



**Deerfield Beach High School**  
**IB THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE**  
**Course Syllabus**



Instructor: Mr. W. Collazo

Academic Year: 2018-2019

This is a general outline of the course topics and issues in the order we will be discussing them. Please note that this syllabus is subject to change in the case of any unforeseen time constraints.

<b>1<sup>ST</sup> SEMESTER - 2018</b>	
<b><i>1<sup>st</sup> Quarter</i></b>	
WEEKS 1-4  8/15 – 9/7	<p><b>Unit 1: Introduction to the Theory of Knowledge</b>  <u>Essential Questions:</u> <i>How do I(we) know the things I(we) know? How does this course fulfill a purpose in the IB program?</i>  <u>Topics Covered:</u> Nature of TOK as an IB subject; the IB Learner Profile &amp; orientation to diploma program curriculum; distinguishing between knowledge from other related ideas; the role of perspective in knowing</p>
WEEKS 5-8  9/10 – 10/5	<p><b>Unit 2: “Know Thyself” - Human Nature &amp; Our Ways of Knowing</b>  <u>Essential Questions:</u> <i>How does being human affect my (our) knowledge? How do our ways of knowing work together to form knowledge?</i>  <u>Topics Covered:</u> Knowing as individuals and as communities; the distinction between personal &amp; shared knowledge; types of perspectives; reflecting on human nature; introduction to our ways of knowing</p>
WEEK 9  10/8 – 10/12	<p><b>Core Concepts Review</b>  <u>Essential Questions:</u> <i>To what extent can beliefs be justified using the ways of knowing? To what extent should they be justified this way? How useful are the truth tests of coherence, correspondence and pragmatism in arriving at knowledge?</i>  <u>Topics Covered:</u> Personal &amp; shared knowledge, the ways of knowing in justifying what we claim to know, belief and knowledge, the role of culture and spirituality, truth checks and explanations/justifications</p>
WEEK 10  10/15 – 10/19	<p><b>Units 3-10: Areas of Knowledge – An Overview</b>  <u>Essential Questions:</u> <i>How do I (we) organize our thinking and knowledge into systems? Why do I (we) do this?</i>  <u>Topics Covered:</u> Paradigms &amp; conventional thinking; types of knowledge claims; formulating knowledge questions; understanding knowledge frameworks and their use</p>
<b><i>2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter</i></b>	
WEEKS 11-13  10/22 – 11/9	<p><b>Unit 3: Areas of Knowledge – Natural Sciences</b>  <u>Essential Questions:</u> <i>How certain is scientific knowledge? How does ‘the’ scientific method work? What is the role of mathematics in science?</i>  <u>Topics Covered:</u> Considering the most basic presuppositions in scientific investigation; clarifying and analyzing scientific goals, objectives and method; identifying scientific paradigms and they might affect method; looking at the role of the scientist and the scientific community and how peer-review functions; asking if math creates our scientific reality; exploring morality/ethics and responsibility in the natural sciences</p>

WEEKS 14–17  11/12 – 11/30	<b>Unit 4: Areas of Knowledge – Mathematics</b> <u>Essential Questions:</u> <i>How does mathematics relate to the natural world? How is mathematical knowledge different from other areas of knowledge?</i> <u>Topics Covered:</u> Defining formal systems & the nature of objective definitions in a real, natural world, that is, pure math versus applied math; considering the early ideas of Pythagoras & different mathematical paradigms; investigating the uses of formal versus informal logic; analyzing the mathematical method and its use of proof for evidence and certainty
WEEKS 18–19  12/3 – 12/14	<b>Unit 5: Areas of Knowledge – Indigenous Knowledge Systems</b> <u>Essential Questions:</u> <i>How and why does cultural knowledge develop? How do we compare/contrast ‘indigenous’ knowledge with scientific/mathematical knowledge?</i> <u>Topics Covered:</u> Identifying indigenous populations and exploring a sampling of their cultures; considering how “non-Western” / “non-traditional” knowledge is embedded in culture; examining how culture seeks to address fundamental questions of existence; Midterm Exam Preparation
WEEK 20  12/17 – 12/21	<b>MIDTERM EXAM</b>
<i>Winter Break: 12/24/2018 – 1/4/2019</i>	

<b>2<sup>nd</sup> SEMESTER - 2019</b>	
<i>3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter</i>	
WEEKS 1–3  1/7 – 1/25	<b>Unit 6: Areas of Knowledge – Human Sciences</b> <u>Essential Questions:</u> <i>How and why do we try to predict or influence human behavior? How do the challenges of doing so reflect why we pursue knowledge in the first place?</i> <u>Topics Covered:</u> Comparing/contrasting scientific investigation in the human sciences versus natural sciences; looking at the concept of <i>Verstehen</i> & the challenges of studying humans; exploring the dichotomy of ‘soft’ versus ‘hard’ sciences and the exercise of operationalizing investigations; considering complementary versus competing paradigms in the human sciences and how this affects public policy; revisiting the ways of knowing and human nature; exploring morality/ethics and responsibility in the human sciences
WEEKS 4–6  1/28 – 2/15	<b>Unit 7: Areas of Knowledge – History</b> <u>Essential Questions:</u> <i>How is knowledge of the past different than other kinds of knowledge? What are the challenges in knowing the past? How are history and identity related?</i> <u>Topics Covered:</u> Clarifying what is meant by ‘history’ and the role of the historian; examining ‘historical method’; analyzing events from different perspectives and how we prioritize values; identifying historical paradigms and alternative narratives; considering the purpose of keeping history and its uses in retaining individual and collective memory
WEEKS 7–9  2/18 – 3/8	<b>Unit 8: Areas of Knowledge – The Arts</b> <u>Essential Questions:</u> <i>How do the arts provide us with knowledge? How does that knowledge compare/contrast with other areas? How does technology affect our creation and appreciation of the arts?</i> <u>Topics Covered:</u> Defining ‘art’ and artistic knowledge; examining the relationship between the arts & ‘quality’; introducing aesthetics and value judgment in the arts; identifying artistic paradigms; revisiting subjectivity and objectivity; considering the relationship between the arts & the sciences

WEEKS 10–11  3/11 – 3/22	<p><b>Unit 9: Areas of Knowledge – Ethics</b></p> <p><u>Essential Questions:</u> <i>How does our intuitive or reasoned determination of good and bad influence our pursuit of knowledge? How can values be considered either/both objective or subjective?</i></p> <p><u>Topics Covered:</u> Distinguishing between morality &amp; ethics; reflecting on thought and action; value judgments as a knowledge claim; considering ‘good’ and ‘bad’ for the individual and societies; examining various systems of ethics/ethical paradigms; the role of cultural relativism</p>
<p><i>Spring Break: 3/25/2019 – 3/29/2019</i></p> <p><i>4<sup>th</sup> Quarter</i></p>	
WEEKS 12–14  4/1 – 4/12	<p><b>Unit 10: Areas of Knowledge – Religious Knowledge Systems</b></p> <p><u>Essential Questions:</u> <i>How and why does religious knowledge develop? How can we know through spirituality and religion?</i></p> <p><u>Topics Covered:</u> Considering knowledge sources in spirituality and religion; a short course in major religions; religious doctrine and practice; examining how religion seeks to address fundamental questions of life, value &amp; knowledge</p>
WEEK 15  4/15 – 4/26	<p><b>Course Review and Assessment Practice</b></p> <p><u>Essential Question:</u> <i>How are these TOK concepts at work in the real world?</i></p> <p><u>Topics Covered:</u> Assessments &amp; presentations; current events and real life situation focus</p>
WEEKS 16–19  4/29 – 5/24	<p><b>IB &amp; AP Examinations (Regular, Alternative, Exception Testing)</b></p> <p>Scheduled presentations; current events and real life situation focus; IB &amp; AP Exam Preparations and Testing; Study Hall</p>
WEEK 20  5/28	<p><b>Making Connections &amp; Back to the Beginning</b></p> <p><u>Essential Question:</u> <i>What have I learned and how can I apply this to my academic and personal life?</i></p> <p><u>Topics Covered:</u> Looking at TOK in the IB program/curriculum and its use in making sense of the world; “TOK Last Will &amp; Testament”; Final Exam Preparation</p>
WEEKS  5/30 – 6/4	<p><b>FINAL EXAM</b></p>