Welcome to the Theory of Knowledge with Mr. Wachs. It is imperative that you share this information with your parents. Open and honest communication between the school and home will help ensure your success in this course. This course is a requirement for the I.B. diploma program, but can be taken by anyone for a ½ credit option.

Expectations:
Because of the nature of the subject, in-class participation, oral communication skills, and being able to present your ideas to your classmates are essential skills to have and develop in this course. My general expectations for this course are simple; students should always try to do their best work. Effort and determination will ensure success. Students must come to class on time, and be prepared each day. Students are required to take part in the course, cooperate with classmates, exhibit a positive attitude, follow the basic expectations of the teacher, and behave in an appropriate manner.

Course Description:
Theory of knowledge is a course designed to encourage each student to reflect on the nature of knowledge by critically examining different ways of knowing (perception, emotion, language and reason) and different kinds of knowledge (scientific, artistic, mathematical and historical). The Theory of Knowledge (TOK) requirement is central to the educational philosophy of the I.B. Diploma Programme. It offers students the opportunity to reflect critically on diverse ways of knowing and on areas of knowledge, and consider the role and nature of knowledge in their own culture, in the cultures of others and in the wider world.

As a thoughtful and purposeful inquiry into different ways of knowing, and into different kinds of knowledge, TOK is composed almost entirely of questions. The most central of these is “How do we know?” It is a stated aim of TOK that students should become aware of the interpretative nature of knowledge, including personal ideological biases, regardless of whether, ultimately, these biases are retained, revised or rejected. TOK also has an important role to play in providing coherence for the student as it transcends and links academic subject areas, thus demonstrating the ways in which they can apply their knowledge with greater awareness and credibility. In addition, it prompts students to be aware of themselves as thinkers, encouraging them to become more acquainted with the complexity of knowledge, and recognize the need to act responsibly in an increasingly interconnected but uncertain world.

Unit 1 – Review: Grade 11 TOK 32 (Approximately 5 Classes)
Students will review the grade 11 TOK topics in the ways of knowing (reason, perception, language, and emotion) as well as knowers and knowing. Students will also be introduced to the I.B. topics list for this year’s I.B. TOK assessments.

Unit 2 – Areas of Knowledge: The Arts (Approximately 6 Classes)
This is a broad topic to characterize, but can include the various forms in the I.B. group 6 (dance, film, music, theatre and visual arts). Students will study the differences between the forms as well as their similarities. For example, how much is there in common between knowing a poem and knowing a dance? (and what does “knowing” means in either case?)

Unit 3 – Areas of Knowledge: Natural Sciences (Approximately 6 Classes)
The natural sciences are recognized as a model for the development of scientific knowledge: owing to many factors, prime among which is their capacity to explain and make precise predictions. Its influence permeates through much of modern life (for example, in the widespread and growing use of technologies). This has led to a wide variety of attitudes towards the nature, scope and value of the natural sciences. Students will discuss questions about scientific methodologies, and the context in which kinds of scientific work take place.
History is studied individually because knowers cannot directly observe the past, opening up many questions of knowledge (“remembering the past” is never straightforward). Historiography, that is, a study of the writings of history, is not a study of every event that has occurred, but rather a study of those traces that have been deemed relevant and meaningful by historians, and they may be influenced by factors such as ideology, perspective or purpose. Students will study whether or not what is claimed is true, they will face problems of reliability and attitudes, and may consider the purpose of historical analysis and the issue of the nature of historical truth.

Students will consider whether human behavior can actually be studied scientifically? What differences and similarities are there between the human sciences and the natural sciences, in terms of both their methods and procedures for acquiring knowledge and the nature of the knowledge produced? Research in the human sciences often has a relationship to practical matters and concerns. Does such a relationship between research and its context affect its status as science?

This unit will be intermixed throughout the course and will involve discussions of the way we ought to live our lives, the distinctions between right and wrong, the justification of moral judgments, and the implications of moral actions for the individual and the group. In class, we will focus on how we can know or justify what we ought to do. In this sense, an exploration of ethical questions from the point of view of TOK focuses on knowledge issues implied in them, rather than exclusively on the questions themselves.

Students will complete the course by completing the major I.B. course assessments including the final essay and the presentations.

The following reflects the breakdown of the evaluation process (possibly subject to change):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation Component</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Daily Evaluation</th>
<th>Summative Evaluation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self Assessments (oral communication skills)</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>40%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reflective Journals (written communication skills)</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unit Assignments/Tests</td>
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<td>Major Concept I.B. Essay</td>
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<tr>
<td>Major Concept I.B. Presentation</td>
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Students who miss deadlines will receive a score of ns (not submitted) until such a time that the missing work is submitted and graded. Work that is deemed exceptionally late may not be accepted at all. Please see the next pages for the department policies on missing/late assignments, as well as policies on academic dishonesty. Parents will receive periodic progress reports. Reports can be e-mailed directly to parents if you provide an e-mail address. All students and parents are encouraged to contact me at school (837-1321) or by e-mail (at any time) by linking off our staff email page at: http://sturgeonheights.sjsd.net/Staff

The two components of your TOK Assessment are the presentation (of your overall I.B. TOK grade) and the essay (the remaining of your overall I.B. TOK grade). Your best TOK Presentation score and your final TOK essay score combine to determine your overall TOK grade. Combined with your extended essay grade, this can gain you up to 3 points towards your I.B. diploma.

(1) **TOK internal assessment (20 points):** is the TOK oral presentation, in which you will lay out a real life situation you have chosen, and identify and explore a knowledge issue that arises from it. Mr. Wachs will score you based on the I.B. internal assessment criteria (specific details to follow in class). The presentation length is approximately 10 minutes per student. Also, an I.B. presentation planning document will be used which identifies: the knowledge issue focused on, a summary of any knowledge issues addressed within, justification for the achievement levels by both student and Mr. Wachs.

(2) **TOK external assessment (40 points):** is your essay, written on a topic chosen from a list of 10 prescribed titles, is marked outside the school by an external examiner using specific I.B. assessment criteria (details to follow in class). The essay is 1,200 – 1,600 words in length.

**Note:** grades A to E are awarded for both Theory of Knowledge and the extended essay, and in order to receive the I.B. diploma, a grade of at least D is required in one of them.
DEPARTMENT LATE POLICIES:

Late Assignments and Major Assessments: The following two statements are the assessment policies teachers in our department will be including in our course syllabi:

(1) Late Assignments: It is the policy of the Sturgeon Heights Social Studies Department that marks may be deducted from assignments that are not submitted on the due date up to a maximum of 10% of the total value of the assignment.

(2) Major Assessments: Assessments deemed as ‘major’ or ‘essential’ to the core curriculum of this course must be submitted. In the case that these assessments are not submitted, students will be required to attend study hall or complete the assessment (or a similar assessment) by means of another suitable arrangement. Students must attend study hall within two weeks of the due date of an assessment. Students will be expected to attend study hall until the assessment is complete. If the teacher is having difficulty arranging a time with students or students refuse to attend, this will be brought to the attention of a school administrator. If a student refuses to complete an assignment in study hall, this will also be discussed with a school administrator. If, by the end of the semester, students have yet to submit a major assessment they will score a zero on any of the assessment they have not submitted.

Major Assessment Completion Procedures: The following procedures have been agreed upon by the members of the Social Studies Department and will be implemented in order to assist and encourage students to submit major assessments:

(1) Teacher sets due date
(2) Possible assessment of late marks
(3) Verbal reminder of the due date and assignment(s) that have not been submitted
(4) Discuss with the student a mutually agreeable time to seek help with the assessment or arrange a time for the student complete the assessment or assign student to study hall

PLAGIARISM AND ACADEMIC HONESTY:

Plagiarism is the use of someone else’s ideas without giving credit where credit is due. More specifically, the MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers defines plagiarism as the “act of using another person’s ideas or expressions in your writing without acknowledging the source” (Gibaldi and Achtert 20). Plagiarism is academic theft, and it can mean the loss of all your marks for an assignment. As you enter post-secondary educational institutions it can result in the loss of credit in your course and in extreme cases of plagiarism, it can mean expulsion from post-secondary institutions. Some examples of plagiarism are:

- Downloading materials in whole or in part from the Internet (even if you pay for them)
- Copying word-for-word from published or unpublished work
- Paraphrasing published or unpublished material without bibliographic notation
- Copying and turning in another student’s work as your own with or without that student’s knowledge

The Impact of Plagiarism in a Course Assignment: Any of the violations noted above are considered to be serious and depending on the severity and/or intentionality of the plagiarism, consequences may involve students being asked to:

- Re-write part of the assignment
- Re-write all of the assignment
- Complete an entirely different assignment
- Complete the same, or a new assignment, while in the presence of the teacher
- Receive a zero on the assignment with no opportunity to complete the assignment
- Other possible consequences depending on the circumstances

How to Avoid Plagiarism: Always give credit where credit is due. Citing a source means giving credit to someone or something when what you use is not your own original work. Cite your sources within your text and in a bibliography at the end of the assignment. In most cases, teachers in the Sturgeon Heights Social Studies Department will provide you with a detailed explanation of the Modern Languages Association (MLA) Style Guide to assist you in properly citing and formatting your sources.

Sources should be cited when:

- You use another person’s idea, opinion or theory.
- You use any fact, statistics, graphs, drawings, pictures, sounds, or any other piece of information that you found from another source.
- You use quotations of another person’s actual spoken or written words.

Citing Sources: All information must be cited whether it is from a book, interview, Internet, electronic source, et cetera. When you use the work of others, you must give them the credit they deserve. When in doubt, cite your source!
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<th>MONDAY</th>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Labor Day</td>
<td>5 Review part 1</td>
<td>12 Review part 2</td>
<td>13 Course introduction</td>
<td>14 Review part 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
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**STURGEON HEIGHTS COLLEGIATE**

**MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 03, 2012**