

Dare To Be Me - 2025-26 Semester 2

Course Syllabus



Photo courtesy of Anja Pfeffer

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Course Description

The Dare To Be Me (DTBM) high school class allows you to embark on a personal and an educational journey. The goal is for you to learn more about yourself and the world around you while building strong connections with your peers and your teachers and fostering your communication skills. We hope that you will begin to feel healthier, more balanced and more empowered to forge your own path in school and in life. Transferable skills are an integral part of this class and will complement and enhance your learning in all other academic subject areas.

We will spend lots of time outside, walk the Hardwick trails, and engage in a mixture of indoor and outdoor activities, including biking, sledding, skiing, snowshoeing, and cooking over the campfire. All of them are designed to make you feel alive, build character, and help you find and strengthen your voice. You will develop your English skills through meaningful discussions and regular journal entries. This will foster your sense of self as well as your academic confidence.

Transferable Skills / Social-Emotional Learning

Communication	Demonstrate effective, expressive, and receptive communication, including oral, written, multi-media, and performance.
Collaboration	Demonstrate a commitment to personal and community health and wellness.

Creativity	Demonstrate flexibility, including the ability to learn, unlearn, and relearn.
Problem-Solving	Persist in solving challenging problems and learn from failure.
Relationship Skills	Apply positive verbal and nonverbal communication and social skills to interact with others.
Self-Awareness	Demonstrate a sense of confidence, personal responsibility, and advocacy.
Self-Management	Understand and use strategies for managing one's emotions and behavior.

Course Objectives / Proficiencies

Upon successful completion of this class, students will earn $\frac{1}{2}$ **ELA** and $\frac{1}{2}$ **PE credit** towards their graduation requirements. The following proficiencies will be **assessed on a bi-weekly basis**:

English Language Arts (ELA) Proficiencies:

Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Develops and strengthens writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.
Speaking & Listening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Participates effectively in collaborative discussions with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively. ➤ Evaluates a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric.
Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Demonstrates command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking. ➤ Demonstrates command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling.

Physical Education (PE) Proficiencies:

Psychomotor Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Demonstrates activity-specific movement skills in a variety of lifetime sports and activities.
Cognitive Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Evaluates perceived exertion during physical activity and adjusts effort.
Social Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Thinks critically and solves problems in physical activity settings, both as an individual and in groups. ➤ Exhibits proper etiquette, respect for others, and teamwork while engaging in physical activity.

Grading

We will follow the OSSU directive regarding grading which uses a 4.0 grading scale. All assignments are separately listed, scored and tracked in Schoology. Students' overall grade, however, can be seen on PowerSchool.

4	Exceeding	The student is exceeding expectations and demonstrates an in-depth understanding that can be applied independently across content areas.
3	Proficient	The student is proficient and meets expectations for the targeted knowledge and skills by demonstrating sufficient understanding through application.
2	Developing	The student is developing proficiency towards the expectations and shows partial understanding of the foundational knowledge and skills.
1	Beginning	The student is not demonstrating sufficient proficiency or evidence of progress towards the expectations of the foundational knowledge and skills.

Remember: We are assessing end-of-year expectations over the course of the school year and are using the 4-point scale to assess where a student is in meeting the proficiency at that given point in time. It is very common that a student may be scoring a 1 or 2 at the beginning of the semester.

General Course Outline & Topics of Discussion and Reflection:

Time Period	Themes	Key Questions
3rd Quarter	Self-Expression ("Me") & Belonging ("Be")	1. How do I communicate who I am to the world around me? 2. Where are the places and communities I feel most alive and connected in my heart, body, and mind?
4th Quarter	Growth ("To") & Courage ("Dare")	1. What are values I admire and respect in others and which I would like to nurture in myself? 2. How would I like to "change my story?"

Disclaimer: This course outline is preliminary and subject to change based on the needs of the class and the discretion of the teacher.

Required Resources

Any texts we may read as a class will be provided. You will receive a DTBM sweatshirt and a DTBM backpack that you are encouraged to use for the semester. In it, you will find writing utensils, a plastic sheet to sit on in the woods, as well as a rain poncho to keep you dry. Please use this backpack to carry your journal (provided to you, as well), your water bottle, and any extra gear. Due to the fact that we spend so much time outside, it is absolutely essential for you to **bring weather appropriate clothing to each class**. There are also winter jackets, boots, gloves, scarves, and hats available for you to use. You are welcome to keep a dry set of clothes and/or shoes in Ms. Pfeffer's classroom. Please note that **sandals or crocs are not acceptable** for walking the trails, because they compromise your safety. If you wear them to school, you must bring another pair of shoes for our class.

IMPORTANT: If you have a medical prescription for an Epi-pen and/or Inhaler, please let Ms. Pfeffer, Sol and Kimberly Cookson (nurse) know and have either or both with you at all times.

Late and Incomplete Work

Late work: Please know that failing to submit work on time will set you back and greatly diminish your chances of achieving the desired depth and quality of the final product of your work. We therefore ask you to **communicate any extenuating circumstances as soon as they come up so that we may develop a plan for you not to fall behind**.

Incomplete work: If your work is incomplete, you automatically risk not achieving the mastery of the proficiency that is being targeted in the assignment. That, in turn, can lead to not receiving a passing grade for the class. Please do your very best to hand in work that is completed to the very best of your ability and, again, communicate if there are hindering circumstances.

An Incomplete (I) will be given to students who have missing or incomplete assignments. **Any Incomplete will turn into a 1 if the assignment has not been submitted within two weeks following the due date** (unless prior arrangements have been made).

Electronic Device Expectations

Based on Hazen's 2025-26 policy, you are not allowed to use personal electronic devices. This includes cell phones, smartwatches, and other internet-connected devices. Please leave your device in your own backpack, or better, don't bring it to school at all. **If we see your device, we will confiscate it and follow the Hazen procedure as stated in the Handbook.**

You may on rare occasions be asked to use your school computer for class (primarily for PLP documentation). We will let you know ahead of time. When we do, please make sure your computer is charged and accessible.

NOTE: Ms. Pfeffer and Sol will carry their cell phones in their backpacks in case that the walkie-talkies do not work and they need to reach the school while we are out on the trails.

Food & Drink Policy:

Please make sure you have eaten a healthy breakfast before coming to class. You will need the nutrition and energy in order to participate fully in all class activities. If you nevertheless get hungry, please let one of the adults in the group know and we will try to provide you with a snack. Always have water with you, but avoid any soda, energy, or other carbonated drinks. Juices and milk are fine.

IMPORTANT Words of Caution:

With the amount of time we will be spending in the woods, there is a good chance of encountering ticks, especially as the seasons change. Please **do a thorough tick check when you get home EVERY DAY!!**

PLEASE SIGN AND RETURN (by Tuesday, January 20th, 2026):

If there are any concerns or questions, please contact Anja Pfeffer as soon as possible.

My parents / guardians and I, _____, have read and understood this syllabus for the 2025-26 Dare To Be Me (DTBM) class. I hereby agree to abide by all the policies.

I can be included in photographs and videos. _____ Yes _____ No

I can participate in all outdoor activities, including biking and skiing. _____ Yes _____ No

I have the following allergies/ dietary restrictions, or other limitations: _____

My shirt size (for DTBM sweatshirt) is: _____

Student / Date

Parent / Guardian

Parent / Guardian

Primary Parent/Guardian Contact Information:

Parent/Guardian Name

Relationship to Student

Phone Number

Email Address

Preferred Contact (please circle one):

Phone

Email

ParentSquare