical literature, write and express themselves well about their own ethical positions, and think critically and analytically about ethical issues.

This course is intended to be taken either as an elective in addition to a core English course, or taken to fulfill the senior Language Arts English credit in tandem to another semester length course “Selective.”

4. Please indicate the target population for this proposal.

Grade 12 students interested in pursuing careers related to technology, journalism, politics, humanities, marketing, social work, health care; or have an avid interest in the subject.

5. Please explain if this course or instructional program is an addition or a replacement for an existing course or program.

This course is being offered as part of the proposed senior “Selectives” choice course offerings. It is being offered in addition to the current course offerings of Individual Perspectives (Currently “Perspectives”), Diverse Perspectives (Currently “Perspectives”), Honors Humanities, AP Language and Composition, AP Literature, and Young Americans (ECE).

6. List any prerequisites for this course or instructional program.

There are no prerequisites other than successful completion of English requirements in grades 9, 10 and 11.

7. Please write a short description of the new course or instructional program that would be suitable for the high school *Program of Studies* or for a curriculum document.

Through this course, students study how leaders, advertisers, and journalists use the power of language and rhetoric to argue, persuade, and even manipulate their audiences. Students explore the role of technology in influencing individuals and shaping society, weighing the benefits of an internet that broadens perspectives but also has the power to manipulate information and people. As an essential part of this course, students explore the ethics behind the rhetoric and determine when and if there should be ethical parameters as we practice freedom of speech in America. This course will challenge students to analyze rhetorical strategies and then practice them through debate and argument.

8. Please list the long-term course or program goals that define the broad outcomes that this course or program seeks to help students achieve.

This course is designed as part of the senior “Selectives” course offerings to fulfill the proposed high school Pathways of available learning opportunities.

9. Please indicate what topics, units, or material will be used to meet the long-term goals listed above. What assessment strategies will be used in this course or program? What are the unique components of this course or program content that make it a worthwhile addition for our students?

Unit 1: The Power of Language - Analyzing the words and rhetorical strategies of powerful speeches, articles, commentaries, interviews, political cartoons. Debating the Ethical Mandate for Truth in Leadership and Press. (6 weeks)

Unit 2: The Techniques and Power of Advertising - Analyzing print and visual advertising techniques. Debating the Feasibility of Truth in Advertising. (6 weeks)

Unit 3: The Role of Technology in Shaping Opinion and Behavior - Studying the techniques used by social media platforms to engage/target the consumer, addictive technology, false information and hacking. Debating the reach of the First Amendment. (6 weeks)

(The formal written curriculum is currently in development).

10. Please enumerate the resources – both human and financial – that you anticipate will be needed to develop this course or program correctly. What impact would this proposal have on scheduling, staffing, and resources? Consider training, equipment and space needs.

The course will be taught by a current member of the high school English Department.

11. If this course will require a textbook, what is the title and cost estimate of a likely text?

The course will not require a textbook, however access to online resources including articles, and social media content, will be required. The purchase of supporting literature may be required, pending finalization of the written curriculum.

12. What impact will this course/program proposal have upon other courses/programs currently being offered in the district?

This course is designed as part of the senior "Selectives" course offerings to fulfill the proposed high school Pathways of available learning opportunities. It is being offered to support and collaborate with courses offered in the Technology, History, Marketing, and Art departments.

**Signatures of those making this proposal:**

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Teacher

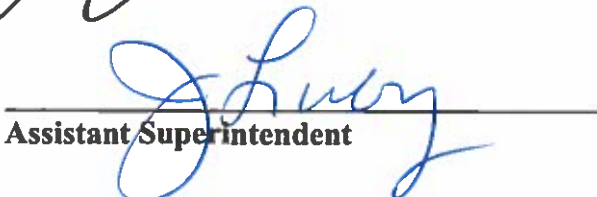
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Department Chair (if applicable)

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Principal

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

  
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Assistant Superintendent

  
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Date