

Comprehensive Course Catalog

Updated for 2026-2027

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Introduction

At Loudoun School for Advanced Studies (LSAS), we offer a range of academic courses that are designed to be rigorous, engaging, and rewarding.

First, we offer what might be characterized as “traditional” courses across subjects, so students can fulfill graduation requirements comparable to those in public school districts and so they can transition into and out of LSAS with continuity in math, English, history, science, and foreign language courses. Given our small class sizes and expert faculty, even these traditional courses are seminar courses with discussion and depth.

We also offer select Advanced Placement courses, so colleges can benchmark our students against the national student population in subjects such as calculus, physics, chemistry, and literature, during the admissions process. And, in some cases, students can earn college credit with high AP test scores.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, we offer our Signature Courses. These topic-driven courses explore a specialized theme with high-level material, open-ended discussion, challenging assessments, and cumulative projects. Signature Courses are designed to show how rich and compelling deep learning can be. They reflect both the expertise of our teachers and the intellectual ambition of our student body. By delving into complex topics, students build a real love of inquiry, overcome their fear of uncertainty, and discover their intellectual independence.

LSAS Signature Courses offered during the 2026-2027 school year include:

- A Study in Fairy Tales: Branching out Beyond Disney
- A Study in Short Fiction: Ghosts, Terror, and Madness
- Protest & Dissent in America
- Political Leadership
- Great Readings in American History
- Creative Explorations in Visual Arts
- Game Theory and Probability
- 3D Printing
- 2D Art
- 3D Art
- Community and Belonging
- Rock Through the Ages
- Electronic Music Lab
- Uke-Box
- History of Basketball

*Not offered in 2026-2027

Mathematics

Pre-Algebra (full year)

Pre-algebra encompasses the study of integers, proportional reasoning, order of operations, expressions, and equations. This course emphasizes mathematical concepts with real-world applications. While learning the language of algebra, students will develop critical thinking skills and problem-solving skills. This course also highlights effective class participation and study skills.

Algebra Explorations (full year) *

In Algebra Explorations, students will be introduced to algebra concepts through both theory and applications. Students will continue to build number sense and practice computation, proportional reasoning, and applications with rational numbers. Modeling and real-world problems are woven throughout this course.

Algebra 1 (full year)

Algebra 1 is designed to give students a foundation for all future math courses. In this course, students will learn to use variables to represent unknown quantities in order to solve algebraic equations and inequalities. Modeling and problem solving are at the heart of the curriculum. Mathematical modeling consists of recognizing and clarifying mathematical structures that are embedded in other contexts: students express a situation in mathematical terms, use mathematical strategies to reach a solution, and present the solution in the context of the original problem. Students must be able to solve practical problems by representing and analyzing the situation using symbols, graphs, tables, or diagrams.

Geometry (full year)

Geometry is primarily the study of spatial relationships with a principal focus on two-dimensional and three-dimensional space. We will begin with lines and angles and then progress to various families of shapes and their relationships: triangles, quadrilaterals, circles, etc. Besides understanding fundamental concepts, we will also look at how objects change as they undergo various transformations: translations, rotations, reflections, and dilations. Our emphasis will be on building students' confidence in problem solving and persevering when challenged with difficult problems.

Algebra 2 with Trigonometry (full year)

Algebra 2 provides students with a foundation for upper-level mathematics by incorporating mathematical reasoning, communication skills, and increasingly sophisticated real-world problems. Students will learn to manipulate more advanced mathematical functions and algorithms. Quadratic functions are thoroughly investigated, including graphing and multiple methods of solving, which require an introduction to complex numbers and advanced algebraic techniques. Real-world applications will be investigated by modeling of quadratic functions. Students will also explore rational functions and master working with radicals and rational exponents. During Trigonometry units, students will learn trigonometric functions and explore their applications in real-life problems. We will analyze, graph, and solve trigonometric functions. In order to improve logical thinking and mathematical reasoning, this course will emphasize the verification of trigonometric identities using all of the fundamental trigonometric identities.

Precalculus/Foundations in Calculus (full year)

Precalculus applies advanced data analysis techniques to working with a variety of functions. Students will examine conic sections as well as logarithmic, exponential, and polynomial functions. Sequences and series will also be explored. Students will strengthen their conceptual understanding of problems and their ability to apply mathematical reasoning in solving problems. We will consider numerical, graphical, and algebraic solutions for all functions and discuss when each of these solutions is applicable. The course's focus on problem solving is enhanced with the use of technology. Foundations of Calculus is designed to prepare students for Advanced Placement Calculus and SAT Math subject level exams. Students use symbolic reasoning and analytical methods to represent mathematical situations, express generalizations, and study mathematical concepts. Students also connect ideas in algebra, geometry, probability, statistics, trigonometry, function families, and graphing. Students will use concrete, numerical, algorithmic, graphical tools and technology to model functions and equations.

AP Calculus AB (full year)

This course teaches students to approach calculus concepts and problems when they are represented graphically, numerically, analytically, or verbally and to make connections among these representations. Calculus concepts will be applied to the functions students have studied the past few years. The real-world applications of calculus will be explored using derivatives, integration, and differential equations. Students learn how to use technology to solve problems, experiment, interpret results, and support conclusions. *High school students only.*

AP Calculus BC (full year) *

AP Calculus BC is roughly equivalent to both first- and second-semester college calculus courses. It extends the content learned in AB to different types of equations (polar, parametric,

vector-valued) and new topics (such as Euler's method, integration by parts, partial fraction decomposition, and improper integrals) and introduces the topic of sequences and series. The AP course covers topics in differential and integral calculus, including concepts and skills of limits, derivatives, definite integrals, the Fundamental Theorem of Calculus, and series. *High school students only.*

Statistics (full year)

Students will learn how to collect, organize, and interpret data using various statistical techniques and will receive a solid foundation in the fundamentals of data analysis through a mix of lectures, discussions, and hands-on activities. This course will cover topics including probability, hypothesis testing, correlation and regression, and statistical inference. In addition to learning technical skills, students will also develop critical thinking and problem-solving abilities through real-world examples and applications of statistics in fields such as business and social sciences. By the end of the course, students should have a strong understanding of statistical concepts and be able to apply them to practical situations. The course will prepare students for future studies in fields such as economics, psychology, and data science as well as provide valuable skills for personal and professional decision-making.

Linear Algebra with Applications (advanced, full year) *

Linear Algebra is a foundational subject in mathematics that is rich in both applications and geometric beauty. This course uses an inquiry-based approach. To paraphrase our main text, the course is structured to provide opportunities to be creative and practice ways of thinking conducive to creativity. The "application" portion of the course is designed collaboratively with students based on their background and interests. *Prerequisite: Precalculus.*

Multivariable Calculus (advanced, full year)

Multivariable calculus is the study of differential, integral, and vector calculus for functions of more than one variable. Multivariable Calculus is used in the physical sciences, economics, engineering, and computer graphics. Upon completion of this full year course, students will be able to extend differentiation and integration to vector-valued functions, apply vector tools to study curvature, study the motion of a particle along a path, extend the concepts and techniques of differential calculus to functions of several variables, compute partial derivatives, evaluate double and triple integrals, explore vector fields, explore integration over curves, paths, and surfaces, and solve applied problems. Multivariable Calculus is a rigorous course that builds on the skills and concepts students learned in AP Calculus AB or BC (preferably BC). *Prerequisite: Calculus BC (or AB with instructor approval).*

Science

Middle School Courses

Earth Science (full year)

Students will examine our physical environment by examining energy transfer, weather processes, plate tectonics, and chemical transformations. This course emphasizes knowledge building through observation, question development, class investigations, writing, and the communal development of scientific models.

Life Science (full year) *

In this course, students will explore the nature of science and scientific inquiry, the life of a cell, classification of organisms into the tree of life, ecology, inheritance, evolution, and the human body systems. Students will build their skills of experimentation, discourse, and the use of scientific models.

Physical Science (full year) *

Students will be introduced to topics in physics, chemistry, and engineering. Topics covered will include motion, atomic theory, and energy. Lab skills and engineering practices will be spread throughout the course. The goal of the course is to improve students' understanding of the physical world and expand their scientific curiosity.

High School Courses

There is no prescribed sequence; however, students interested in physics, mechanical engineering, or electrical engineering should plan on taking an introductory physics course early. This will allow for more advanced electives later. Either Conceptual Physics or AP Physics 1 will fulfill the physics requirement.

Biology (full year)

In this course, we will examine major themes of biology: biochemistry, genetics, cell division, evolution, and natural selection. Modeling of biological processes, reading of scientific literature, formal scientific writing, discourse, biological techniques, and data analysis will be practiced and developed throughout the year.

Chemistry (full year) *

This course is intended to help students realize the important role that chemistry plays in the world around them and to provide a solid foundation in chemistry. Topics to be studied include: the structure of matter, chemical nomenclature, energy, phase changes, stoichiometry, acid-base chemistry, oxidation and reduction, precipitation, gas laws, nuclear chemistry, and other topics as time allows. Students will perform experiments whenever possible. *Prerequisite: Algebra 1.*

Conceptual Physics: Mechanics (full year)

Physics is often described as the fundamental science because it is the discipline most capable of being described in concrete mathematical formulas. It has far more Laws than Theories compared to studies in chemical and biological sciences. But that math can be daunting. The goal of this high school level, algebra-based physics course is to teach all the same principles that can be found in two semesters of college curricula, but in a dynamic, hands-on approach that uses labs and lecture to describe how the natural world works in. General physics is far more than Newton's Laws of Motion; those are just one of the five core components. The first core section studies motion, forces, springs, energy transformations, transfers, and natural resources, and finally, work and power. The second begins with kinetics before moving on to thermal properties. Moving into the third section, the course explores sound, optics, waves, and the electromagnetic spectrum. In the fourth block and final section, students learn magnetism, static electricity, electrical quantities and circuits, electromagnetic forces and induction. In the fifth and final block, the class explores atomic physics and radioactivity. *Prerequisite: Algebra 1.*

AP Physics 1 (full year) *

The philosophy and routines in this course are very similar to Conceptual Physics, since they are both introductory courses. However, this course covers much more material, and the workload is higher. More attention is paid to mathematical rigor and methods. This is the course for students especially interested in physics. See the College Board website for an outline of topics. *Prerequisites: Algebra 1 and Geometry.*

AP Physics 2 (full year) *

This class a year-long algebra-based college-level physics course focusing on thermodynamics, fluid statics/dynamics, electrostatics, magnetic fields, electromagnetism, optics, and quantum/nuclear physics. Students engage in inquiry-based investigations to build critical thinking and reasoning skills. *Prerequisite: AP Physics 1 or teacher approval.*

Anatomy & Physiology (full year)

This course will enable students to develop an understanding of the relationships between structures and functions of the human body. The class will investigate the major organs in the following human body systems: integumentary, skeletal, muscular, nervous, endocrine, cardiovascular, lymphatic, respiratory, digestive, urinary, and reproductive. Emphasis will be placed on how the body maintains homeostasis. In addition to focusing on the structure and function of body systems, the course will integrate topics related to health and fitness, such as exercise kinesiology, nutrition, and disease. Students will draw inspiration from real-world phenomena regarding health topics. Comparative anatomy and physiology will be covered as well; looking at the anatomy and physiology of humans and other organisms to see how differences and similarities in anatomy and physiology can be explained through evolution. Students should expect to participate in many inquiry-based activities and labs throughout the school year. *Prerequisite: Biology.*

AP Physics C: Mechanics/AP Physics C: Electricity and Magnetism (full year)

AP Physics C is a calculus-based, college-level physics course, which is especially appropriate for students planning to specialize or major in physics or engineering. The mechanics portion explores topics such as kinematics; Newton's laws of motion; work, energy, and power; systems of particles and linear momentum; circular motion and rotation; oscillations; and gravitation. The electricity and magnetism portion focuses on electrostatics; conductors, capacitors, and dielectrics; electric circuits; magnetic fields; and electromagnetism. Due to the fast-paced nature of this course, students must have successfully completed an introductory calculus course before enrollment. Math Prerequisite: AP Calculus AB. Prerequisite: AP Physics 1 (or instructor permission).

AP Biology (full year) *

Students examine biological concepts and skills introduced in Biology at a more advanced level, as well as new topics. This course focuses on applying knowledge of these concepts to answer student-developed questions, using advanced biological research techniques and methodologies. This includes focus on experiment development and design, data analysis, use of statistical tools, and computational software. Students will also partake in primary literature research, analysis, and discussions. Pursuit of these science practices be structured around four big themes, outlined by the AP Biology curriculum: 1) the process of evolution drives the diversity of life, 2) biological systems utilize energy and molecular building blocks to grow, reproduce and maintain homeostasis, 3) living systems retrieve, transmit, and respond to information essential to life processes, and 4) biological systems interact, and these interactions possess complex properties. *Additional Science Requirement: Chemistry (may be taken concurrently).*

AP Chemistry (full year) *

This course is an in-depth exploration of chemistry for students who have had one year of intro chemistry. AP Chemistry is considered one of the most rigorous of the high school AP curriculum offerings, and successful completion along with the AP Chemistry exam in May is the equivalent of a freshman year of college-level chemistry. Students should be prepared for a fast-paced class that will begin the year with completion of a summer review packet of concepts. Topics usually not emphasized on the exam, such as organic and nuclear chemistry, will be touched on. Course includes experimental understanding through both standard and inquiry-based experiments. *Prerequisite: Algebra 2.*

Neuroscience (one semester) *

Students will learn neuroscience by doing experiments. They will learn to operate simple neuroscience equipment and then design and conduct an experiment of their own. Students will keep detailed lab notebooks and write lab reports on their experiments.

Ecology (one semester) *

The course examines fundamental principles of ecology within the context of our local environment. We will study multiple habitats within Loudoun County, identify species, and figure out how we impact these systems. The final project will be a poster presentation to the school based on our research. *Prerequisites: Biology and Chemistry.*

Ecological Design (one semester) *

This is a project-based class that leverages our understanding of local ecosystems and how we are changing them. We will identify an issue that we want to address, conduct research, and develop a tangible solution. *Prerequisites: Biology, Chemistry, and Ecology.*

Scientific Reading, Writing, and Research (advanced, one semester) *

How do scientists share their results and find new questions to explore? Students will identify an area of scientific interest, read articles to understand the relevant background material as well as current research in that area, and finally develop a novel hypothesis. The final project will be a 5-10 page background paper that summarizes the current state of understanding of the topic and outlines the rationale for the new hypothesis. Juniors and seniors only.

Independent Science Research (advanced, one semester) *

Students who developed an independent research project in Reading, Writing, and Research can take this class if they want to do their experiment. They will plan a detailed experimental protocol and then conduct their experiment. Students are strongly encouraged to take this

course for at least two semesters to be able to finish their research. In addition to doing the research, students are expected to regularly present their progress in lab meetings. At the culmination of the research, students will prepare a poster presentation for the LSAS community and write a final scientific paper describing their experiment and its results. Prerequisite: Reading, Writing, and Research.

English/Language Arts

Middle School Courses

Middle School English courses provide students with a foundation of skills upon which to build their advanced English coursework at LSAS and beyond. Through both writing and discussion, students practice close reading skills and learn how to use textual evidence to build support for their claims.

Students produce several formal essays that they take through the full writing process, culminating in polished works to be added to their digital portfolios. Socratic seminar is another key component of these courses: students learn and practice speaking, listening, and self-awareness habits in discussions, so as to gain the tools key to building productive dialogue in any setting.

Identity and Independence (full year) *

This middle school English course explores how we view ourselves and our place in the world. What makes us who we are? How are we shaped by our experiences, families, and cultures? Can we learn to accept ourselves even when we don't feel like we fit in? What does it look like to build connections with those whose identities seem so very different from our own? How can we find it in ourselves to act bravely in the face of adversity? Through reading, writing, and discussion, students will explore these and other essential questions.

Community and Belonging (full year)

This middle school English course builds on our previous explorations of identity and looks at our relationships with groups. How are our identities shaped by our communities and connections to those in our lives? How are communities a source of positivity and connection, and in what ways can they exclude others and create divisions? Why might someone challenge the norms of a community, and what consequences might they face? Through reading, writing, and discussion, students will explore these and other essential questions.

Courage and Conviction (full year) *

This middle school English course builds on our previous explorations of identity and belonging with a focus on times of moral struggle. How do we know what choices are right, and why do some people behave in ways that are so clearly wrong? What does forgiveness look like? What are the dangers of mindless conformity and “group think”? How do we find the courage to stand by our convictions even in the most challenging of circumstances? Through reading, writing, and discussion, students will explore these and other essential questions.

High School Courses

A Study in Short Fiction: Ghosts, Terror, and Madness (one semester, fall)

In this course, we'll discuss cultural, historical, and psychological contexts of classic and contemporary fiction that spans the Gothic and supernatural genre. We'll start with archetypal tales of British mansions haunted by sinister specters of the Victorian era, and dive further into the psychology of madness, the nature of good and evil, the fragility of life, spirituality, and other themes explored by American Southern Gothic writers and Stephen King. We'll discuss why tales of terror keep us engaged and dissect how authors captivate their readers with techniques other than stereotypical gore. Throughout the course we'll view and compare related film adaptations and pause the suspense with lighter ghost stories and humorous parodies from Oscar Wilde, P.G. Wodehouse, Mark Twain, and Charles Dickens. Course will include creative and analytical writing projects. Additional authors: Elizabeth Gaskell, Henry James, Edgar Allen Poe, Flannery O'Connor, Toni Morrison, Shirley Jackson, Washington Irving. Film adaptations: James, Jackson, Irving, Dickens

A Study in Fairy Tales: Branching out Beyond Disney (one semester, spring)

In this course, we'll read variants of canonical fairy tales from global cultures throughout history and discuss the classic archetypes, motifs, symbols, and themes that still persist in retellings today. Fairy tales reflect the culture of their time and we'll delve deeper into the historical and societal influences surrounding the classic works. We'll also read and compare modern variants that subvert the canonical versions, questioning outdated ideas such as gender roles and passivity to reflect the complexities of contemporary values, society, and culture. We'll watch film adaptations, filmed stage productions, and read and write in conversation with scholarly critical analyses. The course will require creative and analytical writing projects. Texts: Cinderella, Beauty and the Beast, Jack and the Beanstalk, Little Red Riding Hood, Sleeping Beauty, Snow White (multiple variants and international film adaptations), Ash by Melinda Lo, Of Beast and Beauty by Stacey Jay. The Princess Bride by William Goldman, Into the Woods by Stephen Sondheim and James Lapine, Snow, Glass, Apples and The Sleeper and the Spindle by Neil Gaiman.

Myth, Epic, and Drama (one semester, fall) *

In this course, we will read texts that look backward to a legendary past, where heroes struggle with monsters (or perhaps become monsters themselves). Myths and epic poems were defining texts for the cultures that produced them, so we will ask fundamental questions: What did these stories mean to their original audience? What do they reveal about the values and beliefs of these communities? And why are we still reading them now? At the same time, students will learn to read and analyze poetic narrative, whether that means a long poem such as *Beowulf* or a verse drama such as *Macbeth*. Students should expect a creative project in the first quarter and an analytic paper in the second quarter. Readings include Neil Gaiman's *Norse Mythology*, *Beowulf* (translated by Seamus Heaney), and Shakespeare's *Macbeth*. *Middle school students may take this with instructor permission.*

Odysseys (one semester, spring) *

The central text of the semester will be *The Odyssey* in the new translation by Emily Wilson. We will read Homer's epic in its entirety and explore what it reveals about the politics and culture of the ancient Greek world. We will also discuss the poem's lasting reputation: what does *The Odyssey* mean to modern translators, artists, and readers? The course will include artistic responses to the *Odyssey* from Margaret Atwood, Mary Zimmerman, Derek Walcott, the Coen Brothers, and others. Students should expect to write regular short responses in addition to a creative project and a formal essay. *Middle school students may take this with instructor permission.*

Crime and Detective Fiction (one semester, fall) *

Detective fiction has become a ubiquitous part of popular culture, ranging from novels to television series to podcasts, and it is now a part of our mental equipment for thinking through problems of psychology, sociology, and even truth itself. With their preternatural powers of perception and deduction, fictional sleuths challenge us to think about how we know what we know. And the bizarre cases they solve often test the limits of rationalism. In this course, students will examine the evolution of mystery and crime fiction, along with the genre's relationship to the ideal of a rational public sphere. In addition to classic mystery stories by Edgar Allan Poe, Arthur Conan Doyle, and Dorothy Sayers, we will look at how the puzzle-like construction of detective fiction shows up in other genres, from allegory to horror writing to psychoanalytic case-studies.

AP Literature and Composition (full year) *

This course is designed to prepare students for the exam in AP English Literature and Composition. Students will learn to interpret works of literature at a college level, attending to structure, theme, and the expressive use of language; they will also become familiar with key literary devices and critical terms. Students should expect this class to be both reading and

writing intensive. We will invite students to enroll based on the quality of their written work and their demonstrated ability to participate in a seminar setting.

AP Language and Composition (full year) *

This college-level course is designed to prepare students for the exam in AP English Language and Composition. Organized around three units (rhetorical analysis, argumentation, and synthesis), AP Language introduces students to nonfiction texts from 18th-21st century American and British authors. Students should expect this class to be both reading and writing intensive. High school students only.

Living (and Dying) in the Anthropocene (advanced, one semester, spring) *

Living in the Anthropocene—the name given by scientists and artists to describe an era marked by humans' impact on the planet—is tricky business. With wars raging, an increase in toxic spillage, and rampant consumerism across the globe, it can feel like we are living in the last days. Indeed, this apocalyptic thinking is mirrored in much of the content we consume. This course will focus on two central questions: First, how do we live meaningful and optimistic lives in the Anthropocene. Second, how do we identify and understand the structural and long-term effects of what American writer Rob Nixon calls “slow violence”. We will watch movies, and read reports, novels, poetry, and essays that inspire us to think more critically, more globally, and more slowly. From Rachel Carson we will learn how to care for our suffering planet and avoid extinction while, simultaneously and paradoxically, learning how to die like a samurai, thanks to Yamamoto Tsunemoto's Hagakure (the Samurai's warrior code handbook).

Don Quixote (advanced, one semester, fall) *

In 1605, a relatively unknown writer living in the middle-of-nowhere in Central Castille (Spain) published the first part of a work that would be voraciously read and enjoyed by a large public audience: The Ingenious Hidalgo, Don Quixote de la Mancha. Its author, Miguel de Cervantes, was a chamberlain, soldier, slave, royal messenger, and a (mediocre) poet, who went on to become one of the greatest authors in the Western world. The Quixote, as it is affectionately called, is a masterwork of Baroque fiction, and contains something for everyone: gritty realism, swashbuckling adventure, modern fantasy, pastoral romance, and picaresque comedy; it is, indisputably, one of the most hilarious novels ever written. But it is also a bookish book, slippery and stubborn, one that never behaves, and never presents itself for what it actually is. We will study the novel in its entirety, along with a selection of poems, essays, paintings, and musicals.

Wilderness Writing (one semester) *

Outside the walls of the schoolhouse, the library, the church, the home—in short, the places where we first learn and grow—sits unassuming and unpossessed “nature”, perhaps the first and most radical teacher there ever was. Wilderness Writing is a course which balances the

traditional study of literature, art, and cinema with a particularly immersive kind of creative writing. Like French painters who worked *en plein air*, we will practice reading and writing both in and out of the classroom, taking inspiration from the natural world around us. The course will include an overnight trip to a working farm in the Shenandoah Valley where we will hold a writing workshop, and study the connection between wilderness, agriculture, and civilization.

Short Narrative (one semester) *

This course is a study in the literary genre of the short narrative form. Students will read short stories, essays, novellas, watch short films, listen to radio broadcasts and/or podcasts, and engage with other mediums of narrative which tend towards brevity. Additionally, students will write short stories and/or make short films to practice and demonstrate acquisition and literacy in the medium. Content includes stories by Anton Chekhov, John Steinbeck, Clarice Lispector, Joan Didion, and short films from Werner Herzog, Wes Anderson, and Luis Buñuel.

Rewriting the Myth: The Latin American Novel (advanced, one semester) *

In this course students will study the Latin American novel in translation. Latin American literature was invisible to much of the Western world until publishing houses began widely translating and circulating award-winning Hispanic texts into English in the 1960s-1970s. This period of massive popularity and a renewed interest in Latin American culture was called "The Boom". Much of the literature from the Boom is stylistically experimental and politically engaged: many of its authors conduct mythical retellings of the "discovery" of the New World, in an attempt to reconstruct both personal and national identity. Reading list includes works by Gabriel Garcia Márquez, Carlos Fuentes, Clarice Lispector, and others.

Literature of the American West (one semester) *

For more than two centuries the American West represented a new frontier for early inhabitants of the states, an expansive space of exploration and danger. But what does it represent now, in this day and age? In this class we will read stories of dust-covered farmers, Mexican immigrants, and indigenous people who were born in or drawn to the West's deserts with promises of gold or oil or agricultural wealth. We will examine the problem of the mythos of the frontier and other questions that arise from thinking about land, social order, and identity. We will also consider popular representations of the West, in cinema, country music, and other forms of media, to help us think critically about the Cowboy, and how he became the ubiquitous symbol of 20th century Americana.

Social Science

Middle School Courses

Great Readings in American History (full year)

Through a variety of materials including graphic novels, historical fiction, and YA history books students will study pivotal moments in the history of the United States. Related films and place-based learning opportunities will be provided to sites specific to course readings. Students will also continue to develop formal and informal writing skills through different activities that will also incorporate primary source materials.

Great Lives in US History (full year) *

Great Lives will examine how we understand the role of biography as presented through great books, films, and the homes created by people who have shaped our world. Students will evaluate how biographers treat their subjects and determine the difference between a balanced analysis of these lives as opposed to hagiographies. Films, when possible, will, work in tandem with books being read.

Historical Conversations in American Cinema (one semester) *

In this course students will study singular moments in United States history as presented in Hollywood films. In some cases, different films that deal with the same subject/topic will be explored. Films will include, among others, *My Darling Clementine*, *Tombstone*, *Amistad*, *1776*, *Glory*, *The Grapes of Wrath*, and *Selma*. Students will consider why filmmakers have chosen to depict America through a given lens and will engage in conversations about the films' historical accuracy.

Civics: Fulfilling the American Dream (full year) *

In this course, students will learn about the foundations of American government by studying the Charters of Freedom, the Declaration of Independence, the US Constitution, and the Bill of Rights. Students will explore the concept of Federalism and the role of national, state, and local government while also recognizing the privileges that come with being an American citizen. We will also focus on the value of the common good.

Narratives of the American Experiment (full year) *

In this course, students will read a variety of age-appropriate books that reflect pivotal moments in US History. Students will engage in thematic analysis of the story of the United States based on historical narratives including (but not limited to) *Never Caught: The Story of Ona Judge*,

Tillie Pierce: Teenage Eyewitness to the Battle of Gettysburg, Hiroshima, and Moonshot. Student engagement and participation are expected, and students will need to have a composition book for journal reflections. Field trip opportunities will augment classroom experiences.

Narratives of Inequality (one semester) *

Rooted in the graphic novel series *March* by the late Congressman John Lewis, this course will explore stories of the constant struggle for freedom in the United States, particularly for BIPOC. This class will be about courage, strength, hope, and healing. Students will learn about the music that led the movement for freedom in the United States, and we will watch related documentary and commercial films, such as *Ghosts of Mississippi* and *In the Heat of the Night* among others. A field trip to the National Portrait Gallery and National Museum of American Art will highlight artistic aspects of the freedom movement as inspired works of art. This course will also prepare students for the middle-school spring trip to Civil Rights sites in the South.

High School Courses

World History (full year)

This high school World History course will cover the story of humanity from the Ancient World to the present. Content will cover the Rise of Civilization, the Ancient World, the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, the Age of Reason, and the Modern World. The course will be global in outlook and not just a survey of Western Civilization.

Protest & Dissent in America (one semester, fall)

In this signature course students learn about the various protest movements that have taken place in American history starting from the Imperial Crisis of 1765-1776, the basis for the right to protest as enshrined in the U.S. Constitution, and then examining the following movements: Women's Rights, Civil Rights, LGBTQ+ Rights, the rights of the physically and mentally challenged, and the American Indian Movement. The course will start with a reading of Henry David Thoreau's essay "On Civil Disobedience" which will serve as the foundation for the right to use civil disobedience that was adopted by many protest groups, finding prominence during the Civil Rights Movement.

Political Leadership (one semester, spring)

In Political Leadership, students will investigate James McGregor Burns's theory of transformative leadership: that is, the ability of leaders to create other leaders who serve the common good. A particular focus will include the presidencies of Abraham Lincoln, Ulysses S. Grant, Theodore Roosevelt, Franklin Roosevelt, and Lyndon Johnson. Additionally, students will

examine the role of grassroots political leadership as demonstrated by the Civil Rights Movement, studying the life and work of Fannie Lou Hammer.

United States History (full year) *

In this year-long chronological study of the United States, covering the years from 1607 to the present, students will explore both the triumphs and the travesties that are part of the American narrative. Students will be expected to think and write critically about a range of topics, and, in the process, they will develop their understanding of key themes tied to the American experience. The focus on writing will include the composition of a fully MLA documented research paper. Student engagement and participation are expected, and students will need to have a composition book for journal reflections. Field trip opportunities will augment classroom experiences.

American Iliads (one semester) *

American Iliads is a film study/social science course in which students will learn about significant historical battles and consider how they have been depicted in popular films. It is designed to get students to think critically about real history vs. “reel” history, and how history, at times, has been mythologized at the expense of complexity. An emphasis will be put on the study of public memory in conjunction with the selected films, and studied battles will include the Alamo, Gettysburg, Little Big Horn, and Pearl Harbor. The single course text will be Edward T. Linenthal’s *Sacred Ground: Americans and their Battlefields*.

Geostrategy (one semester) *

We will follow and analyze current events in International Relations. We will attempt to identify the Grand Strategy (if any) of the Great Powers. Our primary source will be articles in *The Economist* magazine. *Middle school students may take this course with instructor permission.*

Current Events & Historical Contexts (one semester) *

We live in interesting times. We are confronted by multiple ongoing crises at the national and international level: COVID, the war in Ukraine, climate change, economic instability (inflation, looming recession), increasing political polarization, and the Jan. 6th Insurrection. In this class, we will keep up with the news, using *The Economist* magazine as our main source, supplemented by others. We will also review previous history alongside science, technology, and macroeconomic theory to provide context for these topics. *Middle school students may take this course with instructor permission.*

Civil War and Reconstruction (one semester) *

In this course, students will examine the American Civil War and the ongoing debate surrounding it. They will explore the war's historical background and discuss various interpretations of its causes. Students will also study the political, social, and military aspects of the war. Reconstruction will also be examined with an eye towards a more contemporary view of the era as opposed to interpretations that have been used to justify social, political, and economic inequity. *Middle school students may take this course with instructor permission.*

When Things Go Horribly Wrong (one semester) *

Nuclear accidents, airplane crashes, dam failures, shipwrecks: in many of these cases humans made poor choices with disastrous consequences. We will investigate several mishaps, in detail, to determine what the crucial decisions were and why people chose badly. In other cases, blame can be ascribed to engineering choices, man-machine interfaces, training, tradition, ignorance, managerial failure, wishful thinking, or bad luck. In most accidents, a combination of events was needed to produce failure; in others, failure was bound to happen sooner or later. Along the way, we will learn about cognitive bias, critical thinking, engineering, management, Bayesian Analysis, and risk. And it's always interesting when big things go boom.

Behave and Consciousness (advanced, one semester) *

This class will focus on the structure and functions of the human brain and how they generate, determine, and influence our behaviors and our sense that we are conscious beings in a physical world endowed with free will. Two books will be the focus of the class: *Behave: The Biology of Humans at our Best and Worst* by Robert Sapolsky and *Being You: A New Science on Consciousness* by Anil Seth. Sapolsky argues that the biology of our brains undermines the idea that we can be held responsible for our actions. Seth suggests that our perception of reality is a "controlled hallucination" and that our sense of free will is just an error-correction mechanism.

Philosophy Wars: Enlightenment Rationality vs its Enemies

(advanced, one semester) *

Through reading, writing, and seminar discussion, students will participate in a centuries-old conversation about the most enduring epistemological (how do we come to know something?), metaphysical (what is the nature of our World?), and ethical (what should we do?) questions in the Western philosophical tradition. Students will learn argumentation and reasoning skills as they attempt to clearly articulate their position, orally and in writing, about complex ideas and college-level texts.

The American Revolution (one semester, fall) *

No doubt you have heard of Paul Revere, John and Sam Adams, John Hancock and George Washington --- all dead white dudes, right? The American Revolution was way more than just those individuals and their contribution. Did you know that there was an African American and Narragansett Indian Regiment, the First Rhode Island Infantry? Did you know Mercy Otis Warren, a Boston housewife, wrote influential political pamphlets? Nathaniel Greene, one of George Washington's ablest subordinates, was physically challenged as was his Chief of Artillery, Henry Knox. And quite possibly Benedict Arnold wasn't all that bad of a human being either; he may have had legitimate complaints against his character leveled by some of his peers. Have you ever heard of Sybil Ludington, the 16-year-old, female Paul Revere, who rode twice as far as her male counterpart, in a driving rainstorm, and was not captured. She finished her ride; Paul Revere did not. Billy Lee, an enslaved African American, was with George Washington everywhere during the eight years of the War for Independence. The American Revolution is filled with stories and tales of all kinds of people. If you take this course, you will learn all about them and what became known as the "Cause." Students in the American Revolution will learn all of this and much more. Field trips will be taken to Philadelphia, Valley Forge, and Yorktown, Virginia to incorporate place-based learning into this unusual but much needed approach to the study of how the United States was born. HUZDAH!

Threats to Western Civilization (one semester) *

The Western Liberal traditions of Individual Freedoms/Rights, Democracy, Regulated Capitalism, Globalization, and International Peace are currently under attack in the U.S. and internationally. This is a surprising development, given the presumed victory of Western Liberalism in the 1990s after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the Soviet Union. Putin in Europe and Xi in the Pacific threaten the Long Peace (created after World War II) by invading Ukraine, or threatening to invade Taiwan, both independent democratic states. In the U.S., these attacks have been rhetorical and material, including disinformation (e.g., claims lost elections are illegitimate without evidence), undermined democratic norms, and an attack on the U.S. Capitol during the certification of the 2020 Presidential election results. This class will outline the Western Liberal traditions and their origins, and track events and rhetoric in connection with Russia and Ukraine, China and Taiwan, and the 2024 U.S. Presidential elections.

World War I (advanced, one semester) *

WWI is arguably the worst disaster in Western History, a war almost no one wanted. Nationalism, mass mobilization, industrial production, and aristocratic leadership combined to kill more soldiers than any other war in human history. The course will focus on two aspects: the diplomatic events leading up to the unwanted war, and the actual conduct of the war itself. We will examine the complex international maneuvering as well as the internal struggles within each of the major powers (plus Serbia). The course will also cover the tactics and technologies used to wage the war. The war, often characterized as a static four-year bloody stalemate, actually

saw constant innovation on both sides. By the end of the war, WWII-like air-supported armored breakthrough attacks were being staged.

World War II (one semester) *

This course will explore how the complex interactions between politics, technology, and strategy shaped the course of World War II. We will learn about the escalating diplomatic crises of the 1930s. We will examine the great military innovations of the war itself: blitzkrieg, airborne troops, U-boats, amphibious invasion, aircraft carrier warfare, and strategic bombing. We will analyze both the large-scale strategic decisions and the urgent tactical choices made during major battles. Finally, we will evaluate the Grand Strategies of each of the major combatants. *Middle school students may take this course with instructor permission.*

America's Longest War: Afghanistan (one semester) *

We will be covering U.S. involvement in the wars of Afghanistan. U.S. involvement in Afghanistan, often kept secret, is entwined with the end of the Cold War (Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan), the U.S. as lone superpower (the 1st Gulf War), the U.S. War on Terrorism (911, Invasion of Afghanistan), and U.S. interventions in the Middle East (Invasion of Iraq). Afghanistan is America's longest war, and yet, few people (including myself) know a lot about what is going on, let alone what happened in the past or how we got ourselves into this mess. We will seek to understand the impact short-term Foreign Policy thinking has had on medium-term and long-term outcomes. We will also attempt to learn some lessons which we hope will improve policy decisions in the future.

How Civilizations Form (advanced, one semester) *

Using *The Dawn of Everything* as an anchor text, this course will explore recent archaeological evidence on the nature of early human civilizations and, in so doing, question the conventional wisdom about how civilizations formed and what early civilizations might teach us about human freedom in organized societies. This will be an advanced course with considerable reading and writing. We will begin with *The Dawn of Everything* and possibly add sources cited therein to evaluate the authors' theory challenging the established view of the role of agriculture and the centralization of power in the rise of civilizations, and the associated assumption that humans must abandon their fundamental freedoms when organizing into societies. Students will have a chance to examine multiple civilizations across the globe spanning thousands of years of human history, including explorations of important archaeological sites that have received scholarly attention only recently. This course is designed to help students better understand the choices that underlie their current civilization.

Social Justice in America (one semester) *

Using a variety of primary and secondary sources, students will study the place of social justice movements in the United States. Particular attention will be paid to the Civil Rights Movement and the LGBT Movement, the Women's Movement as well as the American Indian Movement and the fight for social justice for Latinos and Hispanics

US Government: Current Events and Predictions (one semester) *

We will observe and discuss current national, international, and financial events. In each case we will learn the history and underlying political/economic structures which shape these events. Students will develop a command of recent history, an understanding of how the financial system works, a review of the mechanisms of the U.S. constitutional federal government, and an appreciation for how individuals can impact the course of events. We will also investigate how to make more reliable forecasts of future events.

Modern Spiritual Masters (one semester) *

In this course, students will explore the diverse voices of people in the contemporary world through a variety of religious/spiritual traditions. Writers to be discussed include Thomas Merton, Richard Rohr, Joan Chittester, Thich Nacht Hahn, Abraham Heschel, Howard Turman, and Henri Nouwen. Students will visit a series of faith-based locations and discuss the parameters of that place within the context of the Spiritual Master who is most associated with it.

Spiritual Journeys: Comparative Religion (one semester) *

In this course, students will study various world religions through the lens of pilgrimage. The focus on pilgrimage will reveal crucial differences in religious belief, but it will also highlight the shared experiences and aspirations that unite pilgrims, regardless of their creed. We will examine a variety of pilgrimages, including travels to Lourdes, France and Mecca, Saudi Arabia.

Great Lives: Prophets of Positive Progress (one semester) *

In this course, students will study the intellectual underpinnings of biography as a genre, particularly how the writing process differs from the kind of chronological history featured in textbooks. Prior to reading specific biographies, students will read *Biography: A Short Handbook* by Hermonie Lee. Lee's work will provide the theoretical framework as students read a range of recent biographies. For example, in 2023-2024 students will read the new biography of Martin Luther King, Jr. by bestselling biographer Jonathan Eig.

Foreign Language

Spanish

Spanish 1 (full year)

This is an introductory course to both the Spanish language and the cultures where Spanish is spoken. This course aims to develop basic and intermediate communicative skills in Spanish as a second language and to build basic knowledge about the cultures of the Hispanic world. This course emphasizes fundamental grammatical structures and the acquisition and assimilation of practical vocabulary in conjunction with the development of the four language skills: writing, reading, speaking, and listening. The use of audio and visual materials in class helps students develop listening and speaking skills, enabling them to express themselves in Spanish from the start of the course.

Spanish 2 (full year)

This class is a continuation of the first-year course. Contrary to Spanish 1, by the spring semester, this course is conducted primarily in the target language. Supplementary readings and other materials are introduced to broaden cultural understanding and language capabilities. Conversational language is emphasized. At the intermediate level, we will focus on more advanced grammatical structures and the continuation of acquisition and assimilation of more precise vocabulary in conjunction with the development of the four language skills: writing, reading, speaking, and listening.

Spanish 3 (full year)

Though at a faster pace and more rigorous than Spanish 2, the objectives of this course are identical to those of Spanish 2; however, this course is for students who have already studied Spanish 2 and display a good understanding of the language, but who are not sufficiently prepared for Spanish 4, needing more grammatical instruction. The first half of Descubre 3 is used as the third-year program in an articulated sequence of instruction. The course will continue to emphasize conversational language, but will introduce longer and more complex supplementary readings, videos, and other materials.

Spanish 4 (full year)

This course is designed to enhance the Spanish language learning process through exposure to historical, cultural, literary themes as well as daily news. In addition, with the acquisition of more grammatical instruction and vocabulary, students will do individual and group projects, read works of prose and poetry, and follow current events in the Hispanic world. This course will use

informative and thought-provoking films to focus on the contemporary history, art, and culture of Spain and Latin America. Supplementary literature, texts, articles, video clips, music, and presentations will provide background to historical events. Students will participate in debates and activities that promote effective oral and written communication.

AP Spanish (full year) *

The AP Spanish Language and Culture course provides students with opportunities to develop language proficiency across the three modes of communication: interpretive, interpersonal, and presentational. Students learn about culture through the use of authentic materials that are representative of the Spanish-speaking world. Materials include a variety of different media, e.g., journalistic and literary works, podcasts, interviews, movies, charts, and graphs. AP Spanish Language and Culture is a language-acquisition course designed to provide students with the necessary skills and intercultural understanding to enable them to communicate successfully in an environment where Spanish is spoken. As such, it is an immersion experience requiring exclusive use of Spanish, a requirement which class participation grades reflect. *High school students only.*

French

French 1 (full year)

In this course, students will get an introduction to the basic elements of the French language. These basic elements aim at developing communicative competence in French, which is divided into three strands: Interpersonal speaking and writing, interpretive listening and reading as well as presentational speaking and writing. To develop students' communicative competence, emphasis is placed on use of French in the classroom as much as possible and on use of authentic materials to learn about the French language and culture. Grammar is integrated into instruction according to the vocabulary and structures needed in the various situations in which the students are required to communicate. Our curriculum will include: learning basic greetings, the family and home, food, school and activities, celebrations and how to make travel accommodations. Students will be required to present in French a quarterly project to the class. The project choice will align with what is being studied in class. Students will be given guidelines and coached as needed along the way. The projects will be graded as a test.

French 2 (full year)

In French 2, students will enhance their comprehension of spoken and written French as well as their cultural awareness. The specific content to be covered is a continuation of written and oral skills acquired in French 1. Students will progress through the development of skills across the interpersonal, interpretive, and presentational modes of communication. Reading and writing receive more emphasis, while oral communication remains the primary objective. Focus

continues to be placed on use of French in the classroom as exclusively as possible. In particular, students will develop their ability to address a French-speaking audience. They will further develop their language proficiency through the use of authentic materials to learn about the French language and francophone culture(s). The students will be required to present a quarterly project in French to the class. The project choice will align with what is being studied in class. The students will be given guidelines and will take ownership of their chosen project and the research it entails. The projects will be graded as a test.

French 3 (full year)

In French 3, students continue to develop their communicative and cultural competence by interacting orally and in writing with other speakers of French, understanding oral and written messages in the language, and making oral and written presentations in French. This will be done through a variety of media and based on new topics in familiar contexts. They will be able to identify and understand main ideas and pertinent details when reading or listening to materials such as live and recorded conversations, short lectures, podcasts, videos, reports, and literary selections. Emphasis continues to be placed on use of French in the classroom, as well as authentic materials to dive deeper down in the learning of the French language and francophone culture(s). Students will be required to choose a quarterly project, which they will present in French to the class. The choice of their project will align with what is being studied in class. They will be given guidelines and will take complete ownership of their projects and the research that it entails. The projects will be graded as a test.

French 4 (full year) *

In French 4, students continue to develop their communicative and cultural competence in the interpersonal, interpretive, and presentational modes of communication as well as being able to speak and understand French with near-fluency and with a broad range of conversational skills. They will be able to exchange and support opinions, on a variety of topics related to contemporary and historical events and global issues at a proficiency level commensurate with their study. Students will comprehend and produce information drawn from a variety of authentic sources including but not limited to: listening to or reading materials live or recorded, short lectures, podcast, videos, music, films, reports and literary selections which will not only continue to explore and focus on topics related to France but also the French speaking world: “La Francophonie”. Students will be able to use a wide range of vocabulary, structures, and major time frames. Also, they will learn to identify various literary elements, such as plot, theme, setting, and characters in both spoken and written texts. Periodically, students will be asked to showcase what they have learned through class presentations promoting debate. Class is exclusively conducted in French and is discussion-based.

AP French (full year)

The AP French Language and Culture course is a college course which is designed to develop students' awareness and appreciation of products, perspectives and practices of francophone cultures. This course is conducted entirely in French and is designed around six themes. The first three themes which are: 1/ Families and Communities, 2/ Science and Technology, 3/ Beauty and Aesthetics are studied in French 5. The three remaining themes which are as follows: 4/ Contemporary Life, 5/ Global Challenges, 6/ Personal and Public Identities will be studied via lessons and sub-themes during the course of the year. In this course communicative strategies which are intended to facilitate communication with native speakers will be presented and practiced using only authentic materials and resources from francophone websites and publications from a variety of sources which include but are not limited to newspapers, websites and publications from a variety of sources which include but are not limited to newspapers, websites, literary work and songs. Complete fluency is the goal of this course and at the end of the course students will be able to:

- Speak French with accuracy and fluency using appropriate pronunciation and intonation.
- Read and understand a variety of authentic francophone texts including: newspapers, magazines and literary texts.
- Express ideas accurately and fluently without the use of a dictionary.
- Develop a wide-ranging French vocabulary and master of grammatical structures.
- Demonstrate awareness of some of the cultural perspectives, practices, and products of francophone people and countries.

During the course of the study students will be given multiple opportunities through practice tests both oral and written to prepare for all aspects of the AP French Exam. At the end of the course a complete and thorough review of all six themes will be conducted to ensure that students are well-prepared and ready to take the AP French Language and Culture Exam.

Prerequisite: French 4. *High school students only.*

Electives

All courses are open to middle and high school students unless otherwise specified.

Physical Education (one semester or full year)

The physical education program fosters integrity, respect, responsibility, and participation by focusing on cooperation, effort, development, and fun over winning and losing. A primary goal is for students to enjoy being active in order to create lifelong habits of physical activity. Students learn to take risks, try something new, and develop their physical fitness in a safe and positive environment. Classes increase their self-confidence while providing them with experiences in teamwork, sportsmanship, collaboration, critical thinking, and resourcefulness.

Game Theory and Probability (one semester, fall)

Students play war games, board games, and crisis simulations to explore the following topics: strategy, tactics, efficient use of force, logistics, throughput, decision making given only partial information, game theory, probability, permutations/combinations, Bayes' Theorem, expected values, compound interest, discounting, and other concepts of personal finance.

3D Printing (one semester, spring)

This is a project class where students conceive of a physical object, design it using CAD software, and produce it using 3D Printing technologies. We will initially use TinkerCAD to design projects and move on to Blender later in the semester to render more complex objects. The objects will be printed in biodegradable PLA filament, using Bambu Lab's PS1 and X-1 Carbon printers, which will limit individual prints to 256mm (approx. 10 inches) per dimension. The objects can fulfill a functional or an artistic purpose.

History of Basketball (one semester, spring)

In this course, students will study the complete history of basketball. Starting from the creation of the game until the present, we will study the great games (like Jordan's flu game), the great moments (like Reggie Miller's 8 points in 9 seconds), the great shots (like Curry's famous double bang shot), and the great players who changed the game as well as American culture. Although primarily focused on the NBA, we will also cover the WNBA, NCAA, and basketball's global influence. But we will not merely sit around discussing who the GOAT is (although I can assure you there will be plenty of that), in reading *How Basketball Can Save the World* by NYU professor David Hollander we will also investigate the greater role basketball can play in the global political landscape. In a world that feels increasingly divided, basketball may be a good place to begin the unification. Through films, books, lectures, in-class debates, and field trips, students will gain a greater appreciation for one of the most popular sports in the world, as well as improved debate and research skills. *Note that this course is student-taught.*

War Games (one semester) *

This class will center around playing and analyzing war games of increasing complexity and sophistication. We will begin with basic tactical concepts like concentration of fire, positioning, flanking, defensive structures, and efficient use of force. We will expand to consider concealment, partial information, deception, negotiation, logistics, and rates of production/attrition. Along the way we will pick up Expected Value, Logical Deduction, Risk Management, Bayesian Reasoning, and Game Theory. All of this knowledge will be acquired to become better war gamers and to have a lot of fun pretending to attack the enemy and blow stuff up.

8th Grade Project (one semester, spring)

Eighth Grade Project is an opportunity for students to collaborate on a design, policy, or service project relevant to our local community. The course involves research, outreach to experts and decision makers, and the creation of a final group product designed for an internal or external audience. Classes will include one or more trips to project-related resources or sites. Instruction will include guidance on how to do research, how to reach out to experts and decision makers, and how to work successfully as part of a team. Students will present their final product to the LSAS community at the end of the semester. *Middle school students only.*

Independent Deep Dive (one or two semesters)

This is a one- or two-semester individual study opportunity in which students explore, research, and pursue mastery in a subject that is important to each student. Students identify a subject and key sources, usually well-researched texts, and outline the direction and scope of their inquiry, including the key questions they are investigating. Faculty advisors approve or ask for revisions to the student's plan, and schedule regular meetings to discuss student progress and to help students revise or reconsider their research goals and product(s). We encourage students to explore subjects that are connected to the college major or career they are contemplating, so they can learn more about that subject and, in effect, test drive their contemplated path. The Deep Dive—which does not need to be a dedicated course period and can unfold on the schedule the student outlines when the individual study commences—gives students a chance to learn something deeply, connect with outside influencers and experts, and create a powerful final product. With this knowledge and experience, students will be ready for their senior internship. *High school students only.*

Senior Internship: Leadership, Career and College Readiness (one or two semesters)

This is a one- or two-semester internship the school helps seniors secure in the area they explored in their Deep Dive (or another area if their Deep Dive points them in a different direction). The internship has a classroom component every one or two weeks, in which seniors meet to share their internship experiences and how those experiences do or do not meet their expectations. Discussions will help students calibrate their understanding about the field(s) they are exploring and refine their expectations and skills as they relate to learning and success beyond a school setting. *High school students only.*

Adulting 101: Financial Planning and Literacy (one semester) *

Adulting 101 is designed to equip middle school students with knowledge and skills necessary to make informed decisions about money and future life goals. Through lessons and interactive activities, students will learn about topics such as budgeting, saving, and investing. The course will cover practical skills such as balancing a checkbook, creating a budget, and understanding

the importance of credit scores. Students will also learn about different types of bank accounts, loans, and credit cards. In addition to personal finance, students will explore the broader concepts of economics and the financial system including topics like inflation, interest rates, and the stock market. By the end of the course, students will have a solid foundation in financial literacy, empowering them to make responsible financial decisions throughout their lives.

Music & Theater

Uke-Box (one semester, spring)

Learn how to play your favorite songs on the ukulele in this one semester course. Uke-Box is designed so that there is no musical background required as a prerequisite. Students will learn the rudiments, including restringing, tuning, reading chord charts, and musical notation. Along with playing covers of their favorite artists, students will also have the opportunity to create their own original compositions. By the end of the semester, students should expect to have a decent repertoire at their fingertips. Students taking this course are expected to practice a minimum of 15 minutes per day.

Electronic Music Lab (one semester fall)

Electronic Music Lab is a project-based course that will introduce students to Digital Audio Workstations (DAW). Students will learn the skills required to mix and balance their audio through various assignments given each week. Topics covered in this course will include a brief history of electronic music and audio mixing, how to use filters, balance EQ and record sound in various settings. Students will have ample opportunities to create their own original tracks. By the end of the semester, students will have a number of recordings in their portfolio to share.

Rock Through the Ages (full year)

Fan of rock music? Then this is the course for you. In this lecture-based course you will learn about the evolution of rock music starting from the very beginning and working our way to the present day. Each week will focus on a different decade and study the biggest artists of the time and their influences along with the many sub-genres that have emerged. Most of the course will be discussing history and listening to music, but students will also have the opportunity to dig deeper with independent research projects. *High school students only.*

Introduction to Music Theory (one semester) *

This introductory course is designed for students who are thinking about taking AP Music Theory in high school. In this course students will learn how to read musical notation in various clefs, build and understand chord functions, and analyze music. Students will also work on aural skills, which are required to distinguish between different scales, chords and intervals. While it is

not required for students taking this course to be an instrumentalist, it is highly recommended that they have a piano or other chordal instrument to practice concepts at home.

World Music (one semester) *

This is a music appreciation course that will serve as an introduction to ethnomusicology. Students will be exposed to the music of 9 regions of the world: East Asia, Southeast Asia, South Asia, Pacific, Middle East, Africa, Europe, Latin America, North America, and Russia. In this course we will discuss the musical traditions, philosophy, and musical aesthetics of each region. The goal of this course is to have students become more socially aware of different cultures and tie in influences adopted into pop culture.

Film and Music (one semester) *

In this lecture-based course, students will explore the history of music in cinema. We will be studying many of the industry's greats including Ennio Morricone, John Williams, Danny Elfman, Hans Zimmer and many more. Students will learn about the tools these composers use to evoke certain emotions and meanings in relation to visual media.

AP Music Theory (full year) *

This is a college level course that will develop student's ability to fluently understand and interpret the musical language. The skills learned in this course are universally applicable to all disciplines of music. Upon completion, students should feel prepared and comfortable taking the AP Exam for college credit. Students in this course will learn the following skills:

- Musical notation in all clefs
- All major and minor key signatures
- Modes
- Sight singing using solfège
- Discern chord and interval qualities
- The ability to dictate rhythm and melodies
- Analyzing harmonic functions
- Write 4-part harmonies

High school students only.

Musical Theater (one semester) *

Musical Theater is a class designed to expose students to a variety of skills in the performing arts. Students will learn and perform musical acts from famous and notable works while also learning about the history and structure of the art form.

Theater 1 (one semester) *

Pull the curtain back and discover how the actor immerses themselves in the world of a play. In this one semester course, students will master the fundamentals of acting, stage movement, improvisation, and level one theater terminology through hands-on experiences putting on a one act play. During the rehearsal process, students will gain insight into the roles of directors, designers, and technicians, as well as the history and purpose of theater. Designed for those with little to no experience, Theater 1 encourages creativity, collaboration, and confidence both on and off the stage!

Art

Creative Explorations in Visual Arts (one semester, spring)

In this exploratory course, middle school students are provided the opportunity to develop creative curiosity as they engage in a wide range of artmaking experiences. Students will be introduced to a variety of visual arts materials (both 2-D and 3-D), methods, and design concepts, but the focus will be on using these ideas in personal investigations and experimentations in order to challenge themselves to think critically and creatively while improving skills and developing meaning in their making.

2-D Studio (one semester, fall)

In this open studio course, students creatively engage with two-dimensional artmaking materials (drawing, painting, collage, mixed media, and more) and learn to creatively solve problems that arise on their papers, canvases, and boards. Materials, techniques, and design concepts will be introduced and discussed, but students work independently to decide how to best implement the ideas into unique and original works, thus enabling them to dive deeply into areas of interest and to explore new avenues that intrigue them. *High school students only.*

3-D Studio (one semester, spring)

In this open studio course students creatively engage with three-dimensional artmaking materials (paper, cardboard, wire, clay, and more) and learn to creatively solve problems that arise as they work to make art that stand up, pop out, and simply isn't flat. Materials, techniques, and design concepts will be introduced and discussed, but students work independently to decide how to best implement the ideas into unique and original works, thus enabling them to dive deeply into areas of interest and to explore new avenues that intrigue them. *High school students only.*

Cultivating Creativity (one semester, fall) *

In this open studio course students explore a wide range of activities and practices designed to open them to their creativity as they make their own art. A variety of materials (both 2-D and 3-D), techniques, concepts, and ideas will be explored, but the focus will be on developing creative ideas and how those ideas can inspire and inform the work students make.

Storytelling and Art (one semester) *

In this open studio course, students explore how narrative and storytelling can be used to create art with depth and meaning. A wide range of materials (both 2-D and 3-D), techniques, concepts, and ideas will be explored, but the focus will be on how storytelling and message making can play a key role in artmaking.

Art & Design (one semester) *

In this exploratory course, students focus on making work that is visually interesting and dynamic as they engage in a wide range of artmaking experiences. Students will be introduced to a variety of visual arts materials (both 2-D and 3-D) and methods, but emphasis will be on design concepts as they strive to understand how to create work that has visual impact and draws in the viewer.

Visual Expression (one semester) *

In this exploratory course, students focus on making work that explores a variety of ways to express unique and individual ideas as they engage in a wide range of artmaking experiences. Students will work with a variety of visual arts materials (both 2-D and 3-D) and methods, but emphasis will be creating art that tells a story, expresses a message, or conveys personal ideas.

Drawing on the Past (one semester) *

In this open studio course students explore the history of art and use it as inspiration for making their own art. A wide range of materials (both 2-D and 3-D), concepts, and ideas will be explored, but the focus will be on how artists in the past made their work and how it can inspire and inform the work students make.

Contemporary Practices in Art (one semester) *

In this open studio course, students explore how contemporary artists (ones who are alive and making art now) think about and make art. Students will explore how traditional art can be combined with modern technology to create new experiences. A wide range of materials (both

2-D and 3-D), concepts, and ideas will be explored, but the focus will be on how contemporary artists approach the art making process.

The Visual Journal (one semester) *

Part sketchbook, part scrapbook, and part diary, the visual journal is a potent tool for making art. Students in this open studio course work primarily in a blank book that they transform into a unique artistic artifact. A wide variety of artmaking materials, techniques, and ideas are explored as students develop their unique artistic vision within the pages of their journals enabling them to delve into the areas and the work that speaks most to them.

Dynamic Design (one semester) *

In this open studio course, students explore the impact and implications of design on the art that they make. Whether working in the digital realm or with traditional materials, students explore how the intentional placement of elements and images within a space can help to visually express ideas and create work that viewers will want to look at. A wide range of materials (both 2-D and 3-D), concepts, and ideas will be explored, but the focus will be on how to create visually dynamic work that speaks to an audience.

AP Studio Art: Drawing (full year) *

In this year-long class, students dive deep into investigating the materials, processes, and ideas that artists use in modern applications, and then use that as inspiration for their chosen “Sustained Investigation.” High value is placed on experimentation, which includes practicing and revising within this portfolio of work, as well as synthesis of materials, processes, and ideas. Portfolios are submitted in May for AP credits (no test is taken) and include process documentation and written information about the work presented. Students will use multiple 2D mediums and can choose the artistic tools appropriate to their investigation, which can include paint, drawing, charcoal, colored pencils, collage, digital, photography -- any sort of mark-making technique. Visual journaling, sketchbook challenges, and communicating your ideas -- plus peer feedback -- will be part of our class as well. Some summer work will be assigned. *High school students only.*

AP Art History (full year) *

AP Art History is an introductory college-level art history course. Students cultivate their understanding of art history through analyzing works of art and placing them in historical context as they explore concepts like culture and cultural interactions, theories and interpretations of art, the impact of materials, processes, and techniques on art and art making, and understanding purpose and audience in art historical analysis. *High school students only.*

Computer Science

Introduction to Computer Science (one semester) *

This middle school computer science course provides an introduction for students new to programming. Students will learn new concepts and apply them to projects. We encourage those students with prior programming experience to go further by providing mentoring and frequent feedback to peers.

AP Computer Science Principles (full year) *

This course is the product of the College Board's endeavor to introduce all students to computer science. It covers a diverse set of skills and topics, allowing students to explore what interests them. Second semester is largely spent on projects of increasing length. The final project is completely independent and will make up 40% of the overall AP score. The other 60% is determined by a traditional exam. This course is adapted from Computational Media, a course on creating animations, visualizations, and art with code. Since the results of our code are visual, programming is more concrete and the feedback more responsive. Skills and tools students learn are used by professional artists, designers, and researchers. *High school students only.*

AP Computer Science A (full year) *

AP Computer Science A is equivalent to a first-semester, college-level course in computer science. The course introduces students to computer science with fundamental topics that include problem solving, design strategies and methodologies, organization of data (data structures), approaches to processing data (algorithms), analysis of potential solutions, and the ethical and social implications of computing. The course emphasizes both object-oriented and imperative problem solving and design using Java language. These techniques represent proven approaches for developing solutions that can scale up from small, simple problems to large, complex problems. The AP Computer Science A course curriculum is compatible with many CS1 courses in colleges and universities. *High school students only.*

Advanced Computer Science Projects (advanced, one semester) *

This project-based course will provide students with an opportunity to explore a topic of their choosing under the guidance and direction of an expert in the field of Computer Science. Students can expect to have a completed project suitable for inclusion in a portfolio of their work for the purposes of college and/or career applications. *Students taking this course should know how to code and/or have instructor permission.*

Advanced Topics in Computer Science (advanced, one semester) *

We will be learning how processors work at the assembly code level. This will allow us to understand how hacking vulnerabilities are introduced. We will also learn some basic algorithm design optimizations and how Blockchain systems work. *Students taking this course should know how to code and/or have instructor permission.*

Film

Citizenship in American Cinema (one semester) *

In this course, students will study the theme of citizenship within the context of motion pictures. A focus of the course will be to understand the value of citizenship in a participatory democracy, and how those values are interpreted by American filmmakers. The course will begin with two films that deal with Lincoln's image and legacy: *Young Mr. Lincoln* and *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington*. The subsequent films will show leaders and ordinary citizens responding to situations that put justice in the balance, including *Seven Days in May*, *Twelve Angry Men*, *Selma*, and *Trial of the Chicago Seven*.

Japanese Cinema (one semester) *

This course will provide students with a survey of some of the greatest works of Japanese film, from the post-war era to contemporary Japan. In studying these films, students will gain an understanding and appreciation of Japanese cultural, spiritual, and social values. A basic understanding of film analysis would be helpful but is not required to take this course.

Power and Film (one semester) *

We will investigate the uses, and abuses, of power by viewing, discussing, and analyzing films such as *A Man for All Seasons*, *The Lion in Winter*, *Paths of Glory*, *12 O'Clock High*.

Race in American Film (one semester) *

This course will explore the depiction of race, racism, and Civil Rights in a series of American films stretching from the silent era to the present day. We will discuss these films as both historical documents and works of art. In other words, students will examine the way that these films reflect changing attitudes about race, both in the film industry and in American society, but also the way that they function as the statements of individual artists working within the language of film. Films may include: *Do the Right Thing*, directed by Spike Lee; *In the Heat of the Night*, directed by Norman Jewison; *The Searchers*, directed by John Ford; and others.

Social Science

How AI Will Kill Us All (one semester) *

This class will review the development of Information Networks and how they shaped Human History. We will learn how Neural Networks are trained to create AI outputs. We will discuss the current and future impact of AI on Human Society. Most importantly, we try to determine the benefits and threats of AI and what dangers to look out for. Our primary texts will be *Nexus: A Brief History of Information Networks from the Stone Age to AI* by Noah Harari and *Genesis: Artificial Intelligence, Hope, and the Human Spirit* by Kissinger, Schmidt, and Mundie. *High school students only.*

Robot Ethics and Logical Fallacies (one semester) *

The deployment of robots, drones, self-driving cars, AI algorithms, and industrial automation have raised a number of ethical questions, such as: How should workers and their robot co-workers be treated? Who owns/controls the data humans generate? Should all jobs which can be automated actually be automated? In a crisis, which human should the self-driving car kill and who pays for the death? If an algorithm uses data from a prejudiced human past to predict future human behavior, is it prejudiced? Should computers be allowed to kill on the battlefield without human authorization? We will grapple with the philosophical problems of the ethics of robots, which end up being very similar to the ethics of humans. *High school students only.*

What Will Kill You First? (one semester) *

This is an exploration of disasters. We will explain, do risk analysis of, and learn about prevention of things such as climate change, pandemics, meteor strikes, and nuclear war. How dangerous are these? How have we dealt with (or failed to deal with) these things so far? What can be done to prevent or mitigate them looking forward? How do humans misperceive risk? How dangerous are everyday activities such as driving to school versus the risks of skydiving? There will be some history, biology, psychology, physics, and math. *High school students only.*

Clubs, Sports, and Extracurricular Organizations

Clubs vary year-to-year as determined by student interest in the fall. Past club offerings include:

- | | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------|
| ● AMC 8/AMC 10 Math Club | ● Crochet & Knitting Club | ● Martial Arts Club |
| ● Art Club | ● Drama Club | ● Model United Nations |
| ● Basketball Team | ● Dungeons & Dragons Club | ● NJHS |
| ● Board Game Club | ● Environmental Club | ● NHS |
| ● Book Club | ● Jeunes Amis du Français | ● Sociedad Honoraria |
| ● Community Service Club | (<i>French Honor Society</i>) | Hispanica/Sociedad |

Hispánica de Amistad
(*Spanish Honor Societies*)

- Student Government
- Theatre

- Vinyl Club
- Volleyball Team (Co-Ed)