

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 proficient in a language other than English. In studying another language, one gains a greater depth of understanding not only of one's 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. As students learn to communicate in their chosen language, they master basic grammar and vocabulary through the history, art, literature, and cultures of that language. A student who studies a language throughout high school 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 5th 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 introduces Mandarin to 5th grade students and endeavors to spark their interest in learning Chinese culture and language. Through this nine-week 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 accuracy, and they will also begin to develop confidence and interest in learning Mandarin. This course is graded S/N (Satisfactory/Needs Improvement).

Introduction to Mandarin (*Sixth Grade*)

This sixth-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. The course actively engages students in completing a variety of activities, practice, tasks and assessments. Through the course, students will begin to develop more confidence and interest in learning the Chinese language.

Honors Mandarin I

This course is designed for learners who have had an understanding in basic language materials related to common daily settings. 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. 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 videos and other projects related to Chinese culture are important components of this course.

Honors Mandarin II

Prerequisite: Mandarin I and approval of current teacher or Head of Department

The primary goal of the course is to help students establish a solid foundation of vocabulary, grammar, and knowledge of Mandarin and communication skills through natural and gradual integration of language, content and culture. Students will continue to focus on the four key areas of language skills, especially productive skills (i.e. speaking and writing). Cultural knowledge and understanding, as well as cross-cultural and global awareness are also important components of this course. Beyond language learning, students will be introduced to various Chinese festivals, customs, and foods related to Chinese culture via videos and documentaries.

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 7th 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.