



# Curriculum Guide 2017-18

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# Curriculum Guide

## 2016/2017

### Mission Statement

The mission of The Altamont School is to improve the fabric of society by graduating compassionate, educated individuals capable of independent thinking and innovative ideas. To this end, the school seeks to attract, nurture, and challenge students whose commitment to truth, knowledge, and honor will prepare them not only for the most rigorous college programs, but also for productive lives.

Our faculty reviews and adjusts our curriculum on a regular basis with the stated objectives in mind:

- We will maintain a stimulating and appropriately challenging curriculum for very able and motivated students.
- We will ensure that our students maintain a competitive advantage when they apply to college.
- We will maintain an awareness of the developmental needs of children.
- We will continue to be conscious of what we ask of students and the stress they experience as a result of being in a competitive independent school.
- We will develop a culture of learning founded on the encouragement of critical thinking.

### **Graduation Requirements (approved by Academic Program Committee November, 2009)**

Over the course of the ninth through the twelfth grades, students must accumulate a minimum of 23 ½ credits; they must include 20 major courses (a major course meets four times per week; a minor course meets twice per week and is a half credit). Students must meet departmental requirements in English, Foreign Language, History, Mathematics, Science, Fine Arts, Health/Physical Education, and Speech in grades 9 to 12. The requirements are:

**English:** Students must take four years of English with a minimum of one course each year in the following sequence:

Ninth Grade: Honors 9<sup>th</sup> English

Tenth Grade: Honors Sophomore British Literature Eleventh

Grade: AP American Literature and Composition Twelfth

Grade: One English seminar per semester

**Foreign Language:** Students must complete three sequential levels of the same foreign language, beginning in the ninth grade, through a minimum of the third year of the language.

**History:** Students must take three years of History in the following sequence: Ninth

Grade: World History: Honors Ancient and Medieval Civilizations Tenth

Grade: Honors Europe and the Modern World

Eleventh Grade: AP U. S. History

Students may change the sequence and grade level only with the written approval of the head of the department and the consultation of the Director of College Counseling.

**Mathematics:** Students must complete the course in Honors Precalculus. Most students will follow this sequence:

Ninth Grade: Honors Geometry Tenth

Grade: Honors Algebra II Eleventh

Grade: Honors Precalculus

Students may change the sequence and grade level only with the written approval of the head of the department and the consultation of the Director of College Counseling.

**Science:** Students must complete either three or four years of Science. For both routes, one course must be Honors Biology or AP Biology, and one must be Honors Chemistry. If students choose to take Honors Physics or AP Physics, the student only needs 3 years of science. However, if a student opts not to take Honors or AP Physics, the student must complete four years of Science. In addition students must complete the Laboratory Techniques course. Most students will follow the following sequence:

Ninth Grade: Honors Biology

Tenth Grade: Honors Chemistry, Laboratory Techniques

Eleventh Grade: Honors Physics or AP Physics

Twelfth Grade: Honors Physics, AP Physics, or AP-C Physics if not completed earlier

Students may change the sequence and grade level only with the written approval of the head of the department and the consultation of the Director of College Counseling.

**Fine Arts:** Starting with the class of 2014, students must complete one full credit of Upper School Fine Arts over the course of the ninth through twelfth grades. This can be fulfilled by taking courses within one discipline, or ½ credit in one discipline and ½ credit in a different discipline within the Visual or Performing Arts. Courses that satisfy this requirement come from Art, Choir, Creative Writing, Drama, Jazz Band, Orchestra, and Photography.

**Health/Physical Education:** Students must complete one year of Upper School Physical Education and the Health course.

**Speech:** Students must complete the Upper School Speech course.

Note: Students may complete only the following courses in summer school at Altamont to apply toward graduation requirements: Honors Geometry, Honors Ancient & Medieval History, Health, Laboratory Techniques, and Speech.

The Academic Policies Committee unanimously approved two revisions to the school's existing study hall policy, effective as of the fall of 2010-11. First, students are limited to *four study hall periods per week*. Second, except for seniors in good academic standing, *all students will be required to remain in their study halls throughout the year*.

**Recommended Curriculum:** The following is the recommended curriculum for the four years of the Upper School for major courses (meeting four times per week) and required courses. Students are encouraged to take electives in addition to the required courses. Students can vary from this recommended sequence only with the written permission of the appropriate head of the department and the advice of the Director of College Counseling.

The schedule allows for students to take up to seven major courses at a time. However, we do not recommend this load. Students should consult with their teachers, advisor, and Director of College Counseling in deciding upon their courses and load.

Ninth Grade:

Honors 9<sup>th</sup> English  
Honors Ancient and Medieval Civilizations  
Honors Geometry (Algebra I or Honors Algebra II with permission)  
Honors Biology  
Honors Foreign Language (Levels I, II, III)  
Physical Education  
Consider completing requirements from:  
    Health  
    Speech  
    Fine Arts course  
Consider electives

Tenth Grade:

Honors Sophomore British Literature  
Honors Europe and the Modern World  
Honors Algebra II (Honors Geometry or Honors Precalculus with permission)  
Honors Chemistry  
Laboratory Techniques  
Honors Foreign Language (Levels II, III, IV)  
Consider completing requirements from:  
    Health  
    Speech  
    Fine Arts course  
Consider electives

Eleventh Grade:

AP American Literature  
AP U. S. History  
Honors Precalculus (Honors Algebra II, AP Calculus AB, AP Calculus BC, or Math Electives with permission)  
Honors Physics or AP Physics  
Honors Foreign Language (Levels III, IV, V)  
Electives in:  
    English  
    History  
    Mathematics  
    Science (AP Biology, AP Chemistry, AP Environmental Science, Human Anatomy and Physiology)  
Consider completing requirements from:  
    Health  
    Speech  
    Fine Arts course  
    Independent Study

Twelfth Grade:

Two Semester Seminars in English

Honors Physics or AP Physics if not completed earlier

Electives in:

English

History

Mathematics (Honors Precalculus, AP Calculus AB, AP Calculus BC, Finite Mathematics,  
Honors Statistics, or Math Electives)

Science (AP Biology, AP Chemistry, AP-C Physics, AP Environmental Science, Human  
Anatomy and Physiology)

Honors Foreign Language (Levels IV, V, VI, AP)

Fine Arts course

Independent Study

**Note: We strongly recommend that students take four years of both Mathematics and Science. Consult with the Director of College Counseling when making that decision.**

# English

## *Required (Full Credit):*

- Honors English (Grades 5-12)
- Public Speaking (half-credit)

## *Senior Semester Seminars (Half Credit):* **These offerings will vary from year to year, depending on faculty availability and class size.**

- Honors 20<sup>th</sup> Century American Drama
- Honors 20<sup>th</sup> Century World Literature: East
- Honors 20<sup>th</sup> Century World Literature: West
- Honors African-American Literature
- Honors American Masterpieces
- Honors The Gothic Novel
- Honors Shakespeare
- Honors Southern Literature
- Honors Women Writers

## *Literature Half Credit Courses:*

- Creative Writing (all grades, half credit 9-12)
- Speech and Debate
- The Bible as Literature (grades 9-12, half credit)

## *Offered During Summer School (Enrichment):*

- 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> Grade Grammar and Composition
- 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> Grade Grammar and Composition
- 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> Grade Grammar and Composition
- Writing Intensive Grades 8-10

The English Department embraces Aristotle's belief that literature is *mimetic*, that in imitating life, literature provides us a mirror to see ourselves and the world, so that we can better understand who we are. This belief is consistent with the mission of The Altamont School, which is "to improve the fabric of society by graduating compassionate, educated individuals capable of independent thinking and innovative ideas...whose commitment to truth, knowledge, and honor will prepare them not only for the most rigorous college programs but also for productive lives." To this end, we offer a strong, traditional English program emphasizing literary analysis, frequent and diverse writing, research skills, technological fluency, grammar review, vocabulary enrichment, outside reading, creative writing, and intellectual integrity. The cornerstone of our program is to cultivate the students' ability to think critically and to express these thoughts in coherent and articulate language. In short, the faculty wants our students to love using words.

A centerpiece of the English program at Altamont is our belief in the value of reading as it improves the student's writing, vocabulary, and knowledge. Therefore we require each Altamont student to read

outside of class four hundred pages per month, including books from the English department's list as well as reading for other classes. Furthermore, in our attempt to make reading a lifelong habit, we expect students to read five books during the summer, chosen from the grade-level reading lists.

### **5th Grade English** *(Required)*

The main objective of Fifth Grade English is to develop better readers and writers. As a class, we read and analyze *Holes*; *A Wrinkle in Time*; *When You Reach Me*; *The Phantom Tollbooth*; and *Tom Sawyer*. Students are also formally introduced to poetry. Outside of class, students are required to read a minimum of 400 pages a month and complete reading records for each book. Because of the importance of vocabulary, students are given a list of ten words each week to define, and they take weekly vocabulary quizzes. Throughout the course, using the *Daily Grammar Practice*, students study basic grammar topics, such as parts of a sentence, parts of speech, and phrases. An emphasis on diagramming helps students understand the components of and relationships in language. For some students, this is an introduction to structured grammar. Writing is a central aspect of our curriculum. Assignments range from informal meditations on a theme to expository essays about literature.

### **6th Grade English** *(Required)*

The objectives of Sixth Grade English are to cultivate a love of reading and build vocabulary skills. Collectively, we study the following texts and novels: *Daily Grammar Practice: Workbook 7*; *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*; *The Giver*; *Animal Farm*; *Out of the Dust*; and *After the Dancing Day*. In addition, students read and begin to formally study various selections of poetry. Students also take weekly vocabulary/spelling tests. Also, we try to reinforce and expand students' knowledge of grammar and improve writing. A special emphasis is placed on the writing process, as students write about literature and themselves. Throughout the year, students compose informal meditations, expository essays, and persuasive essays.

### **7th Grade English** *(Required)*

In Seventh Grade English, students read to improve critical thinking skills and their knowledge of the outside world by studying world cultures through the following texts: *The Light in the Forest*; *The Outsiders*; *World Mythology: An Anthology of Great Myths and Epics*; *Reading the World*; *A Midsummer Night's Dream*; *To Kill a Mockingbird*; and *Lost Names*. Students develop writing skills and critical thinking skills by keeping regular reading records based on monthly outside reading, by developing five paragraph essays, and by keeping creative writing journals. In addition, students participate in various hands-on group projects throughout the year to enhance their learning experience through collaboration and creativity. The seventh grade English course includes a study of grammar from *Daily Grammar Practice: Workbook 8*, focusing on parts of speech, phrases, clauses, and verbals. There is emphasis on diagramming in an attempt to help students understand the structure of the language. The acquired grammar skills are put to use in various writing assignments relating to literature.

### **8th Grade English** *(Required)*

Eighth Grade English consists of a study of grammar, vocabulary, interpretive reading, and analytical writing. Literary analysis includes a focused examination of image, symbol, theme, metaphor, and literary allusion. Throughout the year students study world mythology through *World Mythology: An Anthology of Great Myths and Epics*; *Reading the World*; *Things Fall Apart*; and *The Odyssey*. Additionally, students read and study *Romeo and Juliet*; *Fahrenheit 451*; *The Book Thief*; and *Lord of*

*the Flies*. Vocabulary units, combined with required vocabulary writing assignments, ensure correct usage and increase students' expressive capabilities. Through *Daily Grammar Practice: Workbook 9*, students study the parts of speech and syntax, with special emphasis on usage, mechanics, and sentence structure. Students apply language study to expository and creative writing assignments, both in and out of class.

### **Honors 9<sup>th</sup> English (Required)**

Ninth Grade English strives to build students' skills in literary analysis, writing, vocabulary, and grammar. The world literature covering about a dozen countries correlates with the freshman study of world history. Students will read and study novels, plays, short stories, and poems such as *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* and *All Quiet on the Western Front* (required summer reading); *Cyrano de Bergerac*; *Great Expectations*; *The Unvanquished*; *King Lear*; *Julius Caesar*; *Antigone*; *The Glass Menagerie*; and *A Separate Peace*. We also read about twenty stories and forty poems, many from our text: *The Norton Introduction to Literature*, including works by Pablo Neruda, Yasunari Kawabata, Confucius, Gabriel Garcia Marquez, D.H. Lawrence, Flannery O'Connor, Eudora Welty, Katherine Anne Porter, Gwendolyn Brooks, Emily Dickinson, John Keats, William Butler Yeats, T.S. Eliot, and Countee Cullen. Students will be encouraged to think critically and creatively. In the ninth grade we review in the *Warriner's Handbook*: semicolons, colons, quotation marks, apostrophes, run-ons, fragments, parallelism, and integrating subordinate clauses. Students may work independently on exercises that we do not cover directly. Students will write approximately twenty critical or expository essays either as papers or as parts of tests, in which they will formulate and present a thesis about a literary work, such as parallels between the *Odyssey* and *Great Expectations*. They will support their arguments with quotations and incidents from the literature, and structure the essay with an introduction, body, and conclusion.

### **Honors 10<sup>th</sup> Grade British Literature (Required)**

In the Tenth Grade British Literature we undertake a full survey of major British writers. The primary text is *The Norton Anthology of English Literature: Major Writers*. Supplementary texts are Harman's *Handbook to Literature* and *Hamlet*. The survey begins chronologically with *Beowulf* and moves through Chaucer, Marie de France, the *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* poet, Marlowe, Shakespeare, Metaphysical poets, Milton, and the major Neoclassical, Romantic, Victorian, and modern authors. Students read outside of class specific, topical works organized by era under study; students write on this outside reading monthly. Students recite before the class in Old English, "Caedmon's Hymn"; Middle English, from Chaucer's "Prologue" to *The Canterbury Tales*; and Modern English, from *Hamlet*. All of this study is aimed at rounding off the student's ability to think, write, and speak critically, and to introduce him or her to college level work. Sophomores review in *Barron's Grammar for the SAT and ACT* common errors in grammar, usage, and syntax both to improve their writing skills and to prepare for the college admission tests. Each semester is highlighted by a research paper on a work we have studied as a class. Students learn to use electronic databases through AVL and other research tools and write their research papers according to the MLA format. As well, students write love sonnets and create paintings from poem images.

### **11<sup>th</sup> Grade AP American Literature (Required)**

AP English at Altamont is a chronological survey of American literature which focuses on close reading and critical analysis of works from the Puritans to the present, including major literary trends from Transcendentalism to Modernism. In conjunction with their study of American history, students examine

the historical context of literary works as well as social and cultural influences such as the American Dream, gender, class, religion, and race. The course covers stories, poems, and plays from canonical and lesser known writers in the *Norton's Anthology of American Literature (Shorter 8<sup>th</sup> ed.)*, as well as the following novels: *Moby-Dick*; *The Great Gatsby*; *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*; *The Sound and the Fury*; and *Beloved*. At the heart of this course is the development of each student's ability to interpret and evaluate literature in class discussion as well as in thoughtful, effective, and persuasive essays. To that end, students write papers which are evaluated on an Advanced Placement standard, they use literary criticism and MLA citation in their research, and they compose personal essays in response to readings. Over the course of the year, students should gain an understanding of how the American literary tradition reflects our history and society both for us and to the rest of the world.

### **12<sup>th</sup> Grade Honors 20th Century World Literature: East** (*Senior Semester Seminar*)

This semester course uses literature from Africa, the Middle East, and Asia as a lens to explore cultures in the Eastern world as they respond to historical, political, and literary influences that have shaped Eastern life in the modern world. As most of this literature will be unfamiliar to Altamont students, we include as much information about ancient traditions, history, and culture through film and a supplementary reader with older and other text excerpts to help students learn better perspectives from the other side of the world. Each student makes a presentation and writes a research paper on a major work for that presentation. Students write monthly book reports on designated works organized by culture under study. We hope by the end of the course to gain a better sense of our modern global world. We also take field trips to restaurants to sample food from cultures under study as well as to museums. Writers include Achebe, Mahfouz, Tagore, Roy, Rushdie, Lu Xun, Zhang Ailing, Mo Yan, Yu Hua, Tanizaki, Akutagawa, Kawabata, Murakami, and other Eastern writers, including ancient writers whose literary traditions still shape modern Eastern literature.

### **12<sup>th</sup> Grade Honors 20th Century World Literature: West** (*Senior Semester Seminar*)

This semester course complements the Eastern World Literature course. Many of the subjects, settings, and themes studied, especially European ones, will be familiar to Altamont students from their surveys of English and American literatures. In our study of modern European and Latin American literature, we will explore the development of modernist and post-modernist themes and styles: for example existentialism, magical realism, and stream of consciousness as these elements arose in response to historical forces such as urbanization, industrialism, Fascism, Communism, and Post-Colonialism. Each student makes a presentation and writes a research paper on a major work for that presentation. Students write monthly book reports on designated works organized by culture under study. We also take field trips to restaurants to sample food from cultures under study as well as to museums. Writers include Kafka, Mann, Joyce, Proust, Pirandello, Woolf, Yeats, Camus, Nabokov, Munro, Borges, Neruda, Allende, Garcia Marquez, Walcott, Naipaul, and other European, Caribbean, and Latin American writers.

### **12<sup>th</sup> Grade Honors African American Literature** (*Senior Semester Seminar*)

Over the course of the semester, students read and discuss African American works from the 18<sup>th</sup> to the 21<sup>st</sup> centuries in *The Norton Anthology of African American Literature*, as well as Richard Wright's *Native Son* and Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye*, to trace patterns in technique and approach to the subjects of identity, family, race, religion, class, and gender. Students attempt to gain insight into where these works fit in the American canon as well as what sets African American writers apart from other American authors. In order to put these texts into historical and cultural context, we supplement our

readings with music, art, films, and a trip to the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute and the 16<sup>th</sup> St. Baptist Church. Students write two research papers, make class presentations on historical events and iconic figures, and participate in class discussion.

### **12<sup>th</sup> Grade Honors 20<sup>th</sup> Century American Drama** (*Senior Semester Seminar*)

Over the course of the semester, students study major figures of the American stage beginning chronologically with Eugene O’Neill and ending with contemporary playwrights such as August Wilson. Students read plays on their own, discuss them in class, and analyze them in writing and/or scene work. In addition to drawing on their knowledge of various genres and literary periods from AP American Lit., students examine the lives of the playwrights as well as the historical and social context of each play to evaluate theatrical devices and the dramatic treatment of topics such as family, the American Dream, gender roles, race, and religion. After viewing plays adapted for film, students discuss what film illuminates or detracts from the audience’s experience of the play. (If we discover local productions of any relevant plays, we certainly try to attend.) Plays for this class include *Desire under the Elms* by Eugene O’Neill; *Trifles* by Susan Glaspell; *Our Town* by Thornton Wilder; *The Crucible* by Arthur Miller; *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* by Tennessee Williams; *Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf* by Edward Albee; *American Buffalo* by David Mamet; *The Piano Lesson* by August Wilson; and *The Heidi Chronicles* by Wendy Wasserstein.

### **12<sup>th</sup> Grade Honors American Masterpieces** (*Senior Semester Seminar*)

Honors American Masterpieces covers some of our country’s greatest works in more depth than a survey usually can afford. Some authors covered will be Hawthorne, Melville, Whitman, Dickinson, Howells, James, Crane, Frost, Eliot, Millay, Cummings, Fitzgerald, Faulkner, Wolfe, Percy, and O’Connor. Texts will include: *The American Tradition in Literature*; *Three Short Novels* (Faulkner); *Billy Budd*; *The Moviegoer*; and *Look Homeward, Angel*.

### **12<sup>th</sup> Grade Honors The Gothic Novel** (*Senior Semester Seminar*)

In this semester seminar we will examine the Gothic genre from its inception in late 18<sup>th</sup> century England to its diffusion into American culture and especially the American South. We will explore how Gothic literature uses elements such as the supernatural, grotesque, or macabre to create suspense, to react to historical or cultural events, or to respond to societal conditions. Texts include *The Oxford Book of Gothic Tales*; *The Monk* by Matthew Gregory Lewis; *Dracula* by Bram Stoker; *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley; *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* by Robert Louis Stevenson; *The Ballad of the Sad Café* by Carson McCullers; and *The Picture of Dorian Gray* by Oscar Wilde.

### **12<sup>th</sup> Grade Honors Shakespeare** (*Senior Semester Seminar*)

According to critic Harold Bloom, “Bardolatry, the worship of Shakespeare, ought to be even more a secular religion than it already is. The plays remain the outward limit of human achievement: aesthetically, cognitively, in certain ways morally, even spiritually. They abide beyond the end of the mind’s reach; we cannot catch up to them.” This semester seminar course will concentrate on the Shakespearean works not taught in earlier English classes. Students will explore Shakespeare, his works, and his world in depth.

### **Honors Southern Literature** (*Senior Semester Seminar*)

William Faulkner, Flannery O’Conner, Eudora Welty, Tennessee Williams, Robert Penn Warren, Zora Neale Hurston, Alice Walker, Walker Percy, and the Fugitive poets—these are just a fraction of the

world's greatest writers that hail from the American South. What has made the South unique, and why has this region of the country produced so many great writers? In this seminar, students will address these questions and explore common southern themes such as the importance of land, family, tradition, religion, race, social class, and more. Also as part of this study, students will be asked to consider the South today and compare it to both the period known as the Southern Renaissance and to the decades of the 1940's, 50's, and 60's that were influenced by the Southern Renaissance. Ultimately, students will contemplate the place of the southern writer today and consider if southern literature is a dying genre or one that is simply emerging into something new and different.

### **Honors Women Writers** (*Senior Semester Seminar*)

This seminar course provides a thematic approach to reading works written by female authors, focusing particularly on the following topics: gendered space and language, rethinking the maternal, resistance and social subversion, and feminist literary theory. Beginning in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and spanning to the present, students will explore the growth, development, and evolution of female voice as it appears in representative works from novels, poetry, plays, short stories, nonfiction, and literary criticism. Major emphases of this course include research, writing, and independent critical thinking. Students are expected to engage regularly in critical discourse and discussion. Major authors include Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Virginia Woolf, Zora Neale Hurston, Nella Larsen, Stevie Smith, Eudora Welty, Elizabeth Bishop, Gwendolyn Brooks, Denise Levertov, Sylvia Plath, Adrienne Rich, Margaret Atwood, Jamaica Kincaid, Rita Dove, and Sandra Cisneros.

### **Speech and Debate**

*Grades 7-12*

*Classes meet twice a week.*

Students enrolled in Speech and Debate are members of The Altamont Speech and Debate Team and are required to compete in at least 3 tournaments during the course of the year. Students will join the National Speech and Debate Association (NSDA) and have the opportunity to compete in the areas of Public Forum and Lincoln Douglas Debate and in the following individual Speech events: dramatic interpretation, humorous interpretation, program oral interpretation, and extemporaneous speaking. The Speech and Debate course functions as a workshop for practice and preparation, wherein students conduct research, write cases, and select pieces for performance. Generally, the workshops divide into a seventh and eighth grade elective and an upper school elective, though students will travel to and compete in tournaments as one Altamont Speech and Debate Team. Students may take the course throughout 7-12 grades.

### **Public Speaking**

*(Required one semester during grades 9-12) Classes meet by semester.*

This class is an introduction to public speaking wherein students will learn and develop fundamental communication skills. Students will engage in research and writing in addition to delivering the following types of formal speeches: informative, how-to, persuasive, impromptu, and extemporaneous. The Public Speaking course focuses on building skill and confidence, thinking critically, and communicating effectively. Students will also have the opportunity to participate in a public forum debate and to perform a humorous or dramatic monologue.

### **Creative Writing**

*Grades 5-12*

*Classes meet twice a week.*

Creative writing at Altamont functions as a series of workshops. Generally the workshops divide into a fifth and sixth grade rotation, a seventh and eighth grade component, and an upper school elective. These three groups produce creative non-fiction, short stories, poetry, and drama. The students enter local and national writing contests and frequently win awards. Whenever possible, teachers welcome local writers into the classroom to encourage and inspire our budding artists. Most of the workshops are held in computer labs, where students may easily compose, revise, and archive finished pieces. Student work is occasionally presented to small groups for peer editing. Finished products are kept on file, forming each student's portfolio and the basis of *The Dragon's Tooth* and *The Dragon's Toe*, Altamont's creative writing publications.

### **The Bible as Literature (grades 9-12)**

*Classes meet two times per week.*

Arguably the single most influential literary work, *The Bible* lies at the foundation of our western civilization. Since the classics of British and American literature contain innumerable biblical allusions, themes, and types, this half credit course seeks to bolster Altamont students' biblical literacy and thereby provide them with an essential base of knowledge from which to draw upon in their 8<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade English courses. Students will read selected portions from the King James Version of the Bible, exploring various literary genres, motifs, characters, and idioms. Daily readings are assigned as homework, followed by in-class discussion and activities. Assessment is by written tests based upon information presented in class, and one written paper and one project per semester.

#### THE ALTAMONT SCHOOL ENGLISH DEPARTMENT READING POLICY

The Altamont School English Department requires every Altamont student to read five books from appropriate grade-level lists *including the required books* during the summer months. Students may not substitute other titles by the same author for summer reading. English classes will always start the year with a discussion of what we have read over the summer, so do not worry if you do not completely understand the reading; read with purpose and make notes if that helps you. English teachers will quiz students during the first week, and in most classes students will write papers on their summer reading.

- During the school year, every Altamont student is required to read 400 pages per month.
- Rereading books for English credit is a violation of the Honor Code, excepting *required titles* for each class.
- Students may NOT use Spark Notes, the Internet, or any type of condensed source for reference or analysis for summer reading or books read during the school year. Using reading aids in place of reading the text is a violation of the Honor Code. Just read the book and ask questions when we talk about the book in class.

# Fine Arts

*Marygray Hunter, Head of Department*

## *Classes (Half Credit):*

- 7/8 Art
- 2-D Design
- 3-D Design
- 7/8 Choir
- Choir
- 7/8 Creative Writing
- Creative Writing
- 7/8 Jazz Band
- 7/8 Music Ensemble
- 7/8 Wind Band
- Jazz Ensemble
- Music Ensemble
- Music History/Theory
- Music Technology and Composition
- Middle School Beginning Photography
- Middle School Advanced Photography
- Middle School Video & Theatrical Production
- Upper School Studio Photography
- Upper School Documentary Photography
- Upper School Nature Photography
- Upper School Video Production & Sound Recording
- 7/8 Drama
- Acting
- Musical Theater
- Technical Theatre

## *Classes (One-Eighth Credit):*

- 5/6 Art
- 5/6 Choir
- 5/6 Creative Writing
- 5/6 String Ensemble
- 5/6 Music Appreciation
- 5/6 Photography
- 5/6 Drama
- 5/6 Page to Stage

Altamont enjoys a long tradition of excellence in the arts built on middle and upper school instruction and participation in extracurricular activities. We encourage all students, through a rich and varied offering of electives, to explore and develop their talents and interests in music, theatre, the visual arts, and photography.

Each year, students perform in two main stage theatrical productions and winter and spring orchestral and choir concerts. Photography and art students submit their works to a variety of competitions and mount annual student shows in the spring.

## **FINE ART**

### **5/6 Art (Quarter-long Rotation)**

The fifth and sixth grades rotate among the electives. In this fun and relaxed atmosphere young art students work in different media and learn different techniques to develop their motor skills and critical thinking.

### **7/8 Art**

Students begin to learn the basic elements of art, using a variety of techniques and media. They gain experience in printmaking, sculpture, painting, and drawing and are exposed to various art history movements and artists.

### **2-D Design**

*Ninth through twelfth grades*

This course is the first year of art instruction in Upper School. It is for students who do not know how to draw but have an interest. Through projects designed to develop studio techniques students learn the basics in perspective drawing, color theory, drawing, painting, and printmaking. Students also learn to view art and express their thoughts critically.

### **3-D Design**

*Ninth through twelfth grades*

Students learn the basics of 3-dimensional art and are exposed to a multitude of materials. Students will discuss the merits of form vs function and learn how to balance the two when solving various artistic problems. Students will learn woodworking, found object art, installation art, ceramic slab building and sculpting with clay as well as glazing and finishing techniques. In this course, students will learn to develop the conceptual aspect of their work as well as the technical.

## CHOIR

### **5/6 Choir** (*Quarter-long Rotation*)

This class covers the rudiments of music and music theory fundamentals and introduces the young student to the language of music and to music's design and structure. This information is supported with children's songs and some two-part anthems as dictated by the musical aptitude of the group.

### **7/8 Choir**

This course provides choral and vocal instruction to enrolled students. The students learn and perform choral music from all periods providing the students with the means to express themselves through singing. Specialty performances and competition groups are selected by audition from choral music students.

### **Choir**

*Ninth through twelfth grades*

This course provides choral and vocal instruction to enrolled students. The students learn and perform choral music from all periods providing the students with the means to express themselves through singing. Specialty performances and competition groups are selected by audition from choral music students.

## CREATIVE WRITING

### **5/6 Creative Writing** (*Quarter-long Rotation*)

### **7/8 Creative Writing**

### **Creative Writing**

Creative writing at Altamont functions as a series of workshops. Generally the workshops divide into a fifth and sixth grade rotation, a seventh and eighth grade component, and an upper school elective. These three groups produce creative non-fiction, short stories, poetry, and drama. The students enter local and national writing contests and frequently win awards. Whenever possible, teachers welcome local writers into the classroom to encourage and inspire our budding artists. Most of the workshops are held in the computer labs, where students may easily compose, revise, and archive finished pieces. Student work is occasionally presented to small groups for peer editing. Finished products are kept on file, forming the student's portfolio, and the basis of *The Dragon's Tooth* and *The Dragon's Toe*, Altamont's creative writing publications.

# ORCHESTRA

## **5/6 String Ensemble** (*Year-long Rotation*)

*Fifth grade; sixth grade by permission*

Designed for beginner and intermediate string (violin, viola, cell, and doublebass) players, this course will develop and strengthen music reading skills, the technical aspects of playing, and musical sensibilities. The ensemble will participate in the orchestra concerts throughout the year. No prior string or musical experience required. Students are strongly encouraged to sign up for lessons.

## **5/6 Music Appreciation** (*Quarter-long Rotation*)

In this quarter-long class, students will learn how to read sheet music, a brief history of Western music, and the different orchestral instruments. Students will also have the chance to play on different musical instruments. No prior musical experience required.

## **7/8 Jazz Band**

Open to woodwind, brass, piano, guitar, bass, and drum set, this course will go through the basics of jazz and blues playing. The focus will be on developing proper style, music reading skills, listening skills, and improvisation. Students will follow a methods book complemented by performance pieces. No prior experience in jazz music is required; however, students must have acquired basic playing skills on their instruments. This ensemble will participate in the orchestra concerts throughout the year. Students are strongly encouraged to sign up for lessons. Due to instrumentation limitations, enrollment will be limited for guitar, bass, and drum set players.

## **7/8 Music Ensemble**

*Prerequisite: 5th/6th String Ensemble or instructor permission*

Designed for piano, drum set, and string instruments, including violin, guitar, and bass, this course will cover a variety of styles for performance. Students will continue to develop their mastery of music through use of scales, sight-reading, and listening exercises. This ensemble will participate in the orchestra concerts throughout the year. Students are strongly encouraged to sign up for lessons.

## **7/8 Wind Band**

This group is for all woodwind, brass, and percussion players. In this class, students will learn how to put together their instrument, take care of it, and play a variety of styles, pieces, and scales. Students will be required to purchase a method book for the class. This ensemble will participate in the orchestra concerts throughout the year. No prior musical experience is required. Students are strongly encouraged to sign up for lessons.

## **Jazz Ensemble**

*Prerequisite: 7/8 String Orchestra, 7/8 Music Ensemble, or equivalent experience as determined by the director.*

*Ninth through twelfth grades*

An advanced ensemble of musicians that will prepare a variety of musical styles and genres (swing, cool, bebop, latin, rock, fusion) for performance twice a year as determined by instrumentation. Guitarists, bassists, and set drummers will be matched/rotated so that all

players have playing time. Brass and woodwind players will also have rotating assignments commensurate with their proficiency. Students will learn the tools and application of jazz theory in order to develop solo improvisations in addition to preparing music for concerts. Continued private lessons are highly encouraged.

### **Music Ensemble**

*Prerequisite: 7/8 String Orchestra, 7/8 Music Ensemble, or equivalent experience as determined by the director.*

*Ninth through twelfth grades*

An advanced ensemble of musicians that will prepare a variety of musical styles and genres (classical, romantic, modern) for performance twice a year as determined by instrumentation. Orchestral strings, woodwinds, and brass are highly encouraged. Guitarists, bassists, and set drummers are encouraged to consider taking the Jazz Ensemble class as a potentially better match for their skill set. Continued private lessons are highly encouraged.

### **Music History/Theory**

*Ninth through twelfth grades*

This course will act as an in-depth study of music history in conjunction with music theory, allowing students to see the development and growth of both. In light of this knowledge, students will gain a deeper understanding of their own music, both in what they listen to and what they play. Students will be expected to purchase the required reading and listening CDs. A basic understanding of how to read and write music is also required.

### **Music Technology and Composition**

*Prerequisite: permission of the instructor.*

*Eleventh and twelfth grades*

This course covers the history, technical aspects, and current trends in music technology and the use of MIDI to record, arrange, and compose music. Participants will create music using notational software, controllers, synthesizers, and EFX in real and step time as well as producing finished hard copies of this material. Students will also learn how to run the sound board for various performance events throughout the year. Because of hardware limitations, course enrollment will be limited. If over-enrolled, the course may be taken as an independent study with instructor permission.

## **PHOTOGRAPHY**

### **5/6 Photography (Quarter-long Rotation)**

*Prerequisite: An inexpensive digital camera labeled with a strap and memory card.*

Photography class will be an exciting mix of studio work, outside projects and beginning Photoshop on the computer. Students will have opportunities to photograph at school and at home and combine those with fun and creative projects in the classroom.

## **Middle School Photography**

### **Beginning Photography**

*Prerequisite: An inexpensive digital camera labeled with a strap and memory card.*

This course is for beginners who want a taste of excitement as they explore the many different areas of photography. Whether you like sports, food, light painting or animal portraits, this course will let you experiment with the different areas and subjects that photography offers. There will be a field trip to the Botanical Gardens to explore nature and subjects in their surroundings. No experience is needed in this course and students can participate in a photography show in the Livingston Gallery as they learn to use each person's unique visual voice.

### **Advanced Photography**

*Prerequisite: An inexpensive digital camera labeled with a strap and memory card.*

For students who have had photography and those who are beginners, this course will focus on more wildly, creative, and interactive projects. Students will have the opportunity to begin the art of food photography in class. They will also have opportunities to enter photography competitions on state, national and international levels. We will take a field trip to the Birmingham Museum of Art to study the world famous photographs in their collection. Students can design the area of interest that they want to focus on this year, and also the projects that go with that focus to help have a more fun and interesting in depth experience.

### **Video and Theatrical Production**

Photography and Theatre converge as students learn Video Production with the art of acting, lighting, backdrops and theatre production. This class for 7th/8th will be an exciting blend of the challenges of both classes learning together. Video productions will happen on and off stage as actors work with photographers for screenwriting and theatre production. This class will meet in the photography classroom at the beginning of the year but will be in the theatre, drama classroom and photo lab as different projects unfold and are presented throughout the busy year. Video cameras are provided and no experience is necessary!

## **Upper School Photography**

### **STUDIO**

*Prerequisite: No experience necessary. An inexpensive digital camera labeled with a strap and memory card. Year-long rotation*

Food Photography is a great way to start the year. We will learn how the industry shoots it, and enjoy how we can photograph and eat it. A trip to a local restaurant will help us understand why presentation is so important. There is also a field trip to a local photographer's studio to understand the process of working in a space in town. Students will learn Adobe Photoshop as they explore subjects shot in the studio such as portraits and conceptual set-ups. Animal portraits are also a great way to learn the art created in the studio.

### **DOCUMENTARY**

*Prerequisite: No experience necessary. An inexpensive digital camera labeled with a strap and memory card. Year-long rotation*

Documentary photography is the exciting and dramatic process of telling the visual story. Students

will learn to identify a subject that is meaningful to them and explore it with more images than a usual photography project. Students will also learn to tell stories through an honest, clear, ethical voice and use lighting when necessary, portraiture, black and white and Adobe Photoshop.

## **NATURE**

*Prerequisite: No experience necessary. An inexpensive digital camera labeled with a strap and memory card. Year- long rotation*

This course is for those students who enjoy the beauty in nature, light and living things. Learning how to see light and use it as a major tool will help you paint the world you see with creativity and sensitivity to our environment. There will be a field trip or two to photograph the world around you.

## **VIDEO PRODUCTION AND SOUND RECORDING**

*Marygray Hunter and Landon Rogan*

*Prerequisite: No experience necessary. Year- long rotation*

This course is a blend of the two elements in a video production: shooting the images on a camera and the art of recording great sound in the studio. Movies and television record 95% of all sound in the studio. Students would be getting the benefits of learning both the visual techniques but also the sound portion in our music-recording studio. Students will also be encouraged to write original background music for the videos they will be working on and perhaps entering an original production in a student film festival.

## **THEATRE**

### **5/6 Drama** (*Quarter-long Rotation*)

Lower School Drama is an elective course designed to give students an overview of theatre from multiple perspectives. Through various projects and exercises, fifth and sixth graders explore elements of acting and performance. Special emphasis is placed on physical acting through pantomime and on verbal acting through readers theatre and storytelling. Students also work with ensemble-building and interaction with their peers.

### **5/6 Page to Stage** (*Quarter-long Rotation*)

An exploration of performance through playwriting, Storytelling, Readers Theater and Interpretation. Students will present both group and individual performances in various styles.

### **7/8 Drama**

This year-long course provides the student with the fundamentals of theatre through a study of its history, literature, and design. Basic acting techniques feature oral interpretation of scripts, voice and diction, physical presentation, and improvisational theatre. An overview of the technical aspects of theatre introduces students to set, makeup, costume, lighting, and properties design as well as stage management, direction, and publicity. Reading and analysis of play scripts each month during the academic year and attendance at school productions are required.

### **Acting**

*Ninth through twelfth grades*

These year-long courses introduce theories and methods of acting for live theatre. Through a

series of theatre games, scene work, dialogue study, and improvisation, students develop their acting instruments: body, voice, emotions, imagination, and intellect. Emphasis is placed on script analysis, stage movement, and ensemble-building as a performance group. Students are required to attend plays outside of class, as well as take an active part in the production of the school's main-stage plays. Other requirements include participation in at least one acting competition and reading and analysis of no less than five play scripts during the academic year. Students may audition at the end of the course for acceptance into the next level of coursework. Levels II through IV of this course build upon the foundation laid in Acting I to further develop live and video performance techniques. Performances of main-stage plays are often included. Seniors in Acting IV are encouraged to assist with directing responsibilities.

### **Musical Theatre**

*Prerequisites: Permission of the instructor*

*Ninth through twelfth grades*

This course will examine musical theatre in its creative context, introducing students to practical skills in dance, acting, orchestral and singing styles appropriate to this theatre form. It will explore and develop the performer's approach to the integration of acting and singing while exposing the student to literature and techniques specific to musical performance. Works are viewed and performed from a variety of styles including rock opera, musical comedy, operetta, and vaudeville. Student performances by instrumentalists and actors throughout the school year will include solo and ensemble work for public performance, auditions, festivals, and competitions. Coursework culminates in the performance of a Broadway-style musical play.

### **Technical Theater**

*Prerequisites: Permission of the instructor*

*Ninth through twelfth grades*

Technical Theatre explores the backstage and business aspects of theatre, including management, design and construction. This is a hands-on course in which the students design and construct costumes and scenery, execute lighting and sound designs, create properties, and manage a crew. Technical theatre students are required to act as technical staff for all Altamont main stage performances.

# Health/Physical Education

*Susan Keith, Head of Department*

## *Required (Full Credit):*

- 5/6 Grade Physical Education
- 7/8 Grade Physical Education
- Upper School Physical Education

## *Required (Half Credit):*

- Upper School Health Education

## *Required (No Credit)*

- Character Education

## *Offered (Half Credit):*

- Weight Training and Conditioning (female)
- Weight Training and Conditioning (male)

**T**he Department provides opportunities for every student to receive instruction in a variety of sports and activities that will help develop overall fitness, particularly in the areas of strength, flexibility, and cardiovascular endurance. Fitness instruction follows a natural progression, beginning in grade five and continuing through the upper grades, based on the development of the body and the acquisition of skills. In addition, students receive instruction in the vitally important areas of health and family living.

### **Fifth and Sixth Grade Physical Education Program** *(Required)*

Lower school students are divided into classes by gender and receive instruction in a variety of team and individual sports and activities. Current offerings include basketball, softball, indoor and outdoor soccer, flag football, track and field, volleyball, tennis, and ultimate Frisbee.

### **Seventh and Eighth Grade Physical Education Program** *(Required)*

Also divided into classes by gender, these students receive instruction in the same team and individual sports and activities. Current offerings include basketball, softball, indoor and outdoor soccer, flag football, tennis, track and field, volleyball, and ultimate Frisbee.

### **Upper School Physical Education Program** *(Required)*

These classes continue to offer instruction in the various team and individual sports and activities listed above. However, instructors place an increased emphasis on weight training for this age group. In addition, classes take occasional field trips for activities such as swimming, bowling, and golf.

### **Upper School Health Education Program** *(Required)*

*Classes meet twice per week.*

Students explore the importance of good health and how each student plays an active role in their individual health as well as the health of our society. The class places an emphasis on the combined

exploration of social, psychological, and physical well-being. Students will learn the importance of proper nutrition and get the opportunity to practice it through several projects including a field trip to the local grocery store. Every student will receive Red Cross certification in CPR and AED use during the first aid section. We will discuss various topics such as substance abuse, addiction cycle, eating disorders, AIDS, and STD awareness. Students will be encouraged to live healthy and active lifestyles so they may be more productive as they develop into young men and women in society.

**Character Education** *(Seventh and Eighth Grade)*

The course is designed for seventh and eighth grade students and will be taught in a single gender environment. A series called “Film Clips for Character Education” will be used. Various movie clips are used to present topics such as Honor, Respect, Cooperation, and Empathy. Additional exercises, games and activities will be used to completely understand each topic.

**Weight Training and Conditioning** *(Upper School Female Elective) Classes meet twice per week.*

Weight training teaches the students the important benefits of weight training to improve their health. The goal is to develop a strength and conditioning program based on the student’s fitness needs.

**Weight Training and Conditioning** *(Upper School Male Elective) Classes meet twice per week.*

Weight training teaches the students the important benefits of weight training to improve their health. The goal is to develop a strength and conditioning program based on the student’s fitness needs.

# History/Social Science

*Chris Thomas, Head of Department*

## *Required (Full Credit):*

- United States History I (to 1877) (Grade 5)
- United States History II (since 1877) (Grade 6)
- Global Cultures and Geography (Grade 7)
- American Civics and Government (Grade 8)
- Honors Ancient and Medieval Civilizations (Grade 9)
- Honors Europe and the Modern World (Grade 10)
- AP United States History (Grade 11)

## *Semester Electives (Half Credit):*

- AP Macroeconomics
- AP Microeconomics
- Honors 20<sup>th</sup> Century America
- Honors 20<sup>th</sup> Century Europe
- Honors Brain, Culture & Mind
- Honors Constructs of Leadership
- Honors Cross-Cultural Psychology
- Honors Greek History
- Honors History of the New South
- Honors Latin American Studies I
- Honors Latin American Studies II
- Honors Roman History
- Honors The Vietnam Wars 1945 - 1975
- Honors World History Since 1990
- Honors World War I
- Honors World War II

## *Offered (Full Credit):*

- AP Psychology

**T**he study of history involves far more than simply using the past as a guideline for future action. It is more than a mere preparatory exercise in “civic responsibility.” For society and individual alike, historical awareness is an integral part of existential orientation. Our scholastic goals as a department spring from this basic belief. We believe that our primary responsibility is to adequately prepare students for the rigors of academic study – historical or otherwise - on the college level. Preparation for undergraduate work in history is a multi- faceted enterprise involving methodological instruction, factual conveyance, and skill development. The department strives for student growth in each of these areas. The history curriculum at Altamont places a heavy emphasis on reading and writing. Essay questions are a fundamental part of the evaluation process at each grade level; in grading the responses, instructors are encouraged to assess organization, clarity of expression, and grammatical proficiency, as well as

knowledge of the historical material. Although reading materials in the lower school are primarily textual, the department emphasizes interpretive analysis of both primary and secondary sources in most of the upper level history courses. Primary sources are the mainstay of scholarly research in history and we believe students should be exposed to them as early as possible in the educational process. By the time students have completed the history curriculum at Altamont, they should possess not only a foundational knowledge of the major events in American and global history, but also:

- Well-developed critical thinking skills – the ability to marshal facts in defense or pursuit of an argument or answer
- The ability to critically read and understand multiple sources
  - The ability to recognize arguments, theses, and major ideas
  - The ability to recognize bias and to differentiate fact from opinion
  - Familiarity with the written materials common to the historical discipline –texts, scholarly essays, monographs, and primary sources
- Effective written and oral communication of ideas
  - The ability to offer a coherent and convincing argument in support of a thesis
  - The ability to organize ideas and information to maximize communication
  - A knowledge of the mechanics of writing and grammar
  - Familiarity with the terminologies pertinent to the historical discipline
- Effective research skills
  - The ability to apply scientific methods to the analysis of historical issues, while appreciating the limitations of scientific investigation in the humanities
  - The ability to formulate and test hypotheses using both inductive and deductive methods
  - The ability to locate and synthesize information from a variety of primary and secondary sources
  - Familiarity with the research methodologies and citation conventions of the historical discipline
- The ability to take effective notes from lectures, discussions, and readings
- The ability to work and communicate effectively in group settings
- The ability to effectively manipulate statistical data, maps, and other visual sources
- A mature “sense of history” – chronological awareness and an understanding of cause and effect relationships; the ability to appreciate events from different cultural, historical, or ideological perspectives – “historical empathy”

*(Understanding University Success, Center for Educational Policy Research, University of Oregon, 2003)*

## **United States History I (to 1877) (Required)**

### *Fifth Grade*

The fifth grade course is an engaging exploration of American history from the pre-Columbian period to the end of Reconstruction. Major topics covered during the year include exploration and colonization, the American Revolution and Constitution, western expansion, antebellum culture and society, the Civil War, and Reconstruction. Throughout the year, students are instructed in note taking skills, research skills, and report writing as preparation for more advance work in social studies. The course employs class discussion and cooperative learning exercises to communicate to students the importance of both

effective oral and written communication.

### **United States History II (Since 1877) (Required)**

#### *Sixth Grade*

The sixth grade course is an engaging exploration of American history from Reconstruction to the present. Major topics covered during the year include post Civil-War industrialization, the settlement of the trans-Mississippi west, the Spanish-American War, the Progressive era, World War I, social and cultural developments during the 1920s, the Great Depression and New Deal, World War II, the Cold War, the Civil Rights movement, and the Vietnam War. As in the fifth grade, students are instructed in basic note taking, research, and writing skills in preparation for more advanced work in history. The course employs class discussion and cooperative learning exercises to communicate to students the importance of both effective oral and written communication.

### **Global Cultures and Geography (Required)**

#### *Seventh Grade*

The seventh grade year involves students in an examination of physical geography and its effects upon cultural and historical development. Every region of the world is studied in terms of its topography, population, natural resources, climate patterns, and the resultant historical and socio/economic developments. Students are instructed in the proper use of maps and statistics, both of which are vital instructional tools in our upper level history courses. An analysis of current events, particularly those of environmental consequence, helps students to appreciate the symbiotic relationship between human civilization and the natural environment.

### **American Civics and Government (Required)**

#### *Eighth Grade*

The eighth grade year is devoted to the study of American government and political institutions as well as the rights and responsibilities of American citizenship. The course begins with a study of the United States Constitution – the philosophy behind the document, the historical events that precipitated its creation, the general structure of the government it created, and the evolution of that government over the past two centuries. More practical issues of American politics, such as the party system, interest groups, elections, state and local government, the American economy and the role of the United States in global affairs are also addressed in considerable detail. Discussion of current events, particularly those of immediate consequence, is a major component of the course. The class is primarily lecture /discussion based but research assignments, films, debates, and cooperative work are also utilized in presenting the material.

### **Honors Ancient and Medieval Civilizations (Required)**

#### *Ninth Grade*

The ninth grade course examines the development of human civilization from ancient times to the beginning of the European Renaissance. Major course topics include early civilization in India, the Middle East, the Mediterranean, East Asia, Africa, and the Americas; the rise and fall of the Roman and Byzantine Empires; the emergence of Judaism, Christianity, Buddhism, and Islam; and the development of feudalism and manorialism in Medieval Europe. Although primarily lecture based, the course places a premium on student involvement and classroom discussion. Students will study numerous primary source documents to complement the material covered in the textbook.

### **Honors Europe and the Modern World** (*Required*)

#### *Tenth Grade*

The tenth grade course offers a general survey of world history since 1500, focusing on the development of the European ideas and institutions that have been the primary transformative forces at work in the modern world. Major course topics include the Columbian Exchange, the Renaissance, the Reformation and Counter-Reformation, the Scientific Revolution, the French Revolution, the Industrial Revolution, European nationalism in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, European imperialism in Asia and Africa, World War I, the Russian Revolution, World War II, and the Cold War. The course seeks to integrate factual knowledge into an understanding of some of the principle themes that have characterized European and global development during the modern era. These themes include, among others, the emergence of modern nation states, the development of an urban industrial economy, and the secularization of intellectual activity. The class requires students to analyze and interpret relevant primary source material in addition to substantial reading from the assigned text.

### **AP United States History** (*Required*)

#### *Eleventh Grade*

The eleventh grade course provides students with a general survey of American history from colonization to the 20<sup>th</sup> century and offers substantial preparation for the Advanced Placement exam in United States history. The class is structured around four basic themes: the contact of cultures in the new world, the growth of democracy in the United States, the emergence of the American industrial economy, and the rise of the United States to global power status. In addition to the daily lectures and discussions, students are required to read numerous primary and secondary sources each grading period. The course places a heavy emphasis on writing, the particular concerns being content and organization. Although the focus of the course is American political and social history, students gain exposure to economics, philosophy, theology, psychology, and many other fields that correlate closely with the historical discipline.

### **AP Psychology** (*Elective*)

#### *Recommended for eleventh or twelfth grade*

AP Psychology introduces students to the systematic and scientific study of behavior and mental processes with current applications of modern psychology to contemporary society. This survey course emphasizes the historical development of psychology from its philosophical roots to its current foundation in the natural and social sciences. Students are introduced to major psychological studies of the twentieth century through primary and secondary source material relevant to the major perspectives: social/cultural, biological, cognitive, behavioral, psychodynamic, and humanistic. In addition to taking notes on lectures, students gain experience in leading class discussions, reading scholarly articles, conducting case studies, participating in experiments and demonstrations, developing research proposals, utilizing electronic databases for library research, and using APA style format for research papers. A variety of outside speakers from the community expose students to current applications of the core material.

### **AP Macroeconomics** (*Semester Elective*)

#### *Recommended for eleventh or twelfth grade*

This course is designed to prepare students to take the Advanced Placement examination in Macroeconomics. Macroeconomics looks at the economy “from the top down” and thus focuses primarily on the aggregate effect of decisions made by individual firms and consumers. Key course

concepts include international trade, economic growth and productivity, the business cycle, aggregate demand and supply, unemployment, inflation, fiscal policy and monetary policy. Students are strongly encouraged (but not required) to take AP Microeconomics prior to taking AP Macroeconomics.

**AP Microeconomics** (*Semester Elective*)

*Recommended for eleventh or twelfth grade*

This course is designed to prepare students to take the Advanced Placement examination in Microeconomics. Microeconomics looks at the economy “from the bottom up” and thus focuses primarily on the behavior of individual firms and consumers. Key course concepts include economic reasoning, scarcity, opportunity cost, supply and demand interaction, elasticity, production cost analysis, and market structure. Students are strongly encouraged (but not required) to take AP Microeconomics prior to taking AP Macroeconomics.

**History of Western Scientific Thought** (*Semester Elective*)

*Recommended for eleventh or twelfth grade*

This course will cover the changing landscape of scientific thought in the Western world. The first quarter will focus on attempts to understand the physical world before the scientific revolution, while the second quarter will bring us up to modern times. The goal is to understand how scientific investigation and understanding have influenced, and been influenced by, cultural conceptions of the universe and our place in it. As often as possible we will read from original sources, including Galileo, Bacon, Galen, Descartes, Copernicus, Newton, Aristotle, Darwin, Freud, Einstein, et al.

**Honors 20<sup>th</sup> Century America** (*Semester Elective*)

*Recommended for eleventh or twelfth grade*

American artists struggled to break free of European tradition and establish their own styles. The "Eight" or the "Ashcan School" did so and set the groundwork for uniquely American art. Soon, New York displaced Paris as the center of the international art world. This course will study American art movements, their influences, and their impacts. Particular attention will be paid to WWI, WWII, and the Great Depression.

**Honors 20<sup>th</sup> Century Europe** (*Semester Elective*)

*Recommended for eleventh or twelfth grade*

Art History is more than just the study of painting, sculpture, and the like. Effective Art History courses realize that artists and their works reflect their society and their times. Covering Impressionism through Surrealism, this course will focus on stylistic elements and major artists as well as social, scientific, and political influences on these movements. Students will learn to identify artists and movements as well as understand their underpinnings. Students will be expected to read various texts and come to class ready to apply that knowledge to class discussions.

**Honors Brain, Culture, & Mind** (*Semester Elective*)

*Recommended for eleventh or twelfth grade*

This semester-long honors level seminar emphasizes such topics as research methodology, health and well-being, cultural variations in psychopathology and culturally bound disorders. In addition, this semester focuses on the neuroscience of meditative practices and the alliance between eastern philosophy and western developments in neuroscience.

### **Honors Constructs of Leadership** *(Semester Elective)*

*Recommended for eleventh or twelfth grade*

This course focuses on the cognitive, social, and emotional aspects of leadership. Through an in-depth look at current research in these areas, the student can study the elements of leadership and begin to make practical applications. The cognitive aspects include an in-depth focus on analytic and creative skills involving problem-solving and decision-making. The social aspect includes the social psychology of groups, factors that influence conformity/non-compliance, person perception, social influence and persuasion. The emotional aspect includes such factors as empathy, understanding, motivation, self-efficacy, and self-assessment that contribute to emotional intelligence. An important focus will be factors that enhance teamwork, collaboration, and conflict mediation. The course will also touch on gender, cultural variations, and ethics in leadership.

### **Honors Cross-Cultural Psychology** *(Semester Elective)*

*Recommended for eleventh or twelfth grade*

This semester-long honors level seminar emphasizes how cultural influences shape the personality of the individual and the society. The seminar focuses on such topics as research methodology, personality and concept of self, cultural differences in child development, and social psychology.

### **Honors Greek History** *(Semester Elective)*

*Recommended for eleventh or twelfth grade*

This seminar course covers advanced topics in the political, social, and artistic history of ancient Greece from the Bronze Age to Alexander the Great. Readings of primary source documents and the work of modern scholars will augment survey lectures leading to independent research topics and presentations. Class discussion topics will cover but are not limited to Homer and Herodotus and importance of memory, Socrates and the nature of truth, and Protagoras and man's role in the environment.

### **Honors History of the New South** *(Semester Elective)*

*Recommended for eleventh or twelfth grade*

This course will address major themes in southern history from 1865-1980, with a special focus on the lives and creative practices of everyday southerners. As such, the class will examine the roles that music, visual art, and material culture played in historical moments such as Reconstruction, the rise of the New South, the Jim Crow era, and the Civil Rights Movement. In addition to taking tests and quizzes, students will conduct original research and take field trips to local institutions that include Sloss Furnaces, the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute, and the Alabama Jazz Hall of Fame.

### **Honors Latin American Studies I** *(Semester Elective)*

*Recommended for eleventh or twelfth grade*

The course will emphasize the pre-Columbian period of Latin America up until the year 1500 CE. This course will focus on a historical perspective. Students will use a number of primary readings, selected texts, and lectures in class to complete a comprehensive research paper on an approved thesis before the end of the semester. Quizzes, short papers, and tests will be used to assess student learning before the comprehensive essay is submitted.

### **Honors Latin American Studies II** *(Semester Elective)*

*Recommended for eleventh or twelfth grade*

The course will emphasize the period between 1500 CE and the modern day. While a historical context

will be used to frame the chronology of the course, a political science perspective will be used to analyze different events and broad movements throughout Latin America during the period of study. Students will use the information learned through primary readings, selected texts, and lectures to construct a comprehensive research paper that applies a particular perspective of political science to an approved thesis. Quizzes, short papers, and tests will be used to assess student learning before the comprehensive essay is submitted.

### **Honors Roman History** (*Semester Elective*)

*Recommended for eleventh or twelfth grade*

The Roman History seminar will examine advanced topics from the legendary founding of Rome to the fall of the Roman Empires. Readings of primary source documents and the work of modern scholars will augment survey lectures leading to independent research topics and presentations. Class discussion topics will consider the role of antiquity in the modern world and examine the cultural heritage of Rome from the formulation of the middle ages to the American Revolution.

### **Honors The Vietnam Wars 1945 – 1975** (*Semester Elective*)

*Recommended for eleventh or twelfth grade*

This semester length course will examine the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Indochina wars with a focus on the American experience in Vietnam from 1964 to 1975. During the first quarter, students will examine pre-colonial Vietnamese society and culture, the nature of French colonial rule, the growth of Vietnamese nationalism during World War II, the course of the 1<sup>st</sup> Indochina War, and the partition of Vietnam following the Geneva Accords of 1954. The second quarter will be devoted to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Indochina War, with an emphasis on American involvement in that conflict after 1964. Students will study not only the military, political, and diplomatic events of the war, but also examine its social impact on both the United States and Indochina.

### **Honors World History Since 1990** (*Semester Elective*)

*Recommended for eleventh or twelfth grade*

This semester course will explore topics in world history since the fall of the Soviet Union. The course will move region to region, exploring contemporary topics of these regions and placing the issues in historical context including American Hegemony, the European Union, Radical Islam, Free Market China, and Neocolonialism. We will also examine the interactions between these regions and the historical growth of the international community. The course will end with an extensive research project on current global crises.

### **Honors World War I** (*Semester Elective*)

*Recommended for eleventh or twelfth grade*

This course will discuss the origins, development, progression, and outcome of World War I, with a particular focus on the impact this war had on the civilian populations of Europe. The course will begin by discussing the tensions (e.g. ethnic, philosophical, military, hereditary) that existed in Europe on June 27, 1914 (the day prior to the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand), as well as with a discussion of the origins of these tensions. The pre-war alliance system, Western Front, Eastern Front, naval conflicts and the development of military technologies will all be discussed in a way that develops a deep understanding of not just what happened, but why it happened. Finally, the Treaty of Versailles will be discussed in detail so as to develop an understanding of what effect the treaty had on Europe's eventual descent into World War II. Primary source readings, in-class lectures, and the required texts

will be used by students to complete a research paper on a topic of their choice. Short papers of 2-3 pages each, as well as tests and quizzes will assess student comprehension throughout the semester.

**Honors World War II** (*Semester Elective*)

*Recommended for eleventh or twelfth grade*

This course will discuss the origins, development, progression, and outcome of World War II, with a particular focus on the impact this war had on the civilian populations of Europe. While World War II was, beyond any doubt, a truly global conflict, this course will focus only on the European theater so as to maximize the students' ability to see the correlation between events from World War I and the origins of World War II. Additionally, the European theater will be the main focus of this course in order to devote the appropriate amount of time necessary for a truly in-depth understanding of the conflict. The course will discuss the effect of the Treaty of Versailles on Europe's path towards totalitarianism, as well as the conditions that existed within Germany that led to the rise of Adolf Hitler. Europe's descent into war, the progression of the war, and the many decisions that world leaders made with regard to the war will be discussed within the framework of understanding their effect on the people of Europe. The roles of different nations within the war, as well as the interests and ambitions that drove those nations to war will be discussed. Finally, the outcome of the war, as well as the effect of that outcome on the second half of the 20th century will be discussed. Primary source readings, in class lectures as well as the required texts, will be used by students to complete a research paper on the topic of their choice. Short papers of 2-3 pages each, as well as tests and quizzes will assess student comprehension throughout the semester.

# Mathematics

*Josh Barnard, Head of Department*

## *Required (Full Credit):*

- Course I
- Course II
- Pre-Algebra
- Algebra I
- Honors Geometry
- Honors Algebra II
- Honors Precalculus

## *Offered (Half Credit):*

- 5/6 Math Team
- 7/8 Math Team
- Common Denominator I and II

## *Offered (Full Credit):*

- Finite Mathematics
- Honors Statistics
- AP Calculus AB
- AP Calculus BC
- Honors Differential Equations
- Honors Multivariable Calculus

## *Semester Electives (Half Credit):*

- Honors Linear Algebra
- Honors Topology

**T**he Mathematics Department believes that problem-solving skills – the analysis of a problem, plan for a solution, completion, review, and extension of the solution – are essential to critical, logical thinking in all disciplines. Our program, therefore, presents students with opportunities to develop these skills along with basic mathematical concepts. Using various approaches, including elementary, scientific, and graphing calculators, the department strives to develop students' curiosity, initiative, confidence, responsibility, enjoyment, and satisfaction in dealing with mathematics. Our students live in a world where passive involvement is often the norm, so we strive to instill a creative approach to problem solving.

### **Requirements for graduation:**

Every student must take mathematics every year until the completion of Precalculus at Altamont. Beyond that, we encourage all students to take mathematics every year, culminating in a senior level mathematics course.

**Mathematics Course I (Required)**

*Recommended for fifth grade*

Mathematics Course I builds on the student's previous mastery of whole number operations, including long division. Concepts covered are factorization; reasoning and operations with fractions, decimals, percents; geometry; measurement; probability and statistics; and problem solving strategies. The curriculum establishes the mathematical foundation needed to succeed in future math courses by fostering the students' ability to solve problems, reason, and communicate mathematically.

**Mathematics Course II (Required)**

*Recommended for sixth grade*

Mathematics Course II is designed to build on the skills and concepts learned in Course I. Concepts covered include variables and patterns in algebraic thinking, ratios and proportions, integers and rational numbers, three-dimensional measurement, probability, and statistics. The curriculum promotes development of students' understanding of concepts and procedures in a way that also fosters their ability to solve problems, reason, and communicate mathematically.

**Pre-Algebra (Required)**

*Recommended for seventh grade*

This course, building on the students' solid foundation in arithmetic, leads them to generalize their knowledge of arithmetic processes into algebraic expressions and to use the basic vocabulary of mathematics intelligently and precisely. Areas of emphasis include reasoning, verbalizing, and problem solving, and repeated and extensive use of fractions and negative numbers. The course includes work with geometric figures, probability, data analysis, linear and non-linear functions.

**Algebra I (Required)**

*Recommended for eighth grade*

Algebra I continues the refinement and extension of methods of mathematical problem-solving approaches to investigate and understand mathematical content. The idea of relations and functions, as well as graphing, is introduced early and used throughout the course. Problem solving includes equations in one variable, two variable systems, absolute value, quadratic equations and inequalities of all previously listed. Students also study properties of exponents, polynomials, factoring, and operations on rational expressions and irrational numbers. The course emphasizes application of these skills to the real world.

**Honors Geometry (Required)**

*Prerequisite: Algebra I*

*Recommended for ninth grade*

In geometry, students learn to appreciate Euclidean geometry as a deductive system. Accordingly, the students study formal logic early in the course and use it throughout. Starting with undefined terms, postulates, and definitions, the students follow the progressive development of theorems to create a mathematical structure with rich aesthetic and practical value. In building this axiomatic structure, they improve their ability to recognize and organize the various relationships among points, lines, triangles, polygons, and circles in a plane. This course also includes the study of geometry with coordinates and the solid geometry of common shapes.

### **Honors Algebra II** *(Required)*

*Prerequisite: Honors Geometry*

*Recommended for tenth grade*

The Algebra II curriculum moves away from a tight focus on manipulative facility to include a greater emphasis on conceptual understanding, on algebra as a means of representation, and algebraic methods as problem-solving tools. Following a brief review of important topics from algebra I, this course pursues a study of linear functions and relations, systems of linear equations and inequalities, quadratic functions and factoring, polynomials, exponential, logarithmic, and rational functions, analytic geometry including quadratic relations and systems, and trigonometry. Students master parent graphs for each type of function and recognize transformations. Graphing calculators are also used to promote understanding and to facilitate the investigation of more sophisticated problems.

### **Honors Precalculus** *(Required)*

*Prerequisite: Honors Algebra II*

*Recommended for eleventh grade*

The pre-calculus course draws on material from many branches of mathematics, thereby enabling students to perceive connections among them. Concepts studied include function application and modeling, inequalities, inverse functions, exponential and logarithmic functions, analytic geometry, polar coordinates, and vectors, as well as series. Additionally, we devote time to the development of understanding and skill in the use of trigonometric properties and rules. Students make connections between mathematics and appropriate applications. This course provides students with a cumulative and connective experience with algebraic and geometric techniques to prepare them for future study of calculus.

### **Finite Mathematics**

*Prerequisite: Honors Precalculus*

*Recommended for twelfth grade*

Since finite mathematics is a challenging yet more concrete course, it is offered as an alternative to statistics or calculus. Topics studied include matrices, linear programming, probabilities and statistics, finance applications, game theory and logic.

### **Honors Statistics**

*Prerequisite: Honors Precalculus*

*Recommended for twelfth grade*

Statistics is offered as a response to the widespread college requirement for statistics courses in majors such as social and health sciences, business, and psychology, as well as mathematics. The curriculum covers organizing data, producing data, probability and inference.

### **AP Calculus AB**

*Prerequisite: Honors Precalculus*

*Recommended for twelfth grade*

As described by the AP program at The College Board, the AP Calculus AB course is intended for students who will seek college credit, college placement, or both, from institutions of higher learning. This is a college-level mathematics course. It emphasizes a multi-representational approach to calculus, with concepts, results, and problems being expressed graphically, numerically, analytically, and verbally. Students will study both the theory behind and the applications of limits, derivatives, and

integrals. Students are encouraged to take the Advanced Placement exam following this course.

### **AP Calculus BC**

*Prerequisite: Honors Precalculus*

*Recommended for twelfth grade*

The advanced calculus course includes material covered in calculus plus additional topics such as indeterminates, power series, and Taylor series. Students are encouraged to take the Advanced Placement exam following this course.

### **Honors Differential Equations**

*Prerequisite: AP Calculus AB or BC Recommended for twelfth grade*

Upon successful completion of the course a student should be familiar with the standard types of ordinary differential equations and their methods of solutions. The course covers first order differential equations (separable, linear, exact, and nonexact), theory of higher order linear differential equations (homogeneous and non-homogeneous, linear independence and general solutions, initial and boundary value problems), solution of constant coefficient homogeneous linear equations, variation of parameters, undetermined coefficient, nonlinear differential equations, the Laplace Transform (inverse transform, transforms of derivatives, and its operational properties), and systems of linear first-order differential equations (homogeneous and non-homogeneous, and matrix exponential).

### **Honors Multivariable Calculus**

*Prerequisite: AP Calculus AB or BC*

*Recommended for twelfth grade*

Multivariable Calculus is essentially an extension of single variable calculus. While single variable calculus deals with functions, equations, differentiation, integration, etc., on the  $xy$ -plane, multivariable calculus extends these operations to include the  $z$ -axis. A function might be described as  $z = f(x, y)$ , e.g.  $z = x + y$ . In this case, as in all cases in Multivariable Calculus, there is no defined relation between the  $x$  and  $y$  variables. Multivariable Calculus is generally taught in second or third year calculus courses at colleges and universities. It, along with Differential Equations, is the next logical step in a mathematics track.

### **Honors Linear Algebra (Semester Elective)**

*Prerequisite: AP Calculus AB or BC*

*Recommended for twelfth grade*

Students will learn the fundamentals of abstract finite-dimensional vector spaces and inner product spaces, including the algebra of vectors in the plane and space, linear transformations, and eigenvalues and eigenvectors. Multiple applications will be discussed. Knowledge of calculus will be invoked in the study of infinite-dimensional Hilbert spaces. As time permits the course will also include a brief foray into other areas of abstract algebra, such as groups and rings.

### **Honors Topology (Semester Elective)**

*Prerequisite: AP Calculus AB or BC*

*Recommended for twelfth grade*

The course begins with the topology of the real line, then moves through some fundamental topological constructions such as product and quotient spaces. The goal of the course is a full topological classification of surfaces. Other topics can be explored as time permits: geometric structures on surfaces,

three-dimensional manifolds, knots, pathological spaces, the fundamental group, etc.

**Fifth and Sixth Grade Math Team** (*Year-long Elective*)

*Classes meet twice per week.*

Members investigate mathematics in a collaborative, relaxed atmosphere, learning to look for patterns and using a variety of approaches to problem solving. Students grapple with many different problem situations in a non-threatening environment, discovering that there is often more than one way to solve a problem and that some problems have more than one answer. Students participate in several math competitions throughout the year.

**Seventh and Eighth Grade Math Team** (*Year-long Elective*)

*Classes meet twice per week.*

Math Team is a competitive academic activity. It exposes students to a wide variety of advanced problem-solving techniques. Team members learn to work together, helping each other in a relaxed, positive atmosphere. The math team participates in several in school math competitions throughout the year, including Mathcounts, Math Olympiad, the American Mathematics Competition through the eighth grade, and the Alabama, Louisiana, and Mississippi Math League as well as several Saturday offsite invitationals. Students who join Math Team must have a desire to participate in at least one offsite competition.

**Common Denominator I** (*Year-long Elective*)

*Classes meet twice per week.*

The math department recognizes that Algebra I is the first real roadblock for many students in the math curriculum. Common Denominator I is an elective course to support students who have trouble grasping mathematics, who have not yet developed the discipline necessary for algebra, or who simply need more time. It is tied directly to the Algebra I course. Students who score 75 or below in Pre-Algebra should take this course if at all possible. Stronger students may sign up for it although they should realize that it may move more slowly than they would like.

**Common Denominator II** (*Year-long Elective*)

*Classes meet twice per week.*

Common Denominator II is an elective course to support students who have trouble grasping mathematics, who have not yet developed the discipline necessary for Algebra, or who simply need more time. It is tied directly to the Algebra II course. Lessons are reinforced and students are offered one-on-one tutoring. Students who scored 75 or below in Algebra I should take this course, if at all possible.

# Science

*Maureen Frye, Head of Department*

## *Required (Full Credit):*

- Science (Grades 5-6)
- Integrated Life Science\*
- Integrated Physical Science
- Honors Biology\*\*
- Honors Chemistry

## *Required (Half Credit):*

- Laboratory Techniques

## *Offered (Full Credit):*

- AP Environmental Science
- AP Computer Science Principles
- AP Computer Science A
- AP-C Physics (Grade 12)
- AP Psychology
- Honors Human Anatomy and Physiology
- Honors Physics\*\*

## *Offered (One and a Half Credits)*

- AP Biology/Lab
- AP Chemistry/Lab
- AP Physics 1/Lab (Grades 11 or 12)
- AP Physics 2/Lab (Grades 12)

## *Offered (Half Credit)*

- 7/8 Exploring Computer Science
- Advanced Computer Science- Algorithms
- Advanced Computer Science- Data and Information
- Advanced Computer Science- Programming
- Exploring Computer Science
- Intro to 3D Design and Printing
- Video Game Design Implementing STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math)

## *Semester Electives (Half Credit)*

- Honors Brain, Culture, & Mind
- Honors Cross-Cultural Psychology
- Honors Sports Medicine
- Honors Sports Medicine II
- Robotics

*\*Students may elect to bypass Integrated Life Science and move to Integrated Physical Science in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade if they are taking Algebra I. In this case they are required to take AP Biology/Lab as an upper school student.*

*\*\*Students may substitute AP Biology for Honors Biology and AP Physics for Honors Physics with an earned grade of “A” in previous math and science courses, letter of recommendation by previous science teacher, and approval by department chair and Head of School.*

**T**he Altamont science curriculum is concerned with the experimental and theoretical processes by which scientists explore the universe, the results of those processes, and the application of these results to contemporary problems. The laboratory orientation of all science classes encourages students to relate theory to experience. A strong advanced and AP program is offered to students with special interests in science. In addition, the science department offers several electives for those interested in challenging science courses that are not necessarily at an advanced level. Altamont’s science department requires that students in grades eight and ten participate in the science fair each year. All students are encouraged to participate in the science fair in any grade. Science projects are an important part of the science experience, especially for students who move on to the regional and international science fairs. Our science teachers seek to foster critical thinking through creative, independent research.

## **MIDDLE SCHOOL SCIENCES**

### **Fifth Grade Science** *(Required)*

This first course in science is designed to stimulate interest in the life, physical, and earth sciences. It explores problem solving through the use of the scientific method and introduces many modern tools of science. This project-oriented approach to scientific topics includes the tools of science, scientific measurement, Earth’s weather and energy resources, flight and space exploration, environmental resources, human organ systems, kitchen chemistry, magnetism, and electricity. Laboratory activities are taken from a variety of sources. Field trips to area exhibits, museums, and nature centers supplement the classroom experience. Students are required to complete a science fair project for display, which competes with other fifth grade projects.

### **Sixth Grade Science** *(Required)*

The second course in science incorporates a variety of hands-on projects designed to solve problems using scientific methods and to further develop research and experimental design skills through science projects. It seeks to further stimulate student interest in a broad range of science subjects. This project-oriented approach to scientific topics includes environmental science, geology, topography, electricity, magnetism, sound, and light. Students are required to complete a science fair project for the junior division of our annual science fair.

### **Integrated Life Science** *(Required)*

The third science course is designed to give students the opportunity to explore life science by participating in a variety of learning activities and hands-on, inquiry-based lab experiences that stimulate critical thinking and problem solving. Emphasis is placed on constructing and testing explanations using

knowledge, models and experimental evidence. The units of study include: characteristics of life; diversity of living organisms; structure and function of cells, tissues, organs, and organ systems; heredity; interdependence of organisms and their environments; and biological evolution. The course is designed to prepare students for higher intellectual engagement offered by future science courses. Participation in the annual science fair is highly encouraged and supported.

### **Integrated Physical Science (*Required*)**

*Prerequisite: Successful completion of sixth grade science, Integrated Life Science, and Pre-Algebra\**  
This is an introduction to the more advanced courses of chemistry and physics. It develops an awareness of natural principles and technological applications in the everyday world and promotes the realization that the same fundamental principles apply throughout the universe. Students learn how to handle scientific apparatus, perform experiments, take measurements, and to draw valid conclusions. This course draws heavily on mathematic skills and the ability to solve simple algebraic equations.

*\*To take Integrated Physical Science in seventh grade the student must have earned a grade of "A" in previous math and science courses, be advanced in math, recommendation from previous science teacher and approval by department chair.*

## **COMPUTER SCIENCE**

### **7/8 Exploring Computer Science**

*Prerequisite: None*

*Recommended for seventh and eighth grade*

course was developed around a framework of both computer science content and computational practice. Assignments and instruction are contextualized to be socially relevant and meaningful for diverse students. Units utilize a variety of tools/platforms, and culminate with final projects around the following topics: Programming, 3D Design, Problem Solving, Web Design, Computing and Data Analysis, and Robotics.

### **Exploring Computer Science**

*Prerequisite: None*

*Recommended for ninth through twelfth grade*

This introductory course was developed around a framework of both computer science content and computational practice. Assignments and instruction are contextualized to be socially relevant and meaningful for diverse students. Units utilize a variety of tools/platforms, and culminate with final projects around the following topics: Programming, 3D Design, Problem Solving, Web Design, Computing and Data Analysis, and Robotics.

### **Advanced Computer Science: Programming**

*Prerequisite: Completion of 7/8 Exploring Computer Science or Exploring Computer Science and permission of the instructor*

*Recommended for eighth through twelfth grade*

Advanced Computer Science: Programming will dive deeper into the fundamentals of computer science by examining programming in a more focused spectrum. As students learn language specifics for a given programming language, they will create programs, translating human intention into computational artifacts. Students will gain valuable insight and depth into computer science as well as have an

impressive knowledgebase ready for success at the college level.

### **Advanced Computer Science: Data and Information**

*Prerequisite: Completion of 7/8 Exploring Computer Science or Exploring Computer Science and permission of the instructor*

*Recommended for eighth through twelfth grade*

Advanced Computer Science: Data and Information will focus on managing and interpreting raw data. Students will develop an ability to translate, process, and visualize raw data to create useful information. Students in this course work with data, using a variety of computational tools and techniques, to understand the many ways in which data is transformed into information and knowledge.

### **Advanced Computer Science: Algorithms**

*Prerequisite: Completion of 7/8 Exploring Computer Science or Exploring Computer Science and permission of the instructor*

*Recommended for eighth through twelfth grade*

Advanced Computer Science: Algorithms will explore the use of algorithms to create solutions to problems. The development, use, and analysis of algorithms are some of the most fundamental aspects of computing. Students in this course work with algorithms in many ways: they develop and express original algorithms, they implement algorithms in a language, and they analyze algorithms analytically and empirically.

### **Video Game Design Implementing STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Mathematics)**

*Prerequisite: Completion of 7/8 Exploring Computer Science or Exploring Computer Science*

*Recommended for ninth through twelfth grade*

This introductory programming course merges a highly immersive environment of video game design with programming elements needed for further study in computer science. Students will apply the principles of literary theory, storytelling, aesthetics, and sociology towards the design of video games. Once designed, games will be created using a variety of programming languages. Students will also gain insight in the industry and the impacts gaming has had upon society.

### **Intro to 3D Design and Printing**

*Prerequisite: None*

*Recommended for tenth through twelfth grade*

Students will experience practical 3D printing experience and develop a critical eye for the technology's advantages and limitations. Upon course completion, students will be able to explain current and emerging 3D printing applications in the manufacturing field, understand the advantages and limitations of each 3D printing technology, evaluate scenarios and recommend the appropriate use of 3D printing technology and identify opportunities to apply 3D printing technology for time and cost savings.

### **AP Computer Science Principles**

*Prerequisite: None*

*Recommended for tenth through twelfth grade*

This introduction to computer science is designed to show the beauty and joy of computational thinking by actively engaging students in the following topics: software creation, game design, 3D printing, and basic ideas behind technologies such as networking, the internet, and mobile devices. Other points of

discussion will include but are not limited to robotics, creativity in computing, social uses and abuses of information, and the foundations of privacy.

### **AP Computer Science A**

*Prerequisite: AP Computer Science Principles and permission of the instructor*

*Recommended for eleventh or twelfth grade*

The AP Computer Science A course is an introductory course in computer science. Because the design and implementation of computer programs to solve problems involve skills that are fundamental to the study of computer science, a large part of the course is built around the development of computer programs that correctly solve a given problem. These programs should be understandable, adaptable, and, when appropriate, reusable. At the same time, the design and implementation of computer programs is used as a context for introducing other important aspects of computer science, including the development and analysis of algorithms, the development and use of fundamental data structures, the study of standard algorithms and typical applications, and the use of logic and formal methods. In addition, the responsible use of these systems is an integral part of the course.

### **Altamont Computer Science Offerings**

<b>7th</b>	<b>8th</b>	<b>9th</b>	<b>10th</b>	<b>11th</b>	<b>12th</b>
7/8 Exploring Computer Science	7/8 Exploring Computer Science	Exploring Computer Science	Exploring Computer Science	Exploring Computer Science	Exploring Computer Science
	Advanced Computer Science*	Advanced Computer Science*	Advanced Computer Science*	Advanced Computer Science*	Advanced Computer Science*
		Video Game Design*	Video Game Design*	Video Game Design*	Video Game Design*
			Intro to 3D Design and Printing	Intro to 3D Design and Printing	Intro to 3D Design and Printing
			AP Computer Science Principles	AP Computer Science Principles	AP Computer Science Principles
					AP Computer Science A*

*\*Require a prerequisite and/or instructor approval*

# LIFE SCIENCES

## **Honors Biology** (*Required*)

*Prerequisite: Physical Science and Pre-Algebra*

*Recommended for ninth grade*

This first course in biology focuses on evolution and life's diversity. The first half of the course focuses on ecological principles and man's impact on the environment. Students explore Darwinian natural selection, Earth's history and evolution. The second half of the course is geared towards basic cell biology, cell reproduction, and Mendelian and molecular genetics. This is an activity-based course that allows for the development of proper laboratory techniques and considerable exposure to problem solving and experimental design.

## **AP Biology** (*Laboratory Course*)

*Prerequisite: Honors Chemistry and Algebra I*

*Recommended for tenth through twelfth grades*

*May be used to meet the biology graduation requirement with special permission.\**

According to the course description found at [apcentral.collegeboard.com](http://apcentral.collegeboard.com), "The AP Biology course is designed to enable the student to develop advanced inquiry and reasoning skills, such as designing concepts in and across domains. The result will be readiness for the study of advanced topics in subsequent college courses—a goal of every AP course. This AP Biology course is equivalent to a two-semester college introductory biology course and has been endorsed enthusiastically by higher education officials. The key concepts and related content that define the revised AP Biology course and exam are organized around a few underlying principles called the big ideas, which encompass the core scientific principles, theories and processes governing living organisms and biological systems. Big Idea 1: Evolution; Big Idea 2: Cellular Processes: Energy and Communication; Big Idea 3: Genetics and Information Transfer Living systems store, retrieve, transmit, and respond to information essential to life processes; Big Idea 4: Interactions Biological systems interact, and these systems and their interactions possess complex properties." The class meets six periods per week which allows for extensive laboratory exploration which enhances, extends and reinforces concepts discussed during lecture. Students are encouraged to take the Advanced Placement exam upon successful completion of the course.

*\*Grade of "A" in previous math and science course, letter of recommendation from previous science teacher and approval by department chair and Head of School*

## **AP Environmental Science**

*Prerequisite: Honors Biology, Honors Chemistry and Honors Algebra II*

*Recommended for eleventh and twelfth grade*

AP ES is a rigorous, college-level course based on the seven themes of environmental science: Science as a process, energy conversions, ecological relationships, biogeochemical cycles, earth resources, water resources, air resources, and pollution. The goal of any environmental science course is to connect the role of humans as stewards to the biosphere. Laboratory experience in the field or in the lab will consist of 15% of the class time and activities based on content another 15% at minimum. The other 70% on class time will be used to explore content via group research, debate, field trips, recycling and exploratory using our e-books and various links. All will prepare for the AP exam with preparatory materials. The hope is to take field trips to the water treatment facility, a local river the Cahaba and our local recycling plant. We will be responsible for "green" initiatives and defend our proposals.

## **AP Psychology**

*Recommended for eleventh or twelfth grade*

AP Psychology introduces students to the systematic and scientific study of behavior and mental processes with current applications of modern psychology to contemporary society. This survey course emphasizes the historical development of psychology from its philosophical roots to its current foundation in the natural and social sciences. Students are introduced to major psychological studies of the twentieth century through primary and secondary source material relevant to the major perspectives: social/cultural, biological, cognitive, behavioral, psychodynamic, and humanistic. In addition to taking notes on lectures, students gain experience in leading class discussions, reading scholarly articles, conducting case studies, participating in experiments and demonstrations, developing research proposals, utilizing electronic databases for library research, and using APA style format for research papers. A variety of outside speakers from the community expose students to current applications of the core material.

## **Honors Human Anatomy and Physiology**

*Prerequisite: Honors Biology and Honors Chemistry*

*Recommended for eleventh or twelfth grade*

This course emphasizes human body structures and their functions. The major body systems are discussed. Emphasis is placed on homeostatic mechanisms and human disease. The laboratory aspect of the course requires dissection of preserved animal specimens and sculpting organ systems with clay models. Other experiments include computer physiology labs and simulations. While the curriculum contains much lab work, no lab credit is earned for this course. It may be taken concurrently with any science course as an elective as long as the student has completed chemistry.

## **Honors Brain, Culture, & Mind (Semester Elective)**

*Recommended for eleventh or twelfth grade*

This semester-long honors level seminar emphasizes such topics as research methodology, health and well-being, cultural variations in psychopathology and culturally bound disorders. In addition, this semester focuses on the neuroscience of meditative practices and the alliance between eastern philosophy and western developments in neuroscience.

## **Honors Cross-Cultural Psychology (Semester Elective)**

*Recommended for eleventh or twelfth grade*

This semester-long honors level seminar emphasizes how cultural influences shape the personality of the individual and the society. The seminar focuses on such topics as research methodology, personality and concept of self, cultural differences in child development, and social psychology.

## **Honors Sports Medicine (Semester Elective)**

*Recommended for eleventh or twelfth grade*

Sports Medicine is an area of health services that applies medical and scientific knowledge to; prevent, recognize, manage, and rehabilitate injuries related to sport, exercise, or recreational activity. Students will gain a better understanding about history of sports medicine and the various professions within the field. They will develop a deeper knowledge of the human muscular-skeletal anatomy and common injuries and illness associated with athletics. Students will learn the different methods and techniques for preventing injuries. They will learn basic skills and knowledge for injury evaluation and the

rehabilitation techniques for treating those injuries. The class will have both a lecture and practical component, where they will learn the skills and then have the opportunity to practice those techniques. After completion of the class students may take the opportunity to further their education by participating in various internships or job shadowing programs with physical therapists, orthopedic physicians, or athletic trainers in both the high school and college setting.

### **Honors Sports Medicine II** (*Semester Elective*)

*Prerequisite: Honors Sports Medicine*

*Recommended for eleventh or twelfth grade*

Students will develop an in depth knowledge of the human muscular-skeletal anatomy and common injuries and illness associated with activity. Students will learn the different methods and techniques for preventing these injuries. They will also learn basic skills and knowledge for injury evaluation, management, and rehabilitation techniques for treating those injuries. The class will have both a lecture and practical component, where they will learn the skills and then have the opportunity to practice those techniques. Students will be expected to demonstrate their knowledge through various “hands-on” practical exams. There will also be several guest speakers from orthopedic physicians, physical therapist, nutritionist, and athletic trainers. During the class students may take the opportunity to further their education by participating in various internships or job shadowing programs with physical therapists, orthopedic physicians, or athletic trainers in both the high school and college setting.

## **PHYSICAL SCIENCES**

### **Honors Chemistry** (*Required*) *Prerequisite: Algebra I*

*Recommended for the tenth grade\**

This curriculum introduces chemistry in a complete course for students in a college- preparatory program. The course helps students see how chemical principles and concepts are developed from experimental observations, and how these principles may be used to explain phenomena in daily life as well as in the laboratory. Questions and problems provide ongoing reinforcement and extension of critical thinking and problem solving skills. The course emphasizes skills that help students analyze carefully and act wisely on issues that confront us all as citizens in our technological world.

*\*To take Chemistry in ninth grade the student must have earned a grade of “A” in previous math and science courses and a letter of recommendation from previous science teacher and approval by department chair and Head of School*

### **Laboratory Techniques** (*Required*)

*Prerequisite: Algebra I, Biology or entering Chemistry*

*(Classes meet twice a week)*

This laboratory is required for students enrolled in Chemistry. The course meets two times per week, and students are required to produce a science project for participation in the annual science fair. The laboratory course is designed so that students focus on fundamental laboratory procedures as well as experimental methods with respect to biology and chemistry. Students relate mathematical models to experimental evidence and produce well written, lucid laboratory reports. Laboratory science prepares students for subsequent science courses at Altamont as well as collegiate science and engineering courses.

### **AP Chemistry** (*Laboratory Course*)

*Prerequisite: Honors Chemistry and Honors Algebra II Recommended for eleventh or twelfth grade*  
Advanced chemistry is designed to be the equivalent of the chemistry course usually taken during the freshman college year. Students attain a depth of understanding of fundamentals and a reasonable competence in dealing with chemical problems. The course contributes to the development of the student's ability to think clearly and to express their ideas, orally and in writing with clarity and logic. Topics include structure of matter, kinetic molecular theory, thermodynamics, kinetics, gases, electrochemistry, nuclear chemistry, and basic concepts of equilibrium. This course meets six periods per week which allows time for lab periods that enhance and reinforce the concepts covered during lectures. Students are encouraged to take the Advanced Placement Chemistry exam upon successful completion of this course.

### **Honors Physics**

*Prerequisite Honors Algebra II*

*Recommended for eleventh grade*

Physics is a high-school level algebra-based, introductory survey of physics from mechanics to the ideas of relativity. Not nearly as intense as the AP physics courses, students are introduced to the concepts of physics with light mathematical applications. They become familiar with solving motion and other equations, interpreting graphs, and graphically depicting data derived from various experiments. This course enhances higher order thinking skills and prepares students for higher level science courses.

### **AP Physics 1 (Laboratory Course)**

*Prerequisite: Honors Pre-Calculus*

*Recommended for eleventh or twelfth grade*

*May be used to meet the physics graduation requirement with special permission.\**

AP Physics 1 is an intense algebra- and trigonometry-based, introductory college course. The curriculum includes instruction in kinematics, dynamics, rotational dynamics, angular momentum, work, energy, and power; and mechanical waves and sound. It will also introduce electric circuits. Laboratory experiments illuminate principles developed in the classroom. The purpose of this course is to introduce students to the workings of the universe and to enhance higher order thinking skills. This course also prepares students for the Physics Advanced Placement exam (Physics 1).

*\*Grade of "A" in previous math and science courses, letter of recommendation from previous science teacher and approval by department chair and Head of School*

### **AP Physics 2 (Laboratory Course) Prerequisite: AP Physics 1**

*Recommended for eleventh or twelfth grade*

AP Physics 2 is equivalent to the second semester of an introductory college course. Topics will include fluid mechanics; thermodynamics; electricity and magnetism; optics; and atomic and nuclear physics. Laboratory experiments illuminate principles developed in the classroom. The purpose of this course is to introduce students to the workings of the universe and to enhance higher order thinking skills. This course also prepares students for the Physics 2 Advanced Placement exam (Physics 2).

*\*Grade of "A" in previous math and science courses, letter of recommendation from previous science teacher and approval by department chair and Head of School.*

### **AP-C Physics**

*Prerequisite: AP Physics 1 and AP Calculus BC*

*Recommended for twelfth grade*

Altamont's AP-C Physics introduces students to calculus-based mechanics or to electricity and magnetism, which includes differentiation and integration. This course develops a greater degree of analysis than the AP Physics course and an increased sophistication in problem-solving techniques and critical thinking. Students are encouraged to take the Physics Advanced Placement exam (Physics – C) upon the successful completion of this course.

**Robotics** (*Upper School Elective*)

Robotics is a semester long course that will take place during the Fall Semester. It will focus on developing programming skills, building skills, engineering design and teamwork. As part of the course we will participate in the BEST robotics competition, and we will spend some time working with the LEGO Mindstorms Robots. Before and after the BEST competition we will have in class competitions with the LEGO Mindstorms Robots. Students will be expected to complete a final challenge at the end of the semester that will include a paper discussing their problem solving process, design challenges and methods of testing.

# World Languages

## *Required (Full Credit):*

- Fifth Grade Rotation (one quarter each of French, Latin, Mandarin, and Spanish)
- Sixth Grade Introduction course
- Seventh and Eighth Grade core course
- Three sequential levels of the same language in upper school (Grades 9-12)

## *Offered (Full Credit):*

- Honors French I-IV
- Honors French V: French Civilization (Part I)
- Honors French VI: French Civilization (Part II)
- AP French VII: Language and Culture
- Honors French VIII: The French-Speaking World
- Honors Latin I-III
- Honors Latin IV: Vergil
- Honors Latin V-VI: Advanced Literature
- Honors Advanced Introduction to Ancient Greek Grammar and Literature
- Honors Mandarin I
- Honors Spanish I-IV
- Honors Spanish V: Language and Culture
- Honors Spanish VI: Classical Literature
- Honors Spanish VII: Contemporary Literature

The World Languages department believes that a well-educated person should be conversant in a language other than English. In studying another language, one gains a greater depth of understanding not only of his or her own language, but also of other cultures. By introducing languages early in the curriculum, we give our students the opportunity to acquire a language at the optimum time. After mastering the basics of grammar and vocabulary, students' progress to a study of the history, art, and literature of that culture. A student who studies one language through the sixth year or beyond is viewed as having a stronger record by selective colleges. When possible, students are encouraged to study additional languages outside of the requirement. Language courses must be taken in order of numerical sequence.

## **FRENCH**

### **French** (*Fifth Grade Rotation*)

This quarter-long course introduces 5<sup>th</sup> grade students to the culture and language of France in an investigative manner. Daily homework centers on discovering French food, sports & games, history & geography, fashion, literature, colonialization, etc. Students enjoy the sights, sounds, and tastes of France throughout the course. Students leave the course with an appreciation for the rich and varied culture of France and its impact throughout the world – not to mention acquiring several useful vocabulary phrases to get them going on their future study of French. This course is graded S/N

(Satisfactory/Needs Improvement).

### **Introduction to French** (*Sixth Grade*)

This 6th grade course is designed to lay the foundation for a smooth transition into French I in the 7th grade. Designed as a vicarious trip to France, classroom instruction emphasizes oral proficiency and listening comprehension, as well as basic grammatical concepts such as gender, verb conjugations, and agreement. In addition to the general storyline of the course, songs and short oral recitations enhance vocabulary acquisition and introduce more complex structures.

### **Honors French I**

For Grades 7th -12th, this course instructs beginners and near-beginners in French. Progress is made in the areas of listening, reading, and writing, with an emphasis on correct spoken French. Students learn French vocabulary and grammar by engaging in personalized discussions, hearing and reading engaging stories, and writing and telling their own creative stories. By the end of the year, students are expected to achieve a novice-high proficiency level in French.

### **Honors French II**

*Prerequisite: French I and approval of current teacher or Head of Department*

This course continues to build upon the foundations laid in French I. Students experience the use of the past and future tenses, reflexive verbs, and object pronouns in context. Storytelling and reading promote long-term vocabulary retention and enhanced speaking skills. By the end of the year, students are expected to achieve an intermediate-low proficiency level in French.

### **Honors French III**

*Prerequisite: French II and approval of current teacher or Head of Department*

This course continues to build upon the foundations laid in French II. Students experience the use of the conditional and subjunctive tenses as well as a broadening vocabulary. Storytelling and reading promote long-term language retention, build confidence, and refine precision as students advance in spoken and written fluency. This course is taught predominantly in French. By the end of the year, students are expected to attain an intermediate-mid proficiency level in French.

### **Honors French IV**

*Prerequisite: French III and approval of current teacher or Head of Department*

This course is designed to enhance listening and reading comprehension, speaking proficiency, and writing skills. Coursework expands vocabulary, reinforces grammatical structures, promotes fluency, and cultivates a greater awareness of French-speaking cultures. By the end of the year, students are expected to attain an intermediate-high proficiency level in French.

### **Honors French V: French Civilization (Part I)**

*Prerequisite: French III or IV and approval of current teacher or Head of Department*

As the first part of a 2-year survey of French civilization, this course spans from prehistory to pre-Revolution. Readings are more complex, and vocabulary is expanded. Communicative proficiency is reinforced through dramatization, presentation and discussion in French. Grammar is reviewed, and more advanced structures are introduced. Literature is studied in its historical context. Extensive audio-visuals supplement and reinforce the material in the text and provide the students with valuable exposure to additional, authentic resources. This course is taught in French. By the end of the year, students are

expected to attain an intermediate-high proficiency level in French.

### **Honors French VI: French Civilization (Part II)**

*Prerequisite: French V and approval of current teacher or Head of Department*

Continuing the French civilization survey begun in French V, this course picks up from the French Revolution to modern day. While the finer points of the French language continue to be emphasized, the main focus is on student exploration of great literary movements and their representative works, historical high points, and the arts of the day. The important contributions of the French mind continue to be showcased. Political events of the 20th century round out the composite picture of what it means to be French today. This course is taught in French. By the end of the year, students are expected to attain an advanced-low proficiency level in French.

### **AP French VII: Language and Culture**

*Prerequisite: French VI and approval of current teacher or Head of Department*

As the capstone of the French language sequence at Altamont, this course aims to foster richer oral and written proficiency through a variety of media and experience, including film, song, and essay. Current events are also presented and discussed. Advanced grammar concepts are reviewed and elaborated on throughout the course. Conducted entirely in French, this course is designed to prepare students for the Advanced Placement examination in French Language and Culture. By the end of the year, students are expected to attain an advanced-mid proficiency level in French.

### **Honors French VIII: The French-Speaking World**

*Prerequisite: AP French VII and approval of current teacher or Head of Department*

This course explores the sights, sounds, tastes and printed page from around the globe where French is spoken. Students travel virtually from the Americas, to Europe, Africa, Middle East, Southeast Asia, and the South Pacific. Key components include current events, literary works from non-French authors writing in French, and francophone films. When possible, students hear from natives as well. This course will widen the students' understanding of the far-reaching expanse of the French language, see its use in other contexts, and maintain and broaden their language skills in preparation for college.

## **LATIN**

### **Latin (Fifth Grade Rotation)**

This quarter course provides an introduction to the Latin language and the world of Classical Studies. Students will enjoy comparative vocabulary study including derivatives and cognates in English. Along with the basics of Latin grammar, we will cover the lasting cultural legacy of Rome. Discussions on mythology, daily and private life, Mediterranean geography, and famous men and women of the ancient world round out the course. This class is graded S/N (Satisfactory/Needs Improvement).

### **Introduction to Latin (Sixth Grade)**

The sixth grade course emphasizes the Roman people and culture and introduces students gradually to the beginning precepts of Latin grammar. Latin vocabulary and English derivatives are also a main emphasis. This course is designed to prepare students for a smooth transition into the faster pace of Level I.

### **Honors Latin I**

This introductory course provides the student with a solid foundation in vocabulary and grammar through selected readings and in conjunction with a formal study of grammar we will study English word formation and derivation, Classical mythology and art, the daily life of the Romans, and important people and events in Roman history.

### **Honors Latin II**

*Prerequisite: Latin I and approval of current teacher or Head of Department*

This course continues the broad grammatical survey begun in Level I. It is complemented by appropriately adapted Latin passages that underscore the particular grammatical points studied within the lesson. History, art, daily life, and additional cultural elements from Byzantium through the Middle Ages will enrich our understanding of the grandeur of Rome.

### **Honors Latin III**

*Prerequisite: Latin II and approval of current teacher or Head of Department*

The third year begins with an intensive grammar review. Following the review, prose and poetry selections from various authors are read. Emphasis is placed on the literary features of Latin literature and on the historical and cultural context of Latin authors.

### **Honors Latin IV: Vergil**

*Prerequisite: Latin III and approval of current teacher or Head of Department*

This advanced course focuses on reading selections from Vergil's *Aeneid*. Students learn to appreciate not only Vergil's figurative language and poetic imagery but also the *Aeneid's* complex and multi-layered narrative.

### **Honors Latin V/VI: Advanced Literature**

*Prerequisite: Latin IV and approval of current teacher or Head of Department*

This course alternates between advanced readings in poetry and advanced readings in prose. Students will read a variety of authors including Ovid, Horace, Livy, Sallust, and Tacitus. Students continue to expand their understanding of Latin grammar and syntax as well as explore and appreciate the authors' historical, artistic, and intellectual milieu.

### **Honors Advanced Introduction to Ancient Greek Grammar and Literature**

*Prerequisite: Latin III, twelfth grade and approval of current teacher or Head of Department*

This course offers an intensive introduction to the grammar and syntax of ancient Greek, with an emphasis on the Attic dialect and enriching discussions on the morphology of Demotic. The course will culminate in reading a variety of authors, including Homer, Herodotus, Plato, and Koine authors. The class will cover Greek cultural achievement in art, architecture, literature, and philosophy, as we trace the history of Greece from antiquity to the Greek Revolution.

## **MANDARIN**

### **Mandarin (Fifth Grade Rotation)**

This course quarter course introduces Mandarin to 5th grade students and endeavors to arouse their interest in learning an Oriental language. Through this 9-weeks course, students will be taught to

understand vocabulary and expressions related to common daily settings. They will repeat, recite and reproduce words or sentences with fair accuracy as they begin to develop interest in learning Mandarin. This course is graded S/N (Satisfactory/Needs Improvement).

### **Introduction to Mandarin** (*Sixth Grade*)

This 6th Grade course is designed to lay the foundation for a smooth transition into Mandarin I. Students will focus on the four key areas of language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Students are introduced to phonology and vocabulary themes, grammar concepts, and sentence structure to enrich their linguistic knowledge. They will learn to use basic, simple language related to personal and daily activities, such as greetings, self-introduction, family, dates and time, hobbies, colors, and aspect of Chinese culture. The course actively engages students in completing a variety of activities, practices, tasks and assessments. Through the course, students will begin to develop confidence functioning in a Chinese language and culture environment.

### **Honors Mandarin I**

This course is designed for beginners and near beginners in Mandarin. Like the Introductory course, students will focus on the four key areas of language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing, with an emphasis on the last two in particular. Students are expected to quickly handle basic conversational tasks related to greeting, self-introduction, numbers, and family. Additional vocabulary themes explored in this course are countries, languages, jobs, school life, vehicles, and sports. Beyond language learning, various games, art crafts, Chinese cartoons and other projects related to Chinese culture are important components of this course.

## **SPANISH**

### **Spanish** (*Fifth Grade Rotation*)

This quarter course introduces students to the Spanish language through the study of common words and expressions, basic grammatical structures and culture. Group interaction, written and listening exercises, as well as songs and videos will reinforce correct pronunciation and assimilation of the language. Instruction is in both Spanish and English, but students are expected to use Spanish whenever possible. This class is graded S/N (Satisfactory/Needs Improvement).

### **Introduction to Spanish** (*Sixth Grade*)

This course is designed to lay the foundation for a smooth transition into Spanish I in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade. It emphasizes oral proficiency and listening comprehension as well as basic grammatical concepts such as gender, verb conjugations, and agreement. Stories, songs and frequent short oral recitations promote vocabulary acquisition and introduce more complex structures. Instruction is in both Spanish and English, but students are expected to use Spanish whenever possible. This is a novice-low level course.

### **Honors Spanish I**

The first formal year of Spanish instruction introduces grammar, extensive vocabulary, as well as cultural and historical information about a variety of Spanish-speaking countries. Oral and written proficiency is a goal, with audio and video clips incorporated on a regular basis in classroom instruction. This is a novice-mid level course.

## **Honors Spanish II**

*Prerequisite: Spanish I and approval of current teacher or Head of Department*

This course reviews basic grammar structures, expands vocabulary and emphasizes increasingly complex grammatical constructions. Oral, written and reading exercises are integral components of instruction. All simple tenses with the exception of the conditional and imperfect subjunctive are studied. This is a novice-high level course and Spanish is used extensively in the classroom.

## **Honors Spanish III**

*Prerequisite: Spanish II and approval of current teacher or Head of Department*

This course introduces more advanced language structures, while students acquire increasingly sophisticated vocabulary through speaking, listening, writing and reading exercises. Students gain a greater depth of understanding of the culture and civilization of Spanish speaking countries as they read short stories by Hispanic authors. Audio and video clips supplement classroom interaction. This is an intermediate-low level course and is conducted almost exclusively in Spanish.

## **Honors Spanish IV**

*Prerequisite: Spanish III and approval of current teacher or Head of Department*

This course helps students hone the grammar structures presented in Levels I-III while broadening their vocabulary and increasing fluency and accuracy. Students are offered extensive opportunities to develop their comprehension of spoken Spanish, as well as activities to improve their own oral communication skills in the target language. The course introduces students to techniques and terminology needed to view and discuss Hispanic works of art and incorporates discussion of additional short stories from both Spain and Latin America. This is an intermediate-mid level course and is conducted almost exclusively in Spanish.

## **Honors Spanish V: Language and Culture**

*Prerequisite: Spanish IV and approval of current or Head of Department*

This is a course designed to enhance aural comprehension, oral proficiency, and literary skills in order to further develop communicative language ability. This class reinforces grammatical structures, expands vocabulary, refines pronunciation, and develops an awareness and appreciation of Spanish-speaking cultures. Coursework will include reading, creative and academic writing, formal and informal discussions, and formal presentation skills. This is an intermediate-high level course and is conducted almost exclusively in Spanish.

## **Honors Spanish VI: Classical Literature**

*Prerequisite: Spanish IV or V and approval of current teacher or Head of Department*

This course introduces students to the formal study of literary texts within the cultural and historical contexts of Hispanic civilizations in both Spain and Latin America. Works are selected from the classical literature of Spain as well as the pre-colonial and colonial literature from Latin America. Emphasis is placed on the continued acquisition of vocabulary and increased proficiency in reading, writing, listening and speaking. This is an advanced-low level course and is conducted entirely in Spanish.

## **Honors Spanish VII: Contemporary Literature**

*Prerequisite: Spanish VI and approval of current teacher or Head of Department*

This course focuses on prose and poetry from selected contemporary Latin American and

Spanish authors. Non-fiction readings, film and documentaries are included as needed to provide historical background, promote discussion and expand the students' understanding of the Spanish-speaking world. Class discussions, written assignments and oral presentations on a wide variety of literary and cultural topics will focus on broadening vocabulary and polishing grammar while giving students numerous opportunities to demonstrate their increased proficiency in the Spanish language. This is an advanced-mid level course and is conducted entirely in Spanish.

# Non-Departmental Electives

*Offered (Half Credit):*

- Annual Staff
- Independent Study

## **Annual Staff**

Annual Staff exposes the student to the design and production aspects of the school yearbook, the *Altissimus*. Students participate in ad sales, photography, layout, design, and production. Developing a team atmosphere is an important part of the production of the yearbook, and leadership skills are developed as students progress to editorial positions.

## **Independent Study**

Highly motivated juniors or seniors, who have a compelling interest in a specific subject or activity that falls outside the published curriculum, may apply to do an Independent Study. To be accepted into the program, students must have demonstrated exemplary work in the discipline of the Independent Study and be in good academic standing in all other courses. Students who wish to be considered for Independent Study program assume the responsibility of developing and completing a project of their own design with the supervision of a faculty sponsor. Students must solicit a faculty sponsor and incorporate the sponsor's suggestions in the design of the project, but the responsibility for carrying out the project lies with the student. An Independent Study course can be either one (either semester) or two semesters in length, and it will receive half the credit of either a semester or two semester course. The form of the final product/research paper, presentation, portfolio, etc. must be approved in advance. Students accepted for the Independent Study program must have at least 2 study halls per week to work on the Independent Study and must maintain good academic standing in all other courses.