

**Standard 1(e) Rationale: Creates an environment of mutual respect, rapport, and fairness.**

I have been working very hard to improve my classroom culture during my second year of teaching. This is something I hope to demonstrate through the presentation of various artifacts and rationales in this portfolio. I chose the syllabus and classroom expectations for my 9<sup>th</sup> grade American History class to demonstrate that my instructional practice meets this criterion. I hand out a class syllabus on the first instructional day of class. As a class, we go through the class structure, grading and testing policies, and behavioral expectations. We also do some role play to along with it, especially for my classroom social expectations to illustrate examples for concepts such as “Fire to shed light, not fire to burn,” “Respect yourself,” and “Respect your classmates.” I set the tone for what I expect of each student and also of each class as a whole the very first day. Then students are required to take it home and go over it with their parents, after which, both the student and the parent sign the syllabus. This way, I can refer back to the syllabus when I am discussing with a student, parent, or a class as a whole what I expect from them in my class later in the year. I have found that the syllabus and expectations does a good job of setting the tone for my class and also provides consistency throughout the year as students need to be reminded of my expectations. It helps remove the mystery in what I expect from them as students.