



EMBRACE CHALLENGE,  
DISCOVER YOURSELF.

UPPER

SCHOOL

CURRICULUM

GUIDE

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# ***Nichols School Philosophy***



"To train minds, bodies and hearts for the work of life, and to carry into all we do the highest ideals of character and service."

- ***Joseph Dana Allen***

## ***About Nichols***



Nichols School is a nationally recognized college preparatory coed independent school in Buffalo, NY. At Nichols, students are encouraged every day not only to be accepting of challenge, but excited by it. Through caring guidance and unwavering support, they are inspired to face academic, athletic, creative and social growth with confidence, determination and joy. The ease with which our students approach new learning opportunities and experiences becomes a mark of their characters, and is an asset that continues to open doors for them throughout their lives.

As an independent school with an average class size of 14, our students are empowered to think critically, creatively and go beyond the test. Nichols offers 17 Advanced Placement courses, over 35 clubs, four academic teams, dozens of service opportunities, multiple performances throughout the year, plus more than 20 athletic teams—and we encourage participation in multiple activities and electives. From engineering and robotics to dance, on the courts, the turf or the ice, students are encouraged to be leaders, push limits and pursue their true potentials.

We take great pride in our distinguished academics and athletics, but there is much more to Nichols School than rigorous curriculum and winning teams. Students are encouraged to enrich themselves, express themselves and discover themselves through an extensive arts program that includes theatre, drawing, music, dance, fashion design and more.

Nichols School has occupied a special place in Buffalo and the greater Western New York community for many years. Located on 30 acres, the School is minutes away from galleries, historic houses, Olmstead parks and The Buffalo Zoo; our campus feels like a small liberal arts college. Our beautifully landscaped urban campus includes seven separate buildings linked by tree-lined sidewalks and several indoor passageways.

Faculty members, chosen for their expertise, regularly publish in their academic field: 75% have master's degrees; 10% have doctoral degrees. About 14% of faculty members are Nichols alumni. They are committed to the School's educational mission and they have an average of 20 years of service. Teachers are involved in student life beyond their classrooms, serving as student advisors, coaches, club advisors and mentors.

Nichols students abide by an Honor Code in all aspects of their life both in and out of the classroom.

Nichols School subscribes to the Statement of Principles of Good Practice of the National Association of College Admission Counseling. The school is also a member of the National Association of Independent Schools, the College Board, the National Association for College Admission Counseling, and the Association of College Counselors in Independent Schools.

Nichols is accredited by the New York State Association of Independent Schools and the New York State Department of Education. It received national recognition in the Secondary School Recognition Program and Exemplary Private School Recognition Program.





## THE ARTS



# THE ARTS

Nichols requires all students to participate in the fine and performing arts. We feel no education is complete without a profound understanding of the arts, and that understanding is best gleaned from hands on involvement in the creative process. In addition to offering students formal instruction in the arts, extracurricular activities are available in theatre, music, dance, and visual arts.

In Grade 9, Freshman Survey of the Arts, a comprehensive, interdisciplinary course is required. Survey of the Arts emphasizes a shared vocabulary amongst all of the art disciplines. Double class periods may be used for field trips, guest artist visits and presentations. The course involves a rotation through the music, theatre, dance and visual arts mediums. Students may also take chorus, orchestra or dance for credit.

All 10<sup>th</sup> graders have the option to take semester-long sophomore electives or a full-year course. The Arts Department offers Foundation of the Arts electives in Visual Arts, Music, Theater, and Dance. Chorus and Orchestra also fulfill the 10<sup>th</sup> grade elective. Select sophomores may use a junior/senior elective to fulfill the requirement.

In Grade 11 or 12, students take an additional year-long elective in either or both years. Select juniors and seniors may also use two semesters of sophomore arts to fulfill this requirement.

## ALL GRADES

### Orchestra

A year-long commitment, Orchestra is open to players of string, wind, brass, and percussion instruments who have demonstrated proficiency on their instrument. Music from Baroque, Classical, Romantic and the Modern era is performed. Developing aesthetic sensitivity, the proper technique, timing, tone, and interpretation are stressed. Each student is evaluated in a weekly lesson lab. Performances include a minimum of two instrumental concerts. The Jazz Band, an extracurricular activity, meets twice a week after school to prepare for performances throughout the year.

### Concert Choir

A year-long commitment, Concert Choir is an ensemble requiring scholastic achievement, concentration, and discipline striving toward excellence in the choral arts. It is open to any student interested in singing. Emphasis is placed on the development of vocal skills, beginning sight singing techniques, and music listening skills. The Concert Choir will sing music in a variety of musical styles including contemporary, pop, sacred, secular, classical, baroque, and others depending on concert activities. Students will also learn the fundamentals of proper vocal technique through individual lesson instruction with the director. At least two annual school concerts should be expected, with the addition of possible tours, off campus concerts, and optional events including (but not limited to): Cabaret, All-County Chorus, Area All-State Chorus, and NYSSMA solo Adjudication.

### Advanced Contemporary Dance I, II, III, or IV

A year-long commitment, Advanced Contemporary Dance is for students who have previous training and often find it difficult to balance a full commitment to the after school program and their outside competition studios. The class meets during x period.

The advanced dance class has three goals:

- To develop students who enter the upper school and have extensive previous training and a passion for dance.
- To offer an elite performing ensemble as part of the Nichols dance program.

- To allow these students opportunities to learn contemporary dance techniques that they will encounter in collegiate programs.

Curriculum will include learning and performing advanced and professional dance repertoire, (fall) choreographic lessons and creation, (winter) and subtle somatic techniques and awareness of choreographic forms (spring). Students will collaborate and view experimental choreographic examples throughout the year. Assessment will include performing in the Fall Dance Concert, the Choreographers Showcase, school meetings and /or peer teaching opportunities.

### **Nichols Dance Ensemble I, II, III, IV**

This student dance group provides opportunities for freshman, sophomore, junior and senior students to study dance techniques, create dances, collaborate with peers and perform challenging works. Students may enroll for a full year or for each individual sports trimester. This class takes place daily during the after school sports period (3:45-5:30). Students may receive physical education credit, arts credit or both for fully participating in the classes and contributing to the performances. With the permission of the instructor, students may enroll twice a week for physical education credit only. Students study ballet, classic modern, improvisation, composition, yoga, and dance repertoire. Guest artists teach movement workshops and set choreography for performances. Advanced dancers have the opportunity to work individually and in small groups on solos, professional repertoire, and portfolio development.

## **SOPHOMORE FOUNDATIONS OF THE ARTS**

### **Visual Thinking and Community, Photography (Fall)**

In this course, students develop their understanding of the basic guidelines of design and composition using a variety of traditional and digital photographic tools. The goal of this class is to introduce students to the language of photography and to become smart image-makers and critical thinkers in our current culture of mass media and prolific mechanical reproduction. Through the application of photographic techniques ranging from the very simple (such as pinhole camera) to the more complex (photo collage) students create images that challenge conventional and personal viewpoints. Through multimedia presentations, we look at other photographers, discuss their work and build a greater understanding of photographic history. This is primarily a hands-on studio class, which includes group projects, group critiques and development of students' personal perspectives and styles. The class includes at least two field trips to a local art center and a meditation on the role of visual art in the community.

### **Foundation in Drawing and Painting (Fall)**

This course introduces the beginning student to a variety of materials and techniques. The course emphasizes the elements of line, texture, shape, space, value and color through the creation of both objective and subjective artworks. Special focus will be placed on developing observational drawing skills and hands on experience in an engaging classroom community. Students will participate in class discussions, critiques, and group activities as well as create individual projects and keep a visual journal. Shorter projects will introduce new concepts and build confidence before applying these ideas to extended student driven works. Multiple mediums are explored which may include graphite, ink, frottage, printmaking, watercolor crayons, charcoal and acrylic paint. Field trips to local art events will enrich classroom experiences and course discussion.

### **Play Making (Fall)**

This class is designed for students with or without experience in theater. Students learn in a very active, hands on way about the elements of drama through reading and watching plays, group discussion, theater games and exercises, improvisations, and visits from local playwrights. Students develop their imaginations, strengthen their

artistic voice, and develop their sense of self by creating 3 short original works. Students work individually and collaboratively.

### **Xylophone Band (Fall)**

In this course, students will create and perform their own music using an ensemble of percussion instruments including xylophones, metallophones, gongs and chimes. No previous musical training is necessary. We will start by learning how to play the instruments. The rest of the course will be devoted to creating our own original compositions under the guidance of the instructor. If time permits, we might arrange a contemporary well-known piece of music for the ensemble. This class places top priority on learning how to listen and communicate musically with each other and the desire to acquire long-term goals through regular practice.

### **Visual Thinking and Community, Motion Pictures (Spring)**

In this course the students develop their understanding of the basic guidelines of composition, using the principles and elements of two-dimensional design in relationship to both space and time. An emphasis is placed on time-based art making techniques such as performance, animation, film, video, photography, and projection. Using a variety of film and video media, students complete projects that include: movie making, media literacy, performance art and animation. The goal for each project is for students to gain experience with new or familiar material, develop a strategy for completing a piece of artwork, and incorporate an art historical reference, or contemporary cultural critique. The class includes at least two field trips to a local art center and participation in the Flick Fest student film festival.

### **Fashion Laboratory (Spring)**

This course emphasizes learning to think creatively to gain a better understanding of the history of fashion as a voice for the people it clothes. In this maker's space, students will receive an introduction to sewing, both by hand and machine. Previous sewing experience is not required. Sketches and concept boards will inform 3-dimensional sculptural pieces constructed from both fabric and nontraditional materials. The introduction of multicultural and historical content through the examples of contemporary and influential historical designers will inspire students to respond with designs of their own in a strong classroom community. Field trips, guest speakers and class discussion will introduce issues of identity, race and gender politics and the environmental effects of the garment industry as we discuss how, when, where and why we wear what we wear.

### **Technical Theatre (Spring)**

This course covers the important concepts of technical production primarily through hands-on experience. The students learn about the principles and basic operation of theatrical lighting, audio, and video systems; theatrical rigging; the theatrical production process and technical theater's role in it; and workplace safety. Participation in school plays and Cabaret is encouraged but not required.

### **Acting Styles (Spring)**

Through improvisation, acting exercises, and scene work, we will explore how acting styles have emerged from different cultures and time periods. Expect to be on your feet as we learn to understand our own physical traits so that we might outwardly express the emotional life and thought process of a fictional character. We will begin with self-awareness, focusing on relaxation, flexibility, alignment, centers, and creative movement. We will continue with an exploration of theater forms including Commedia dell'arte, Elizabethan theater, Absurdist Theater, and Epic Theater.

## JUNIOR/SENIOR ARTS ELECTIVES

With permission of instructors, juniors and seniors may use two semesters of sophomore arts electives to fulfill this requirement.

### **Acting: Introduction to Acting Technique**

Students engage in exercises that focus on building a character vocally, physically, and psychologically. Acting exercises created by theatre greats Jaques LeCoq, Konstantin Stanislavski, Uta Hagen, and others are explored through improvisation and prepared performance projects. Students also apply Stanislavski's character and scene analysis techniques to short elliptical scenes and full length scenes from 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century American Theatre. Film acting is also explored. *Suggested Prerequisites for this course are Foundations of the Arts: Play Making and Play Building.*

### **Advanced Acting**

*This year long class is available only to students who have completed Acting: Introduction to Acting Technique or those who have been granted special permission from the instructor.* After a brief review of Konstantin Stanislavski's technique, we focus on the Sanford Meisner acting technique through improvisational "repetition" exercises and scene work. For the second half of the year we apply improvisation, character analysis, and scene analysis techniques to a small ensemble piece to be performed in late spring.

### **Songwriting**

This class is open to any student who enjoys popular American music. Students will foster their own personal musical style while developing skills in melody, harmony, music theory, arranging and writing lyrics. Students are not required to know how to play an instrument to take this course. Other class time will be spent in creative activities and discussion, listening to and discussing American popular music since 1950, and working to understand songwriting fundamentals and the connection between emotion, imagination and song. We will use Garageband, instruments, iPads, voices and other technological devices to record, create and arrange music. Students should expect to participate in group discussions, group projects, individual presentations, reading/article evaluations and field trips to evaluate and discuss the evolution of music in America.

### **Filmmaking and Video Production 1**

This course challenges students to use the tools of digital filmmaking in the production of original, creative, and thought-provoking work. The use of digital video cameras, lighting, microphones, audio editing software, video editing software, and postproduction techniques are introduced and taught through projects. Students are asked to produce several short original works in a range of genres that include animation, narrative, experimental, documentary, and performance/video art. In order to better understand time-based media, super 8mm film production, wet processing, and hand coloring are explored. In addition to making films, video, and audio works, the class spends time looking and analyzing a variety of films and videos by local, national and international artists. In the spring the class curates and produces the Flick Fest, an annual film festival that features work from Western New York and Southern Ontario student filmmakers. The students in the class work to launch the festival at the North Park Theatre. *Suggested prerequisites for this course are sophomore art electives Visual Thinking and Community.*

## Filmmaking and Video Production 2 and Screenwriting

This course builds on the Filmmaking and Video Production 1 class and further challenges students to use the tools of digital filmmaking in the production of original, creative, and thought-provoking work. The Advanced Filmmaking and Video Production 2 class explores the process and craft of screenwriting. The students analyze existing screenplays, and critique the resulting films during the first weeks of the course. The students write an original screenplay for a short narrative work in the first quarter. During the second quarter they produce their original work using students in the Filmmaking and Video Production 1 class as their crew. In the spring, the class experiments with 8mm film, video installation and curates and produces the Flick Fest, an annual film festival that features work from Western New York and Southern Ontario student filmmakers. The students in the class work to launch the festival at the North Park Theatre. *Prerequisites for this course are permission of the instructor, Visual Thinking and Community, or Filmmaking and Video Production 1. This course must also be taken concurrently with the senior English Elective, Criticism 1.*

## Photography

The photography course takes the application of image reproduction and photographic techniques and applies them to the very simple and complex techniques available to us. The course starts with black and white traditional darkroom photography for the first quarter, branching out in the second, third, and fourth quarters to introduce digital imaging, electronic transmission, studio photography, photojournalism, and image analysis and criticism. Emphasis is placed on development of a photographic portfolio that includes at least 25 quality works. *Students are encouraged to have either a 35mm or a digital SLR (single lens reflex) camera for this class.*

## Advanced Photography

Advanced Photography is a class for students who have a serious interest in photography even though they may not have any experience with formal photographic technique. This class moves quickly through the technical strategies involved in traditional and digital photography. The emphasis of this class is on developing original and individual expression through photography. Students are challenged to address each class project through the production of a series of photographs. As a final project, students are required to complete an in-depth investigation on one topic. Both digital and traditional photography is accepted for the final project. The class emphasizes building a portfolio of work, and is a suggested pre-requisite for the AP Studio Art class. *Students are encouraged to have either a 35mm or digital SLR (single lens reflex) camera for this class. Prerequisites for the Advanced Photography course are Visual Thinking and Community, or permission of the instructor.*

## A Study and Practice in Creativity

This full year course focuses on each student practicing creativity and taking a hands on approach to the processes used by creative role models in many fields. This course is for Seniors who have not had a junior year of arts or who have limited experience. Projects and class activities that encourage creative collaboration between peers is a fundamental method of learning. This interdisciplinary course provides the students with opportunities to engage in many creative projects. Additionally, students practice yoga fundamentals and stress reduction techniques. A relaxed mind is a creative mind. Artistic journaling, jewelry making, and reading about the creative process and creative individuals show students that we are all creative and have more unrecognized or unexplored skills to express these ideas than we realize. Creativity found in the arts, science, writing, and leadership is explored through media and internet resources.

## **AP Studio Art**

A capstone course, this class is for students that take their art making seriously, are highly motivated and self-reliant. The work of this class is to make art with fluency and conviction. Students must produce a living, breathing body of work. This class requires a lot of work and promises great reward and satisfaction for jobs well done. The class builds on techniques and concepts that students have acquired in past art courses in the production of new work. The major project in this class is the production of a series of 12 artworks based on a central interest. The 12 work concentration should develop a theme and challenge the maker and viewer with complex aesthetic and conceptual ideas. Work in this class can include photography, mixed media collage, digital art, painting, and drawing. The portfolio of work must be primarily two dimensional in nature. Students are required to complete a portfolio of at least 25 works. The portfolio includes a concentration (12 pieces), a breadth (12 pieces) and 5 works selected for quality. *Suggested prerequisites for this course are Advanced Photography, Visual Thinking and Community, Photography, Drawing, Painting.* Open to Juniors and Seniors.

## **Exploring Concepts in Drawing and Painting**

This course embraces multiple approaches to a topic by pushing the boundaries of medium and technique to explore ideas through visual communication. Students develop observational skills, explore expressive mark making, use color theory and gain hands on experience while creating a diverse and content rich portfolio. Multiple mediums are explored which may include various types of graphite, ink, printmaking, watercolor crayons, acrylic paint and charcoal as well as more experimental mediums. Students participate in class discussions, critiques, and group activities as well as create individual projects and keep a visual journal. Students may participate in one or more art service projects as part of the curriculum. Shorter projects introduce new concepts and build confidence before applying these ideas to extended student driven works. Conceptual units may include ideas of identity/portraiture, time/motion, and space. Students are introduced to multicultural and historical means of art making as well as being exposed to local artistic resources through multiple field trips throughout the year and workshops with visiting artists.

## **The Art of Craft**

This is a course for juniors and seniors with limited hands on experience, but an interest in making. Through the introduction of fine craft students explore carving, forming, sewing, printing, and weaving both utilitarian and decorative objects over the course of this year-long arts elective. Students actively create individual as well as group designed projects within a supportive and collaborative class community. Shorter projects introduce new concepts and build confidence before applying these ideas to extended student driven works. Emphasis is placed on the exploration of materials to express ideas. Students are introduced to multicultural and historical means of art making as well as being exposed to local artistic resources through multiple field trips throughout the year. Printmaking, fiber, sculpture, as well as installation are explored in the creation of both two and three dimensional projects. A visual journal is also kept.



## ENGLISH



# ENGLISH

The Nichols English program seeks to develop in our students the related skills of reading, thinking, speaking, and writing. Students achieve these goals through the study of literature at all grade levels in the Upper School. The English faculty expects and encourages students to read with close attention; to participate in a variety of discussion styles; to become aware of the linguistic nuances of the texts they read; and to incorporate the fruits of their reading, thinking, and speaking into well-crafted essays. The English program serves the purposes and objectives of Nichols School in several ways:

- Practicing the close, careful reading of literary texts, a skill transferable to texts in other academic disciplines.
- Developing students' ability to write clear and concise prose, which is equally valuable in other disciplines and in later life.
- Articulating ideas in the give-and-take of class discussion, a skill that helps to build students' confidence in their own ideas and values.
- Exposing students to the ethical and moral issues found in great literature, which intensifies students' awareness of these issues in life and in the wider world.
- Giving students experience with literature drawn from diverse viewpoints and identities.
- Revealing the pleasures of close and attentive reading, which require patience and a willingness to reflect and contemplate. We all require a "broad margin" to our lives and occasional havens of peace.

## Grade 9

### **Foundations of Literature**

Foundations is an introductory course in composition and world literature. The program in writing provides a review of paragraph structure and introduces short expository or analytical essays. In literature, readings in poetry and short fiction build critical attitudes and develop awareness of narrative points of view, tone, imagery, symbolism, and irony. Works studied include *The Odyssey*, The Old Testament, and *Julius Caesar*. The Advanced section signifies additional coursework.

## Grade 10

### **British and Postcolonial Literature**

This course focuses on the development of the literary tradition in the English language from the late medieval period to the 21st century. Extensive emphasis is placed on lyric poetry and drama; the second semester covers the emergence of prose fiction in both the novel and short forms. Students receive further instruction and practice in critical writing and continue to develop verbal and analytical skills. Works studied include *Hamlet*, the poetry of Donne, Milton, and Wordsworth, the 19<sup>th</sup> century novel, and 20<sup>th</sup> century writers of Britain and the Commonwealth. The Advanced section signifies additional coursework.

## Grade 11

### **American Literature**

Although the course reviews usage, mechanics, sentence structure, and organization, the most significant composition work takes place individually, as students revise and edit their own work through teacher's comments on papers or after individual conferences. Literature of the English Language II traces American literature from colonial times to the present day. Works studied include selected text by Hawthorne, *Huckleberry Finn*, *The Great Gatsby*, the poetry of Whitman, Dickinson, and Frost, and *Beloved*. The Junior Poetry Paper must be completed in order to pass this course.

### **AP English Literature and Composition**

This course is broadly similar to the American Literature course above, including the requirement for the Junior Poetry Paper. However, instruction is at an accelerated pace, and includes specific preparation for the AP English Literature and Composition exam.

**The course concludes with the expectation that all students will take the AP examination given in May.**

### **Grade 12 – Senior Electives**

#### **Topics in Literature and Criticism I and II**

This is the culmination of a student's progress in critical reading and in the development of a mature writing style. Students choose two single semester electives (see below) designed to delve deeply into a particular theme, author, or genre. All of the courses demand extensive reading, discussion, and writing. The Advanced section signifies additional coursework.

### **Fall Semester**

#### **Irish Literature**

This course is one of discovery and exploration of the rich and multi-textured literature of Ireland. Because the culture and history of Ireland is inextricable from the literature, the course necessarily introduces various faces of Irish life, past and present. The course cannot be an exhaustive study of Irish literature and history; it is an introduction. Most of the course is centered on contemporary Irish literature. As with all "introductions" to a National Literature, we attempt to diminish the myths and stereotypes of the Irish and Ireland to reveal its complex troubled history and dynamic culture.

#### **Criticism I**

Seniors in Criticism 1 will read many great essays by critics from Tolstoy onward, will learn to define different genres of film, and will learn the basic terms of film grammar in order to write their own critical essays. Students will submit 17-20 pages of critical writing in MLA style, including a midterm essay, a term paper, and five short response papers. This is a writing-intensive course!

#### **Jane Austin**

Though society has morphed in huge ways, people continue to find Jane Austen's works relevant. Harold Bloom, a great literary critic, calls Austen a "profound ironist." Students of this course will have the opportunity to experience Austen's brilliant wit alongside her stylistic prose and narrative techniques as they read *Emma* and *Pride and Prejudice*. They'll also have the opportunity to examine 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century writings that stem from this literary giant. Contemporary short stories from the collection *Jane Austen Made me Do it* and excerpts from the memoir *Confessions of a Jane Austen Addict* will provide fodder discussions. Of course, we'll have to examine both the period films as well as the contemporary ones. By the end of the course, students will have to decide why Austen still keeps pace with our society and where she fits in this era of Me Too; they'll also decide if they want to read further. Students taking this course for Advanced Credit will read an additional novel.

#### **African-American Literature**

This course will explore African-American Literature with an emphasis on the past 40-50 years. We will read writers such as Toni Morrison, Colson Whitehead, Octavia Butler, and Audre Lorde, as well as Yaa Gyasi, and Nnedi Okorafor.

## Salinger and Kerouac

The autobiographical fiction of Jack Kerouac and J.D. Salinger helped define a certain attitude of modern literature. The noted literary historian Daniel S. Burt suggests that "no other American novel written during the second half of the 20th century, with the possible exception of J.D. Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye*, is so heavily freighted with a cult or cultural significance as Jack Kerouac's revered, reviled, and all too often misunderstood *On the Road*." We examine these two writers from the perspective of their lesser known - but equally impressive - works. Texts include Salinger's *Franny and Zooey*, *Raise High The Roof Beam, Carpenters*, and *Seymour, An Introduction*, and Kerouac's *The Dharma Bums* and *Big Sur*.

## Introduction to the Study of Shakespeare I

This course is not just an introduction to Shakespeare. It's an introduction to the state of Shakespeare studies in the early twenty-first century. We'll look at the way actors, directors, and scholars work with Shakespeare's text today. There are several trends in Shakespeare study that are exciting and new. We'll try to take them into account as we do scholarly and theatrical work with Shakespeare's plays. During the course, we'll read original texts of four plays closely, and we'll use them to talk about different approaches to Shakespeare. We'll study and use the late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century rehearsal and performance techniques that would have been used by Shakespeare's own company, the King's Men. We'll do a teaching project in which you will develop and teach a lesson for younger students. You'll learn how to do academic Shakespeare scholarship by researching and writing a paper. Throughout the course, you'll develop and use skills of reading, writing, rehearsing, and acting. Students will be graded on their participation and for the various papers and projects in the course. Different grading rubrics will be used for each project.

## The Mythology of Ovid

During the reign of Rome's first emperor, Ovid became its most famous poet, but was banished suddenly and lived out his life in a dull town on the coast of the Black Sea. He never wrote any kind of poetry without breaking all the rules, and in the process pioneered new genres of literature. In this class, we study the *Metamorphoses*, his epic masterpiece of mythology. Many of the great myths are known to us only because Ovid wrote them down in this work. It is not merely a collection of myths, however, but a rich exploration of human experience, of love and gender, suffering and triumph, adventure and death. We explore its influence of Renaissance artists and writers such as Shakespeare, and discover why Ovid is undergoing a revival of popular and critical opinion.

## Spring Semester

### Creative Writing: Contemporary Short Fiction

This is a course aimed at promoting the enjoyment and appreciation of contemporary short fiction. Students are expected to make informed literary responses to the readings—a skill central to every course in the English Department—and to try their hands at the craft of writing the short story. This is not going to be a survey course, but instead concentrates on the works of some of the best known, and some lesser-known, writers working in the English language today. Though most of the artists are not those recognized as part of the more traditional academic canon, they invite rich academic study. The student understands how individual stories work, and how authors use the formal resources of narrative. The second aim of the course is to incite and nourish literary enthusiasms beyond the course's scope. The student also develops the ability to analyze texts within their social, political and cultural context. We also look at a few writers who are quite dead physically, but very much alive artistically.

## **Creative Non-Fiction**

Creative nonfiction is synonymous with memoir or autobiography. The conversation, however, has become one not necessarily about who a person is and what his or her experiences are, but how he or she tells her story. And inevitably, it often ends with a reader wondering how true is this? We begin with Stephen King's *On Writing* before moving into Annie Dillard's *An American Childhood*, Gretel Erlich's *The Solace of Open Spaces*, and Barry Lopez's *Arctic Dreams*. Essays also come from a collection of creative nonfiction essays titled *In Fact* (edited by Lee Gutkind). Students both read and write a great deal of creative nonfiction and must be open to whole class essay workshops. Each student also presents a creative nonfiction essay to the class.

## **Introduction to the Study of Shakespeare II**

Introduction to the Study of Shakespeare 2 is a continuation of Introduction to the Study of Shakespeare 1. It may be taken independently, or as the second half of a yearlong course. Shakespeare 2 will look at the ways in which Shakespeare study and performance continues to evolve in the twenty-first century. We'll read plays in class and act out scenes according to the original rehearsal and staging practices of Shakespeare's day. The course Shakespeare 2 will pay special attention to Shakespeare education. To that end, we'll read Ralph Alan Cohen's text *Shakespeare and How to Cure It*. This book is a contemporary guide to Shakespeare education by the director of the American Shakespeare Center. We'll also use the ASC method of reading and interpreting plays for staged performance. Throughout the course, you'll develop and use skills of reading, writing, rehearsing, and acting. Students will be graded on their participation and for the various papers and projects in the course. Different grading rubrics will be used for each project.

## **Literary Monsters**

In this course, we will address our obsession with horror. We will consider some of the monsters of poetry, short fiction, novels, illustration, and film, addressing the various uses of the literary monster, as well as some of the most popular of our contemporary monsters: vampires and werewolves. We will pay some attention to the romance-monster hybrid. We may read *Beowulf*, Shelley's *Frankenstein*, Rossetti's "Goblin Market," Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, as well as work by Anne Sexton and Angela Carter. Our study should bring us to consideration of Stephanie Meyers, Jonathan Stroud, and that now-cult-classic, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*. We could even consider *Beowulf* with the new reconception, *The Mere Wife*, a modern retelling from the perspective of Grendel's mother, a veteran of the Iraq war.

## **The Writing of John McPhee**

Since 1963, John McPhee has written more than one hundred pieces for *The New Yorker*. He is described as "one of the most prolific non-fiction writers of our time. He's written about the famous (for instance, the young Bill Bradley in *A Sense of Where You Are*) and famously about pursuits of the common man." McPhee currently serves as the Ferris Professor of Journalism at Princeton University, where he has taught since 1974. This course explores "the most versatile journalist in America" and his best works of creative non-fiction.

Readings: *The John McPhee Reader*, *The Second John McPhee Reader*

## ***Anna Karenina***

Leo Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina* is often called the greatest novel ever written. It is a sprawling work of realism set in a world of princes and palaces in 19<sup>th</sup> century Russia, which is inhabited by some of literature's greatest characters. We follow Anna as she is drawn into a love affair and finds herself caught between her own desires and society's

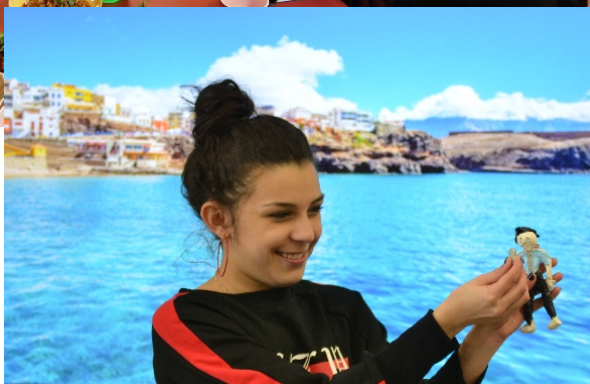
restrictive demands on women. The title is misleading, however, because the novel contains several other major plot lines, with men and women struggling to decide what to make of their lives, characters who nearly come to life through Tolstoy's unparalleled descriptive powers and remain with readers forever. Through close reading and response papers, students in this class will come to understand Tolstoy's great achievement.

### **Postmodern Approaches to Literature, Art, Film, and Social Media**

Text and images bombard us every day. In order to organize all of this information and experience, we rely on "metanarratives"—grand, underlying stories that help us to organize and understand all of the little stories. So, for example, if we understand the "hero's journey" metanarrative, we might appreciate it as the basic story template underlying the movie *Star Wars* or the myth of King Arthur, *Wonder Woman* or *The Lord of the Rings*. Likewise, if we grasp the basic story template of capitalism, we probably rely on it when we read *The Great Gatsby* or watch *The Godfather*. Even when we do not consciously think about them, metanarratives point us toward some sort "universal truth." They organize our lives. French theorist Jean-Francois Lyotard points out, however, that we can approach these metanarratives, or grand stories, with skepticism. By identifying and questioning the metanarratives underlying works of literature, art, or film, we become free to critique the text and images all around us.



## MODERN AND CLASSICAL LANGUAGES



# MODERN AND CLASSICAL LANGUAGES

We teach modern and classical languages in order to bring to our students the intellectual, personal, and cultural benefits of learning new means of communication. Students, in learning a language, come to understand the structure underlying all language, including their own. Language study increases mental agility and leads to growth in one's powers of reasoning, memory, and creative thinking. Language study allows one to go beyond oneself to experience the new and different, and to courageously confront and surpass personal limitations. It nurtures adaptability and openness. Through the medium of language, students come to know and appreciate the richness of other cultures in our increasingly interdependent world. By encouraging the free exchange of ideas, the development of articulate expression, and the incorporation of both contemporary and time-tested thinking in other languages, we help equip our students to learn from the past, to participate in the complex world of today, and to shape the future.

## **Mandarin I**

This course begins with an introduction and an overview of both the phonetic and writing system of Mandarin Chinese. After extensive drill of the phonetic system, listening and speaking skills are cultivated through the acquisition of vocabulary, memorization of dialogues of natural speech and extensive drill of pattern structures. Learning to read the traditional form of characters and to write simplified forms of characters is the second phase after an oral foundation has been established. Appreciation of Mandarin culture is cultivated through readings and appropriate activities.

## **Mandarin II / Advanced Mandarin II**

A continuation of Mandarin I, Mandarin II is designed to increase vocabulary and strengthen grammar. The course focuses more on integration of oral and written skills. The class is principally conducted in Mandarin, and students are required to use Mandarin as much as possible. Additional aspects of Mandarin culture are introduced through readings, film and speakers.

## **Mandarin III**

Mandarin III continues to sharpen students' oral and writing skills by increasing the volume of vocabulary, mastering more complex sentence patterns and writing compositions. Mandarin culture is further explored through reading pieces in various genres, making oral presentations, learning songs and watching/discussing films.

## **Advanced Mandarin III**

Advanced Mandarin III stresses the development of the four basic language skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. It focuses on grammar, building up vocabulary and mastering complex sentence structure and the improvement of writing skills. Students who successfully complete the Advanced Mandarin III generally go on to the Advanced Placement course and exam in Mandarin during senior year.

## **Mandarin IV**

Mandarin IV is designed for students who have already completed Mandarin III. It focuses on the continued development of the four major communicative skills. Students read articles that deal with a variety of historical and contemporary elements. Classes are conducted predominately in the target language. Students have more opportunities to do oral presentations.

## **Advanced Mandarin IV**

Advanced Mandarin IV is designed for students who have already completed Advanced Mandarin III. Students will read longer articles with a variety of historical and contemporary elements, write longer essays and have more opportunities to do research projects and oral presentations. Classes are conducted predominately in Mandarin. Students who successfully complete the Advanced Mandarin IV class will go on to AP class in senior year.

## **AP Chinese Language**

The AP Chinese Language course is designed to help fine-tune and improve students' reading, writing, listening and speaking skills in Mandarin in preparation for the exam taken in May. AP Chinese Language is an advanced course and the work done in this class is reflective of that which is done in an intermediate college course. We review grammar as needed, acquire a wide range of new vocabulary and idiomatic expressions and read selections of prose and poetry written by Mandarin authors. We also read newspaper and magazine articles and listen to radio broadcasts in Mandarin to keep abreast of what is happening in the Mandarin-speaking communities in the U.S. and internationally. *Prerequisite: Completion of Mandarin IV and recommendation of the Department.* **The AP exam is a requirement of the course.**

## **Mandarin V**

The Mandarin V course is designed for students who have already completed Mandarin IV. The class will focus on learning cultural topics such as Mandarin Arts, Famous Mandarin People, current events in China, etc. The class is mainly conducted in Mandarin, and video clips will be used as authentic resources to support student learning. Students will do research on cultural topics, and will write and orally present on these topics. *Prerequisite: Completion of Mandarin IV and recommendation of the Department.*

## **French I**

French I is an introductory course for all students beginning their study of French. Through the acquisition and practice of the four language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing, the course aims to develop functional proficiency -- the language skills necessary to handle communication tasks and social situations in a culturally correct manner. Students work on acquiring a wide range of vocabulary, and on mastery of verbs, both regular and irregular, in the present tense. The compound past tense is introduced in the second semester. Students are introduced to and work on appreciating and reproducing both formal and informal levels of language. A new textbook and materials include a very developed Internet component which allows students unlimited listening, speaking and vocabulary practice on their own from any Internet-connected computer.

## **French II**

French II continues the work of the French I course. The course work again centers around the four language skills. Vocabulary development expands and students thoroughly review the present and compound past tenses. The remaining indicative tenses, both simple and compound, are presented, and the study of grammar structures intensifies with an emphasis on reflexive verbs and pronouns. Class activities emphasize speaking and listening activities.

## **Advanced French II**

The Advanced French sequence comprises Freshman and Sophomore-level courses emphasizing grammar study and vocabulary building. Students who successfully complete Nichols' Advanced French sequence generally go on to the Advanced Placement course and exam in French language during Junior year. Students in Advanced French II review and work on present and past tenses, reflexive verbs and pronouns, among other grammar topics. Cultural topics and short-subject films provide a theme for each chapter's extensive vocabulary. Students are introduced to expository writing in Advanced French II. *Prerequisite: Recommendation of the Department.*

## **French III**

French III continues the sequence of instruction begun in Levels I and II. The Level I and II grammar work is reviewed in advanced form as part of each chapter's work. Vocabulary-building continues with review and expansion of vocabulary topics from French I and II and with the addition of new topics. Students learn to use the subjunctive and conditional modes and to express actions in the future tense. Readings are literary, historical and cultural at this level. Level III, regular or advanced, is the final required course in French. Students successfully completing French III may elect to continue in French IV.

### **Advanced French III**

Students in Advanced French III continue the grammar and vocabulary work begun in Advanced French II. Verb tense review and practice is constant. Students learn the remaining indicative tenses and the two subjunctive tenses. Other grammar topics include review of all pronouns, adjective, adverbs, prepositions and the passive voice. Writing assignments are lengthier than those in Advanced French II leading up to working on essay-writing. Level III, regular or advanced, is the final required course in French, although students in the Advanced section generally elect to continue in the Advanced Placement course as Juniors. *Prerequisite: Recommendation of the Department*

### **French IV / V**

This course is divided into 4 quarter-long electives that deal with a variety of historical and contemporary elements of francophone study. The course focuses on the continued development of the four major communicative skills while offering the students a unique opportunity to study one particular topic in depth. *Prerequisite: Completion of French III and recommendation of the Department.*

### **AP: French Language**

AP French concentrates on further developing the four language skills in order to prepare the students for the College Board Advanced Placement exam in French Language given in early May. The AP exam in French is divided into four equal parts, one part for each of the language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Classes are conducted predominantly in the target language, the major exception being grammar study. Works of literature and other authentic documents make up the reading material. Internet resources are increasingly available both as reading and as listening-practice material. Essay-writing is also an ongoing part of the work in AP French. Speaking practice in class is required of all participants. Students in AP are strongly encouraged to participate in Nichols' French Exchange Program if they have not already done so. *Prerequisite: Completion of Advanced French III and recommendation of the Department.* **The AP exam is a requirement of the course.**

### **Advanced French V: Current Events**

This course deals with a variety of current events and global realities through a francophone lens. This course is designed for students who have completed the AP French course and are interested in perfecting their fluency in a fast-paced learning environment. The individual courses focus on the continued development of the four major communicative skills while offering the students a unique opportunity to study their role as global citizens. Students who have completed French IV AP or French IV are eligible to take this course. *Prerequisite: Completion of Advanced Placement French and recommendation of the Department.*

### **Latin I**

In this course students are introduced to basic elements of Latin grammar and begin to build a vocabulary in Latin through the reading of stories about Roman history and mythology. Students also learn to recognize the patterns of word derivation from Latin to English and the Romance languages. They investigate ancient Roman life and culture, and explore many facets of Greek mythology.

### **Latin II / Advanced Latin II**

Students continue to master fundamental Latin grammar, to broaden their vocabulary, and to further their understanding of the etymology of English words derived from Latin. We now begin to read selected stories from Latin literature and short poems in Latin. Ancient Roman life and culture, and Greek mythology, are also important topics in this course.

### **Latin III / Advanced Latin III**

This course completes the sequence of grammar lessons and continues the study of mythology, word etymology and derivation, and Roman culture and life. The development of a broad vocabulary and a strong facility in reading Latin is a significant goal of the course. Students now begin reading selections, in both prose and poetry, from various Roman writers on a wide range of perennially vital topics including love, leadership, and heroism.

### **Advanced Latin IV / Advanced Latin V**

This course offers advanced work in Latin prose literature. The primary focus will be on reading Julius Caesar's commentaries and studying their historical context, but students will also read selections from other important prose authors, including Cicero, Sallust, and Livy, as well as various inscriptions and documents from the ancient world. Students will study the history, geography, art and daily life of ancient Rome. This course will prepare students for the AP Latin course. *Prerequisite: Completion of Latin III and recommendation of the Department.*

### **AP Latin: Caesar and Vergil**

AP Latin prepares students for the AP Latin exam on Vergil's Aeneid and Caesar's Gallic War. The class reads a portion of the Aeneid and the Gallic War in Latin, and portions of both works in English translation. They furthermore aim to develop a high level of skill in reading authentic Latin literary texts, in both prose and poetry, from a variety of genres and authors. They also gain familiarity with the mythology of the Trojan War and the history of Rome through the reign of Augustus. *Prerequisite: Successful completion of Latin III and recommendation of the Department.* **The AP exam is a requirement of the course.**

### **Spanish I**

Spanish I provides an introduction to the four basic skills of language and communication: speaking, listening, writing and reading. Acquisition of cultural knowledge is also emphasized at this level. Students focus on subject-verb and noun-adjective agreement, the essential building blocks of all sentences. The present tense, gender and number agreement, an introduction to the preterit and basic vocabulary elements complete the course work.

### **Spanish II**

Spanish II continues to stress the development of the four basic language skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Emphasis is placed on oral communication and interaction, and students are expected to use the spoken language extensively in class. Content consists of structured reading assignments, as well as grammar-vocabulary activities and cultural awareness units. Students learn and practice the present, past, future, and conditional tenses.

### **Advanced Spanish II**

Advanced Spanish II is designed for students who possess strong linguistic skills and dedication to the study of languages. This course covers the same material as Spanish II at a faster pace, with greater attention to reading, and more frequent writing assignments. They also master the various command forms and are introduced to the formation and use of the present subjunctive. Students are selected for the course by the department members, based on ability and commitment to the language. *Prerequisite: Recommendation of the Department.*

### **Spanish III**

Spanish III completes the introduction of advanced grammar points, and requires the students to communicate successfully in challenging conversational situations. The students continue to refine their use of the spoken and written language through a multiplicity of drills, compositions, and oral-aural techniques. The course is conducted primarily in Spanish. The students read short stories and articles on historical and cultural information. Written work gradually becomes more complex as students master the use of all verb tenses and moods, in addition to completing an in-depth study of the formation and use of the present and the imperfect subjunctive.

### **Advanced Spanish III**

This course is conducted almost entirely in Spanish. Students are expected to express themselves exclusively in Spanish both in oral and written work. It is designed for students with strong linguistic skills and dedication to the language. It is taught at a faster pace, with a more extensive reading list and more frequent writing assignments. This course introduces literature through short stories, poetry and drama by Spanish and Latin-American authors. The department selects the students for the

advanced section based on ability and commitment to the language. *Prerequisite: Recommendation of the Department.*

### **Spanish IV**

This course increases student proficiency in language skills, requires frequent class participation, readings in Spanish, writing, and the use of recorded material. Language usage is stressed, as well as a thorough review of grammar. The course is taught predominantly in Spanish, and examines the history and society of Spain and other Hispanic countries. *Prerequisite: Completion of Spanish III and recommendation of the Department.*

### **Honors Spanish IV**

This course is designed for students who have already completed Spanish Level III. This course alternates between readings of short stories, short film analysis, and the review of selected grammar concepts at an intermediate/advanced level. Class activities emphasize oral and written communication; therefore, active participation in the target language and careful homework completion are essential to do well in this class. This class is taught entirely in Spanish. *Prerequisite: Completion of Advanced Spanish III and recommendation of the Department.*

### **AP Spanish Language**

The Advanced Placement Spanish Language course is for students who have demonstrated proficiency in composition, conversation, and grammar. This course concentrates on further developing the four communicative skills. Classes are conducted entirely in Spanish, and emphasize advanced work in grammar, progressive vocabulary building, reading advanced works of literature and other authentic documents. Intensive writing and extensive speaking stress both formal and informal types of situations. *Prerequisite: Completion of Advanced Spanish III and recommendation of the Department.* **This class prepares the students for the May AP examination, a requirement for this course.**

### **Spanish V: Youth Culture**

The Spanish V: Youth Culture course will examine a variety of themes relevant to the culture of teenagers and young adults across the Hispanic world. Students will engage in a study of music, movies, daily regimen, attitudes and initiatives and popular style. Students will engage in weekly presentations and daily conversations to develop their productive and receptive auditory skills. They will also write reviews, summaries and opinions and share these with their classmates. In this way all four linguistic skills will receive frequent attention. *Prerequisite: Completion of Spanish IV or Spanish 3 ADV, and recommendation of the Department.*

### **Advanced Spanish V: Contemporary Film and Culture**

This is an advanced senior course taught entirely in Spanish and structured around a selected topic each quarter. The course focuses on the continued development of the four communicative skills and on the understanding of Latin American and Spanish culture through various forms of representation. Therefore, in this course students read a variety of works of literature (about 60% of the course), watch and discuss films and other audiovisual material, as well as discuss cultural events published on media outlets. *Prerequisite: Completion of Spanish IV AP or Honors, and recommendation of the Department.*

### **Cultures of the Spanish-Speaking World**

This course fosters language proficiency while teaching new vocabulary and grammar explicitly through the study of Spanish-speaking cultures. New grammar concepts are communicated and existing grammar is strengthened topically as students study Spanish culture (family values, etiquette, religion, holidays, celebrations, media, and food) both in the United States and around the world. The course is taught primarily in Spanish. Students are expected to participate within the target language and are assessed based on class discussions, homework assignments, quizzes, and projects. *Prerequisite: Completion of Spanish III and the recommendation of the department.*



## HISTORY



# HISTORY

The study of history is a cornerstone of a liberal arts education. History provides an appreciation of the past, its peoples and its cultures. The study of history offers unique opportunities to understand the human condition and the processes of change. These skills are necessary for the development of citizenship in a democratic republic. History allows for the development of a range of skills including reading, writing, interpretative analysis, and critical thinking. Research is an integral part of historical scholarship and requires familiarity with current technologies for investigation and communication.

## Grade 9

### **Ancient World History**

This course is a survey course tracing the development of civilization from the Neolithic Revolution to the emergence of the modern world around 1500 CE. Emphasis is placed on an examination of the ancient civilizations of Egypt, Mesopotamia, India, China, Greece, Rome & the medieval Mediterranean. A strong emphasis is also placed on the development of key skills through a multifaceted program of instruction. Instruction emphasizes technology and media skills and fosters development of critical thinking and reading. Special attention is also paid to analyzing and interpreting primary sources as a key to understanding history. Finally, connections to contemporary world issues is a critical aspect of this course, promoting historical understanding as well as global awareness. The Advanced section signifies additional coursework.

## Grade 10

### **Modern World History**

This course is framed as a continuation of our 9<sup>th</sup> grade course in Ancient World History. The course begins with the end of the Middle Ages in Europe, and continues to the present. Topics include the rise of nation-states, the era of colonization, the Atlantic slave trade, social and intellectual developments, the 20<sup>th</sup> century (World Wars, dictatorships, and the Cold War), and the Age of Terrorism. This course encompasses the history of five geographic regions of the globe: Africa, the Americas, Asia, Europe, and Oceania, with special focus on historical developments and processes that cross multiple regions. Critical reading is expected and analytical writing is developed. Students learn to work with primary documents and refine research skills.

### **AP Modern World History**

AP Modern World History focuses on developing students' abilities to think conceptually about world history from approximately 1200 CE to the present and apply historical thinking skills about the past. Five themes prevail in this course: focusing on the environment, cultures, state-building, economic systems, and social structures. This course encompasses the history of five geographic regions of the globe: Africa, the Americas, Asia, Europe, and Oceania, with special focus on historical developments and processes that cross multiple regions. **The course concludes with the expectation that all students will take the AP examination given in May.**

## Grade 11

### **United States History**

Students take a course with two major components. The first is a chronological coverage of American history from the Colonial period to the present. In the second

component, students examine in depth critical themes of American history. Critical writing and analytical skills are emphasized. So, too, is historiography, the analysis of how historians have viewed controversial events, trends, or people in history. In the second semester, the Junior History Paper, a major 2,000 to 3,000-word research paper is required. Topics are introduced in the spring at the teacher's discretion, and the process of completing a major research paper becomes the focus of the third quarter.

### **AP US History**

AP U.S. History is designed to be the equivalent of a two-semester introductory college or university U.S. history course. In AP U.S. History students investigate significant events, individuals, developments, and processes in nine historical periods from approximately 1491 to the present. Students develop and use the same skills, practices, and methods employed by historians: analyzing primary and secondary sources; making historical comparisons; utilizing reasoning about contextualization, causation, and continuity and change over time; and developing historical arguments. The course also provides seven themes that students explore throughout the course in order to make connections among historical developments in different times and places: American and national identity; migration and settlement; politics and power; work, exchange, and technology; America in the world; geography and the environment; and culture and society." The Junior History Paper is a requirement of this class. **The course concludes with the expectation that all students will take the AP examination given in May.**

## **Senior Electives**

### **AP Economics**

This course is a study of the major concepts of economics, using the A.P. curriculum as a guide. The course begins with a focus on the basic concepts of economics, providing a foundation for the rest of the course. For most of the first semester, the course examines basic economic principles and macroeconomics. The purpose of this half of the course is to give students a thorough understanding of the principles of economics that apply to an economic system. There is an emphasis on the study of national income and price-level determination, while developing students' familiarity with economic performance measures, the financial sector, stabilization policies, economic growth, and international economics. Through an examination of macroeconomic perspectives and ideas, students have a better understanding of economics on the national and international level, and relate them to everyday examples and applications in the classroom. The second semester focuses on microeconomics. Students examine the principles of economics that apply to the functions of individual decision-makers, both consumers and producers, within the economic system. An emphasis is placed on the nature and functions of product markets, including the study of factor markets and of the role of government in promoting greater efficiency and equity in the economy. Both semesters culminate in a comprehensive examination. A macroeconomics examine is given at mid-year and a microeconomics exam is given at the end of the year. *In order to take this senior elective, students must acquire a recommendation from the History Department.* **This course concludes with the expectation that all students will take either the AP Macroeconomics or AP Microeconomics exam given in May.**

### **AP Modern European History**

AP European History is designed to be the equivalent of a two-semester introductory college or university European history course. In AP European History students investigate significant events, individuals, developments, and processes in four historical periods from approximately 1450 to the present. Students develop and use the same skills, practices, and methods employed by historians: analyzing historical evidence; contextualization; comparison; causation; change and continuity over time; and argument development. The course also provides six themes that students explore

throughout the course in order to make connections among historical developments in different times and places: interaction of Europe and the world; poverty and prosperity; objective knowledge and subjective visions; states and other institutions of power; individual and society; and national and European identity." *In order to take this senior elective, students must acquire a recommendation from the History Department.* **The course concludes with the expectation that all students will take the AP examination given in May.**

### **AP Government & Politics**

There are two segments to this course, which examine government and politics. The first semester of the course begins with a general study of the American political system, taking a look at the constitutional and federal context of the national government as well as the cultural and ideological backdrop against which this system operates. It provides students with an analytical perspective on government and politics in the U.S., including both the study of general concepts used to interpret U.S. government and politics and the analysis of specific examples. The course also provides familiarity with the various institutions, groups, beliefs, and ideas that constitutes U.S. government and politics. The second semester of this course focuses on comparative government and politics. This segment of the course provides students with a global perspective as they compare and contrast different political systems throughout the world. Students examine a variety of countries from Europe, North America, Africa, and Asia, focusing on political institutions and behaviors, and drawing conclusions about the impact that these countries have on each other and the global community. Students also explore the following topics: the concept of sovereignty, political institutions, the relationship between citizenship, state, and society, political and economic change, as well as public policy. By examining both U.S. Government and Politics and Comparative Government and Politics, students have a solid foundation in understanding how the government and countries interact and impact each other. Growing out of this, students also have a solid foundation in understanding how different governing systems work, providing the students with important perspectives and insights into the global community. This course requires an extensive commitment from students if they want to be successful. Daily preparation, attention to detail, refinement of written work, and a commitment to work in class is vital to all students in this course. There are periodic tests and quizzes as well as two exams, one at mid-year and another at the end of the year. *In order to take this senior elective, students must acquire a recommendation from the History Department.* **This course concludes with the expectation that all students will take either the AP US Government & Politics or AP Comparative Government & Politics exam given in May.**

### **AP Psychology**

This course is designed to introduce students to the systematic and scientific study of the behavior and mental processes of human beings and other animals. Students are exposed to the psychological facts, principles, and phenomena associated with each of the major subfields within psychology. They also learn about the ethics and methods psychologists use in their science and practice. Major topics include history and approaches, research methods, biological bases of behavior, sensation and perception, states of consciousness, learning, cognition, motivation and emotion, developmental psychology, personality, testing and individual differences, abnormal psychology, treatment of psychological disorders, and social psychology. *In order to take this senior elective, students must acquire a recommendation from the History Department.* **This course concludes with the expectation that all students will take the AP exam given in May.**

### **Entrepreneurial Studies**

This class analyzes the problems of real start-up companies and asks students to present solutions and creative ideas to business owners over a short time frame. Students work in teams to brainstorm, research, interview, and propose ideas to help business owners. After working on two or three real business problems, students explore the steps necessary to create a new start-up. The course combines theoretical and experiential learning to prepare students to transform knowledge into practice. Students benefit as they learn to think critically, make well-informed decisions, innovate, and communicate effectively in today's high-tech, fast changing world.

### **Service and Social Justice**

Do you feel called to serve others? Is the idea of making a difference important to you? Are you interested in social change? Are you bothered by injustice? Do you suspect that there is more to a good education and a good life than only individualistic or self-centered pursuits? If you answer "yes" or "maybe" to any of the above questions, Service and Social Justice (SSJ) is for you. SSJ is a course that will be at turns experiential, academic, and personal. The experiential part of this course centers on hands-on service learning experiences both here at school and out in our Western New York community, where we will often find ourselves off campus partnering with local nonprofit organizations. The academic part of SSJ will, through reading, writing, film, guest speakers, and class participation, encourage students to participate in the ongoing discussions and debates surrounding service and social justice. Finally, the personal aspect of this course will ask students to reflect on their experiences in the classroom and out in the community, to keep a service journal, and to arrive at a personal ethic of service that might help to shape, enrich, and give meaning to their lives after Nichols. Through all of this work, students will gain practical skills while also arriving at a deeper understanding of injustices such as homelessness, the ongoing refugee crisis, economic, racial, and gender inequities, environmental degradation and pollution, poverty, unequal access to healthcare, and hunger. At its heart, then, SSJ aims to fulfill our shared Nichols commitment to "train minds, bodies, and hearts for the work of life."

### **Modern American Landscapes**

Modern American Landscape is an interdisciplinary approach to understanding aspects of the modern world around us. We will use historical and literary texts to, in the words of Harvard historian John Stilgoe, "unlock essential landscape." Stilgoe continues: "Looking around, walking and noticing and thinking, putting words to things, especially simple things, enables and empowers and pleases: discovering landscape is inexpensive, good exercise for body and mind, and leads to satisfying and often surprising discovery." Selected texts will include those by Stilgoe, J. B. Jackson, Helen Horowitz, Robert Moor, and others. *Although interdisciplinary in approach, this course does not fulfill Senior English credits.*



## MATHEMATICAL SCIENCES



# MATHEMATICAL SCIENCES

The goals of the mathematics program at Nichols are for students to master algebraic skills, understand algebraic methods, reason graphically and analytically, and use mathematics in solving everyday problems. For each course, the students are divided into levels based on their backgrounds and abilities. Courses at all levels make use of graphing calculators and appropriate computer software.

## Grade 9

### **Integrated Algebra I and Geometry**

This full year course provides an introductory geometry course integrated with an intensive review of elementary algebra. Intended for students whose background in algebra needs additional support, this course covers many of the concepts of a traditional geometry course, however, it places less emphasis on formal proof in favor of algebraic computation and manipulation.

### **Geometry**

Geometry explores congruency, similarity, transformations, convex polygons, area, and volume. Students are also introduced to the presentation of ideas in the format of formal and informal proof. In order to cement skills studied in Algebra I, the course utilizes the coordinate plane and algebraic descriptions of geometric properties. At all levels, the course employs exploration and discovery in addition to traditional lecture. The Honors and Advanced sections presume greater proficiency with elementary algebra; these sections study vectors and transformations with greater depth and rigor.

## Grade 10

### **Integrated Geometry and Algebra II**

Integrated Geometry and Algebra II continues the exploration of the principles of plane and solid geometry through the lens of algebraic problem solving. The course gives students the opportunity to cement fundamentals from an introductory algebra course while advancing their command of geometric reasoning. The course also introduces several algebraic techniques typically studied in a second year algebra course.

### **Algebra II**

Algebra II develops computational proficiency while studying absolute value, linear and quadratic equations and expressions, systems of equations and inequalities. Function notation is introduced. Utilizing equations to model real world applications is emphasized. The Honors and Advanced sections study additional topics including polynomial, rational, power and root equations.

## Grade 11

### **Integrated Algebra II and Trigonometry**

This full course advances students' understanding and facility with algebraic methods of problem solving while preparing students to study more abstract topics in mathematics. The course includes an intensive review of trigonometry in triangles and also introduces the study of analytic trigonometry. This third course in the integrated sequence continues to emphasize concrete applications of mathematical concepts.

### **Pre-Calculus**

This course utilizes the fundamental concepts and mechanical algebraic skills developed in Algebra II to study Analytic Trigonometry and advanced algebraic concepts. Topics

include polynomial, rational, trigonometric, exponential, and logarithmic functions. As time permits, additional topics of study include matrices, polar coordinates, parametric equations, vectors, sequences, series, probability, and analytic geometry. The Honors and Advanced sections signify additional course work.

\*Completion of *Integrated Algebra II and Trigonometry* or *Pre-Calculus* satisfies the graduation requirement in Mathematical Sciences.

## **Mathematics Electives:**

### **Introduction to Computer Programming**

A computer program is a set of instructions that tells a computer how to accomplish a given task. Computer programming is the art and science of planning and implementing computer programs. This course is designed as an introduction to both hardware and software programming. The course begins with basic components of a computer, machine representation of data, number systems, and an introduction to digital electronics through logic gates. The course also introduces the syntax and style of a high level programming language such as C++ or Java. The course stresses the nature and design of algorithms, top-down and object-oriented design, and coding and debugging skills. Topics include data types, file and screen input and output, conditional statements, iterations, recursion, subroutines, arrays, and if time permits pointers and data structures. Students who do well in mathematics and have a possible interest in pursuing careers in any math or science area should consider taking this course. *Prerequisite: An interest in computers, logic, and digital electronics with completion of Geometry with a Grade of C or better and permission from the Department.*

### **AP Statistics**

AP Statistics introduces students to the major concepts and tools for collecting, analyzing, and drawing conclusions from data. Students are exposed to four broad conceptual themes: i) Exploring data: Observing patterns and departures from patterns ii) Planning a Study: Deciding what and how to measure iii) Anticipating patterns: Producing models using probability theory and simulation iv) Statistical Inference: Confirming models. *Prerequisites: Completion of Algebra II with a Grade of C+ or better and permission from the Department.* **The AP exam is a requirement of the course.**

### **AP Computer Science A**

This second course in computer programming is intended for students who have successfully completed the Introduction to Computer Programming course and wish to continue their studies. The language focus for the second year course is Java. At the completion of the course, students have sufficient programming experience in Java and computer science knowledge to take the Advanced Placement A examination in Computer Science. *Prerequisite: Introduction to Computer Programming.* **The AP exam is a requirement of the course.**

### **Data Structures and Topics**

This third course is a continuation of study in computer science. The intention of the course is not only to study certain data structures and their associated algorithms, but also to study topics that are of student interest, such as GUI and applets. *Prerequisite: AP Computer Science A.*

## Senior Mathematics Electives:

Registration for VI Form electives requires completion of *Pre-Calculus or Integrated Algebra II and Trigonometry* with a grade of C+ or better. Students whose grades do not support further study in mathematics may be required to do summer work if they wish to register for a mathematics elective.

### **Pre-Calculus**

This course utilizes the fundamental concepts and mechanical algebraic skills developed in Algebra II to study Analytic Trigonometry and advanced algebraic concepts. Topics include polynomial, rational, trigonometric, exponential, and logarithmic functions. As time permits, additional topics of study include matrices, polar coordinates, parametric equations, vectors, sequences, series, probability, and analytic geometry.

### **Differential Calculus**

While promoting a deeper understanding of the abstract notion of Function, this course concurrently introduces the fundamentals of Differential Calculus including Limits, the Difference quotient, the Derivative and its applications. The course is organized around families of function with particular attention to polynomial, exponential, logarithmic and trigonometric functions. Prerequisites: *Completion of Pre-Calculus or completion of Integrated Algebra II and Trigonometry with additional summer work and permission of the department*

### **Honors Differential and Integral Calculus**

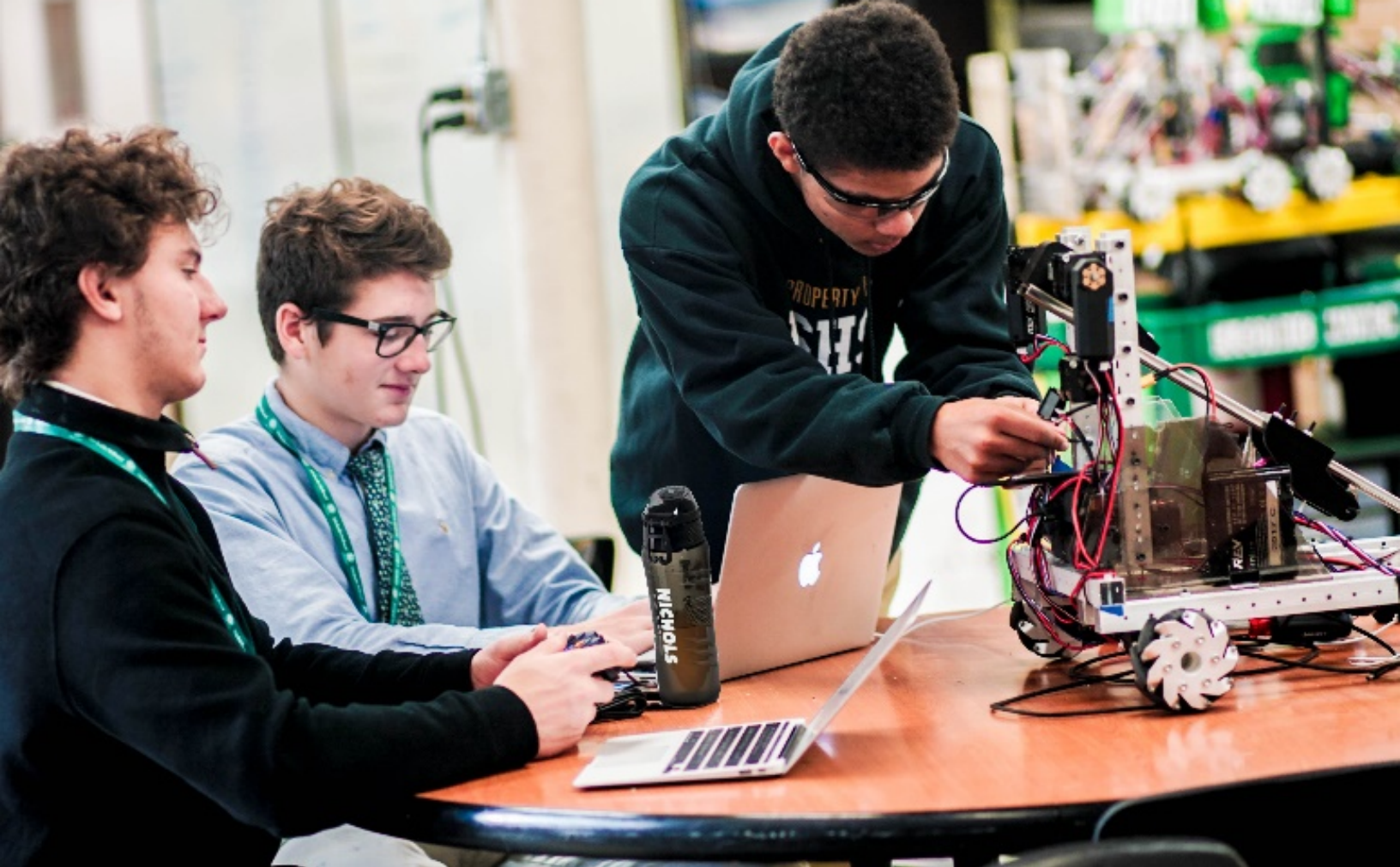
This full year course introduces qualified students to the fundamentals of calculus. Topics from differential calculus include slopes of secant and tangent lines, the definition and interpretation of the derivative, applications of the derivative including related rates, optimization and linearization. Topics from the integral calculus include techniques of integration and utilizing integration to find area, distance, and volume. Prerequisites: *Completion of Honors Pre-Calculus and permission of the Department.*

### **AP Calculus AB**

AP Calculus AB covers all the material presented in Calculus, however it is studied in greater depth and with more emphasis on theory as opposed to computation. Additional topics covered include Mean Value Theorem, volumes by known cross-section, slope fields and differential equations. Prerequisites: *Completion of Honors Pre-Calculus and permission of the Department.* **The AP exam is a requirement of the course.**

### **AP Calculus BC**

AP Calculus BC covers all the topics in AP Calculus AB but in greater depth. Additionally, students in BC also study Rolle's Theorem, Taylor series, L'hôpital's rule, polar coordinates, arc length, surface area, vectors, and parametric equations. Prerequisites: *Completion of Advanced Pre-Calculus or Advanced Algebra II and permission of the Department.* **The AP exam is a requirement of the course.**



## SCIENCE



# SCIENCE

The goal of the Nichols science program is for students to acquire and use the tools of methodical scientific inquiry and explore the relationships between science, society and the natural world. Students will learn how to identify and ask original scientific questions, and rigorously answer those questions with evidence-based, reasoned conclusions. In addition, students will gain mastery of foundational scientific concepts. We particularly value the promotion of innovation and curiosity, crossing traditional disciplinary boundaries, and multiple modes of communication.

## Grade 9

### **Physics**

The science department believes that a firm understanding of the natural laws that govern the universe is essential to further studies in science. This is a conceptually and mathematically rigorous course that allows students to understand the principles that govern the phenomena they witness in their everyday lives. Extensive and original laboratory work forms a cornerstone of this course. Students explore the concepts of motion, forces, momentum, energy, static electricity, electric circuits, and magnetism. The advanced section covers similar content at a faster pace with more advanced mathematics and higher levels of abstraction.

## Grade 10

### **Chemistry**

Chemistry is a broad science. Knowledge and awareness of chemical principles are important in understanding other fields of science and touches on virtually every aspect of life. Chemistry is a subject that explains the fundamental principles involved in the study of matter. Topics include: the states of matter; chemical equilibrium; acids and bases; oxidation-reduction reactions; kinetics and thermodynamics; and organic biochemistry. This course establishes a foundation for the understanding of the chemical principles pertaining to the study of biology, the next course in the science sequence at Nichols. The advanced section covers similar content at a faster pace with more advanced mathematics and higher levels of abstraction.

## Grade 11

### **Biology**

The main topics covered in Biology are: *i*) Molecular and Cellular Biology, *ii*) Genetics, *iii*) Animal Structure and Function with an emphasis on Human Systems, *iv*) Evolutionary Concepts, and *v*) Plant Structure and Function. Laboratory exercises are designed to demonstrate the principles discussed in class. Additionally, labs provide the students with an opportunity to develop laboratory skills and to learn the use/application of scientific instruments.

### **AP Biology**

This course follows the Advanced Placement biology curriculum. Over the course of the year, the students receive a detailed introduction into many of the major branches of biological sciences. Unit topics include evolution, cellular biology, metabolism, cell division, genetics, molecular biology, anatomy and ecology. Major themes include the random and directional changes to systems, the flow of information and energy, the cycling of matter and the ability for living systems to communicate and coordinate.

Laboratory work is an essential part of the course. *Prerequisite: Chemistry and permission of the Department.* **The AP exam is a requirement of the course.**

## Science Electives

### **AP Physics C**

This course involves an advanced mathematical approach to physics. The content of the course follows the calculus-based program of the AP Physics C syllabus. Each year of this course alternates content; the upcoming year will consist of one full year of electricity and magnetism. Permission of the department is required to ensure adequate preparation for the mathematical demands of the course. *Prerequisite: Permission of the Department.*

**The AP exam is a requirement of the course.**

### **AP Chemistry**

This course is designed for students who have successfully completed one full year of chemistry and who have demonstrated excellent ability in the area of mathematics. It is the equivalent of a college freshman chemistry course. This course provides preparation for the Advanced Placement chemistry exam and for further scientific study at the college level. Laboratory work is a vital part of AP Chemistry. *Prerequisite: Permission of the Department.* **The AP exam is a requirement of the course.**

### **AP Environmental Science**

This is an ecologically based course of study, although interdisciplinary topics from economics to ethics are considered. The course is equivalent to an introductory Environmental Science course in college with a laboratory component. The goal of the AP Environmental Science course is to provide students with the scientific principles, concepts, and methodologies required to understand the interrelationships of the natural world, to identify and analyze environmental problems both natural and human-made, to evaluate the relative risks associated with these problems, and to examine alternative solutions for resolving and/or preventing them. The content of the course follows the AP Environmental Science curriculum and covers topics in earth systems and resources, the living world (ecology), population dynamics, land and water use, energy resources and consumption, pollution, and global change. AP Environmental Science has a large laboratory and field investigation component. *Prerequisite: Completion of the science graduation requirement.* **The AP Exam is a requirement of the course.**

### **Anatomy and Physiology**

Complete with clinical case studies and dissections, anatomy and physiology examines the structure and function of the human organ systems. The anatomy section of the course is interwoven with the physiology section to clarify and highlight the interrelationships between the structure and function of body parts. Emphasizing relevance, each organ system is introduced with a clinical case study pertaining to a pathology of the system. Through lecture and laboratory work, the course explores the skeletal system, the muscular system, the nervous system, the circulatory system, the respiratory system, the digestive system and the renal system. *Prerequisite: Completion of the science graduation requirement.*

### **Engineering I**

### **Engineering II**

The goal of these courses is to teach a variety of engineering skills through the lens of robotics. Students taking this course can expect to learn skills in mechanical engineering, electrical engineering, computer-aided design (CAD), programming,

budgeting and economics, and project management. We also work on video production, interview preparation, and community service. Students will learn to design and fabricate custom parts on our 3D printers, UV laser cutter and CNC Router. The class culminates in the building of a competitive robot to compete in the FIRST Tech Challenge (FTC) competition. Competitions are in the winter and spring. A significant component of this course is attending outreach events and competitions, typically involving a commitment of one Saturday or Sunday each month. The dates for these events are announced with as much advance notice as possible. This elective is available to both Juniors and Seniors. Students may take the course twice, focusing on different skill development each time. Participants in the class can apply for specific personal awards and college scholarship money through the FIRST program.

### **Organic Chemistry**

Generally stated, organic chemistry is the study of compounds containing carbon. This course integrates and elaborates on topics introduced in physics, chemistry, and biology. Emphasis is placed on the basic structure of organic molecules and their properties, advancing into synthetic organic chemistry concepts such as alkene reactions, stereochemistry, substitution reactions and structure determination. Laboratory techniques are emphasized. This course prepares the student for advanced study in pre-professional sciences. *Prerequisite: Completion of the science graduation requirement.*

### **Research Scholars**

The research scholars program enables senior scientists to work collaboratively with professional researchers on original experiments in Cancer research. After an overview of cancer and of research methods, the students will develop an original research question, test their hypothesis with a statistical analysis of a large database, and prepare a manuscript for publication. This course is reserved for highly motivated, independent students; admission to the course is by application only. *Prerequisite: Successful application for admittance to the program.*

# ADDITIONAL COURSE INFORMATION

## Graduation Requirements

**English-** 4 full years

**Mathematics-** 3 full years, through Integrated Algebra II and Trigonometry or Pre-Calculus

**History-** 3 full years, through US History

**Science-** 3 full years, through Biology

**Modern and Classical Language-** Complete through level 3 on one language

**Fine and Performing Arts-** 2 full years

**PE/Athletics-** 4 full years (2 credits)

**Electives-** 5 credits

*\*For Modern and Classical Language and Mathematics- Students may satisfy their requirements in each department if they have completed level three in Language or Pre-calculus by Junior year. In the event that a student completes both Math and Modern and Classical Language requirements by the end of 10th grade, the student is then required to take at least one advanced course in either department before graduating.*

## **Senior Thesis**

The Senior Thesis is a capstone academic experience involving extensive research in an academic field or in the arts. Seniors develop their thesis topics throughout the year and, after receiving faculty approval, embark on a period of research and writing. In addition to a Senior Thesis paper, all students are required to give an oral defense of their thesis in order to pass.

## Course Load

- Freshman and Sophomores must take a minimum of six courses. Any additional courses must be approved by the Academic Review (ARC) Committee.
- Juniors must take a minimum of five courses. Any additional courses must be approved by the ARC Committee.
- Seniors must take a minimum of six courses. Any additional courses must be approved by the ARC Committee.
- Seniors must pass **all** courses in their final year.

## Grading System and Academic Standing

Nichols has no pass/fail courses, and does not modify its requirements for students who transfer into the Upper School. The normal course load during grades 9-12 results in a total of 25 credits. Due to the competitive nature of admission to Nichols and the academic rigor of the program, the faculty has chosen not to rank students, nor calculate a cumulative grade point average.

Approximate Grading Scale:

Superior Achievement	A = 100-90
Strong Achievement	B = 89-80
Satisfactory Achievement	C = 79-70
Minimal Achievement	D = 69-60
Unacceptable	F = Below 60; <i>no credit</i>

Highest Honors is awarded when a student achieves an unweighted A- average (3.7/4.0).

Honors is awarded when a student achieves an unweighted B average (3.0/4.0).

Commendations is awarded when a student achieves an unweighted B- average (2.7/4.0).

## Independent Research: Nichols Research Scholar

### **Science Scholar**

This program gives Nichols students the opportunity to conduct scientific research in the Western New York area. Research facilities previously involved in this program include the University of Buffalo, Roswell Park Cancer Institute, and the Hauptman-Woodward Medical Research Institute. Students, under the guidance of research scientists, learn laboratory techniques, use state of the art equipment, and study the processes involved in completing college level scientific research. All students participating in the program present their scientific findings to the Nichols community. Students may request independent research credit through a petition to the Academic Review Committee. *Permission from both the Science Department and the Academic Review Committee are required for participation in this program.*



### **Humanities Scholar**

This program gives Nichols seniors the opportunity to conduct humanities research in the Western New York area through SUNY Buffalo. Depending on the length and intensity of the project, students may apply for independent study credit through the Academic Review Committee. Faculty members serve as liaisons with university and institute personnel. Student participants are encouraged to apply to present their papers at conferences and seminars in which they present and defend their data before other scholars who evaluate its merits. They are also expected to attend local humanities events, lectures and demonstrations as observers. At the conclusion of the program whether it is for the summer, one year or more, students present a poster or power point presentation to other participants in the program, mentors, faculty and parents. Other interested teachers and students may attend, as well. *Senior class status, along with permission from either the Modern and Classical Languages Department, English Department or the History Department and the Academic Review Committee are required for participation in this program.*

## Independent Studies

Teachers and students at Nichols have very full schedules that make additional commitments difficult to fulfill. While Independent Studies take the place of a credit in a student's schedule, teachers undertake Independent Studies in addition to all teaching requirements and major duties such as coaching and heading clubs. No teacher is expected to undertake this additional duty, and the Academic Review Committee will take a teacher's schedule into account when deciding whether to allow a student to pursue this course of study.

**Due to the above considerations, Independent Studies are granted only in cases where students have demonstrated an exceptional ability to work independently in the course of their time at Nichols.** Independent Studies are only possible for a course of study that is not currently offered at Nichols School. Instead of granting the Independent Study request, the ARC may propose an offered course that a student should take in place of the Independent Study, or suggest that a student pursue his or her interest as a Senior Thesis topic. Independent Studies are not part of the regular scheduling process, and therefore, students need to have a full schedule of options from courses offered at Nichols School in order to finish the regular scheduling process. Independent Study Proposals will be heard at ARC in the meeting following the close of the third quarter. Grade level deans will bring IS proposals to the ARC.

An Independent Study (IS) is subject to the following stipulations:

- The student must find a Nichols faculty member who is competent in the proposed field of study, is in the appropriate department, and is willing to supervise and evaluate the student's work and assign grades. Teachers are *not* under any obligation to supervise a proposed IS.
- The student understands that whatever papers or assignments the IS teacher assigns must be completed as in a regular course.
- The student understands that the bulk of the work and learning in an IS will be done *independently*, outside of a classroom setting. The teacher's role is to provide guidance and tutorials.
- The student must demonstrate that the work to be completed will be the equivalent of a comparable course that *is* offered by the department within which the IS will be supervised.
- The student must meet with his or her IS teacher for at least two full periods in every rotation.
- Semester courses must complete all meetings within a single semester.
- The student will receive 1/2 of a credit for a semester course and a full credit for a full year course.
- The student must complete an IS application and submit it to the grade level dean.
- The IS application must be approved by the Academic Review Committee (ARC).
- Once the application is approved, there can be no midterm or mid-year adjustments to the proposal, the workload, or the number of credits earned. If a student chooses to drop an IS after the drop/add period, the drop will be reflected on a student's official transcript.

NICHOLS SCHOOL  
APPLICATION FOR INDEPENDENT STUDY

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

Proposed Title of IS \_\_\_\_\_

Supervising Faculty Member \_\_\_\_\_

Department \_\_\_\_\_

The course will meet for a semester, full year (select one).

The student proposing the Independent Study will submit a formal proposal that demonstrates substantial interest and effort. Please type a formal proposal that includes the following information:

1. A thoughtful and specific description of the topic and justification for proposing it as an IS. Please include several essential questions that you plan to explore in the course of your study.
2. Provide a typed list of readings with correct bibliographic format.
3. Provide a list of proposed assignments and evaluations (consult with proposed IS teacher) along with due dates.

Signatures:

Student: \_\_\_\_\_

IS Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

Department Head: \_\_\_\_\_

Upon approval by ARC,

Head of Upper School: \_\_\_\_\_

Once this application is approved, it constitutes a learning contract,  
and the student is bound to complete the proposed work.

## Scheduling

Scheduling takes place each year in March for rising juniors and seniors. The combination of teacher recommendations and blind lottery is meant to ensure that the process is fair and transparent for all involved. Following Scheduling, a list of recommended courses based on selections made during the scheduling process is sent home. These courses are not guaranteed but we do everything we can to build a master schedule that accommodates all course requests. Students will be notified over the summer if they need to select any new courses due to conflicts.

## AP Exam Policy

Any student whose cumulative average in an AP course is below B- two weeks prior to the AP exam will be required to take a departmental final exam in addition to the regular AP exam. All students enrolled in AP courses are required to take the AP exam. This requirement may be waived by the ARC in cases of financial hardship or extreme mitigation circumstance.

## Drop/Add Procedure

After the beginning of the year, adjustments are made to students' schedules, such as changing from AP to regular math or dropping a difficult extra (6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup>) course. Only in very unusual circumstances, and only with the approval of the Academic Review Committee, may a student drop a year-long course after the third week of school or go below five courses. Students dropping a year-long or semester course after the third week of the marking period will have the designation of "withdrawn passing" or "withdrawn failing" on their transcript, unless that designation is waived by the Academic Review Committee.

## Academic Review Committee

The Academic Review Committee, or ARC, is a group charged with examining the academic performance of our students after each marking period. This committee is made up of the Class Deans, Academic Department Chairs, Athletic Director, Director of Studies, Dean of Students, College Guidance Counselors, and the Heads of Middle and Upper Schools. ARC will also review Independent Study proposals, questions about course loads, schedule changes, as well as approve added or dropped courses.

## Disciplinary Status

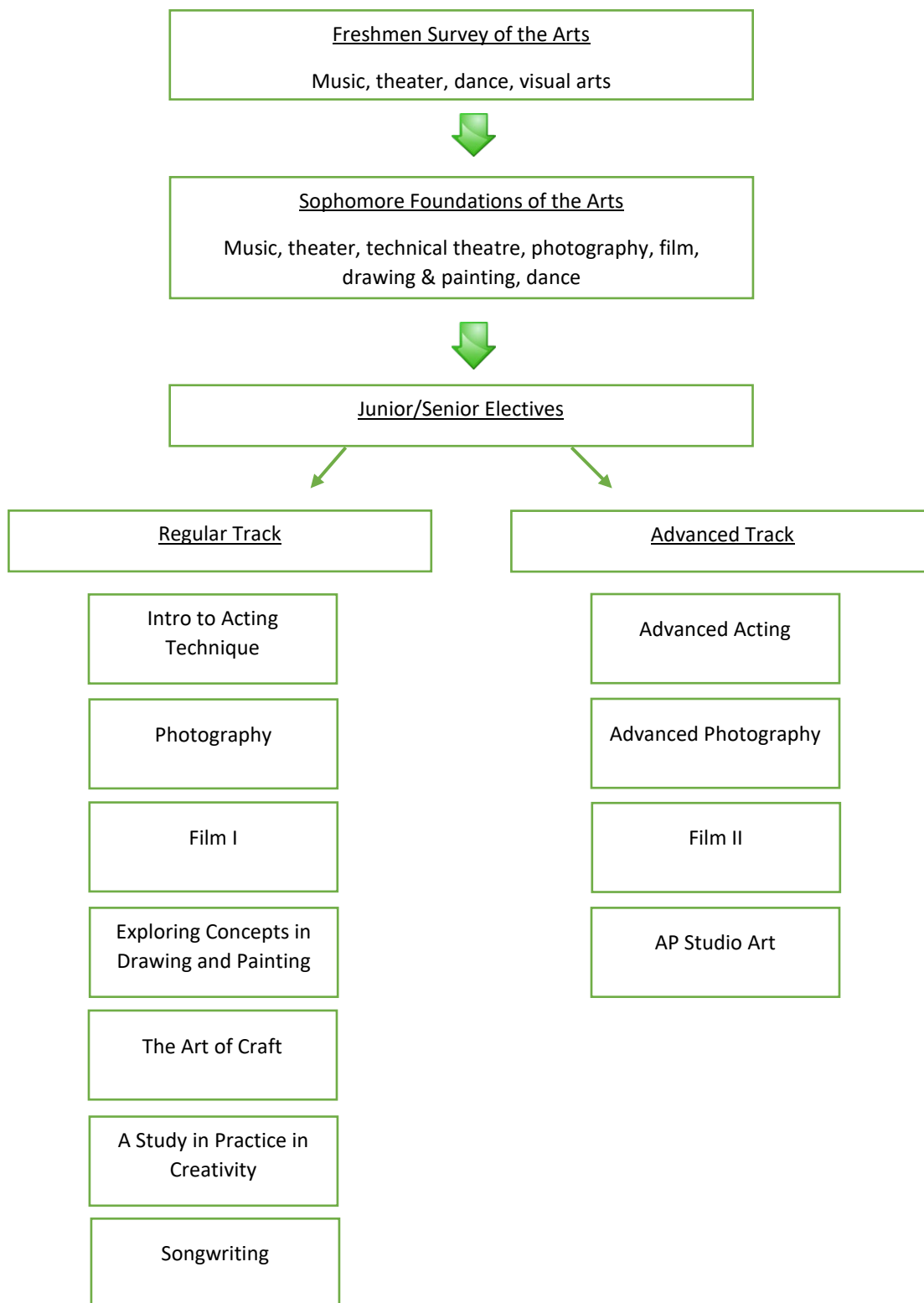
If asked, Nichols reports major disciplinary measures taken against a student to any college, university scholarship program or educational program that requests such information. Major disciplinary measures include, but are not limited to, suspensions and expulsions occurring while the student is enrolled in grades nine through twelve.

## Cum Laude Society

The words "Cum Laude" come from the Latin phrase meaning "with high praise." In 1918, Nichols School was the thirteenth school in the country to be admitted into the membership of the Cum Laude Society. At Nichols, criteria for admission of students to the Cum Laude Society is based on: Academic excellence; scholarship and love of learning, consistency in performance across the four years, with special attention to achievement in grades 11 and 12, degree of difficulty of course load, and character, honor, and integrity in all aspects of school life.

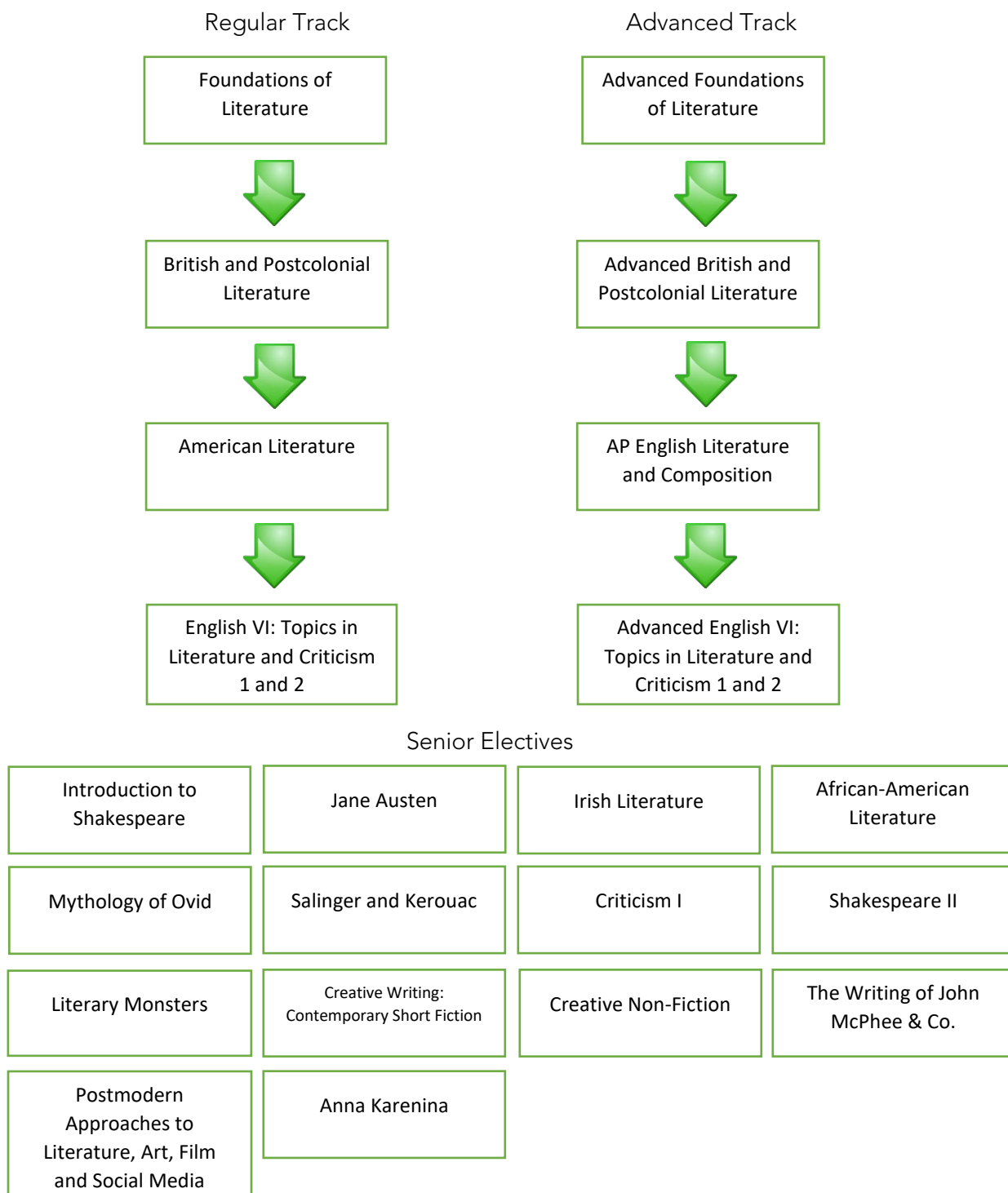
# Pathways Schematics: Arts Curriculum

(Concert Choir, Orchestra, and Dance Ensemble are available to students in grades 9-12)



# Pathways Schematics: English Curriculum

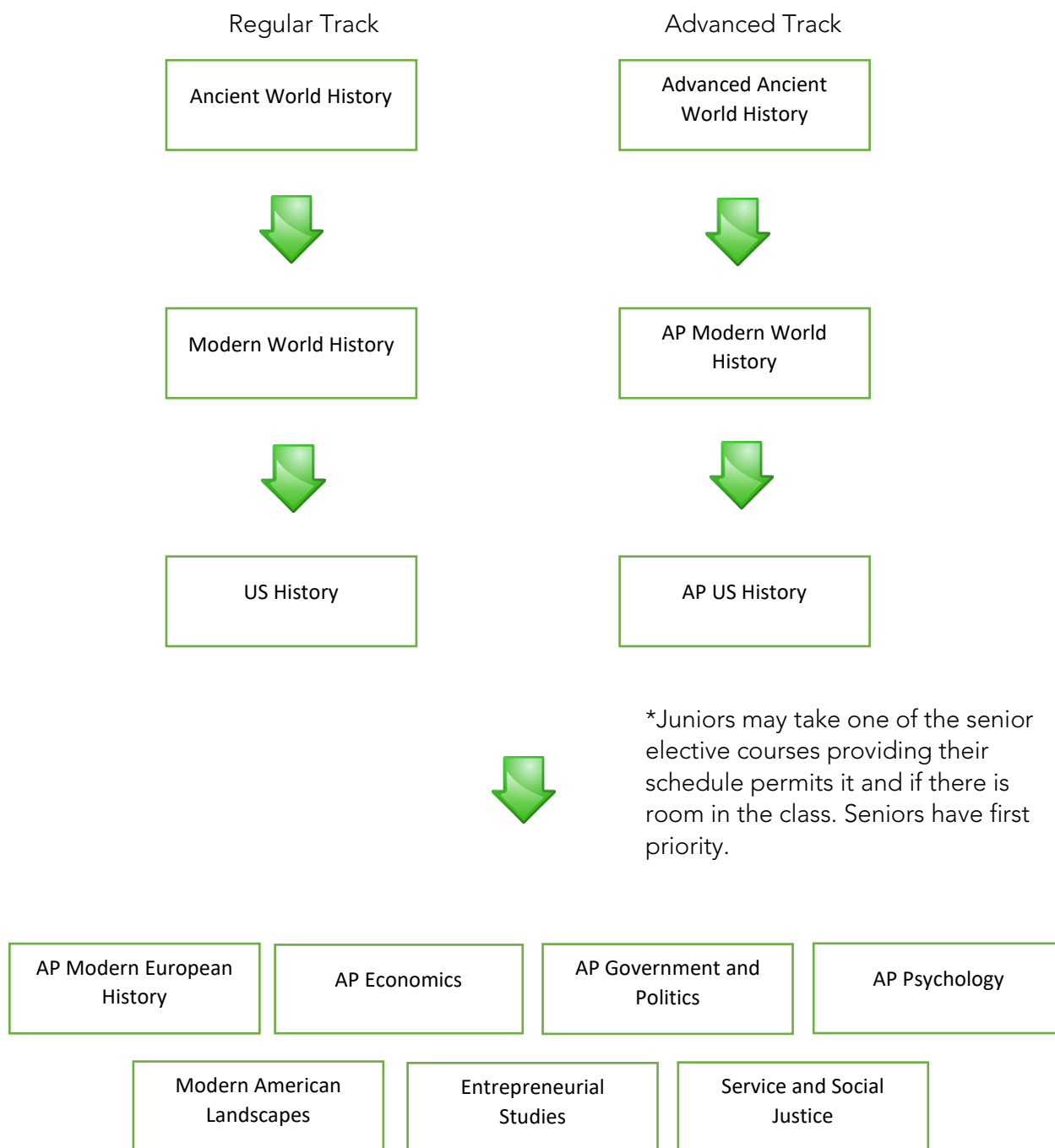
Graduation Requirement: 4 full years



Students can move between tracks from year to year based on the recommendation of the teacher.

# Pathways Schematics: History Curriculum

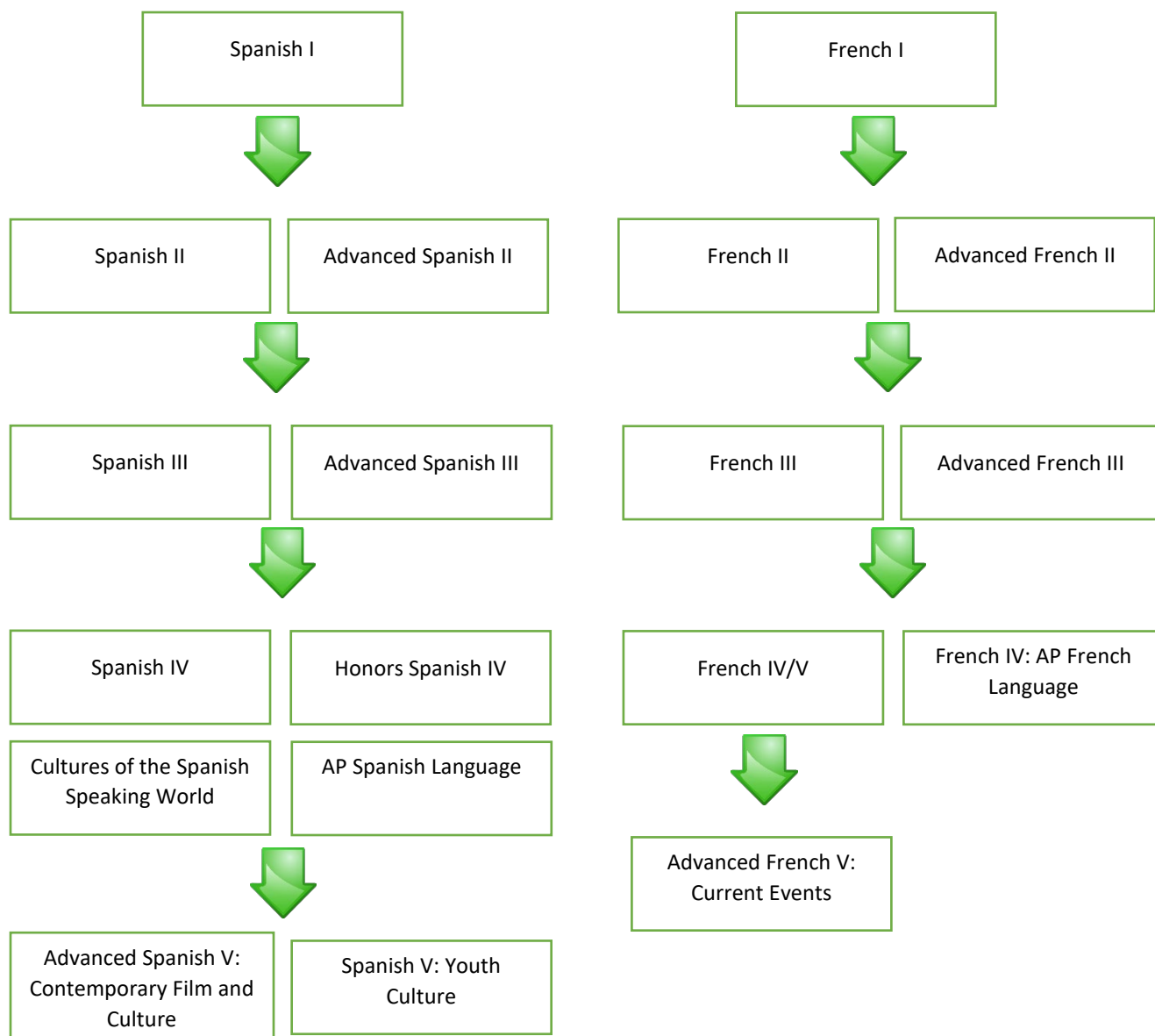
Graduation Requirement: 3 full years



Students can move between tracks from year to year based on the recommendation of the teacher.

# Pathways Schematics: Modern & Classical Languages Curriculum

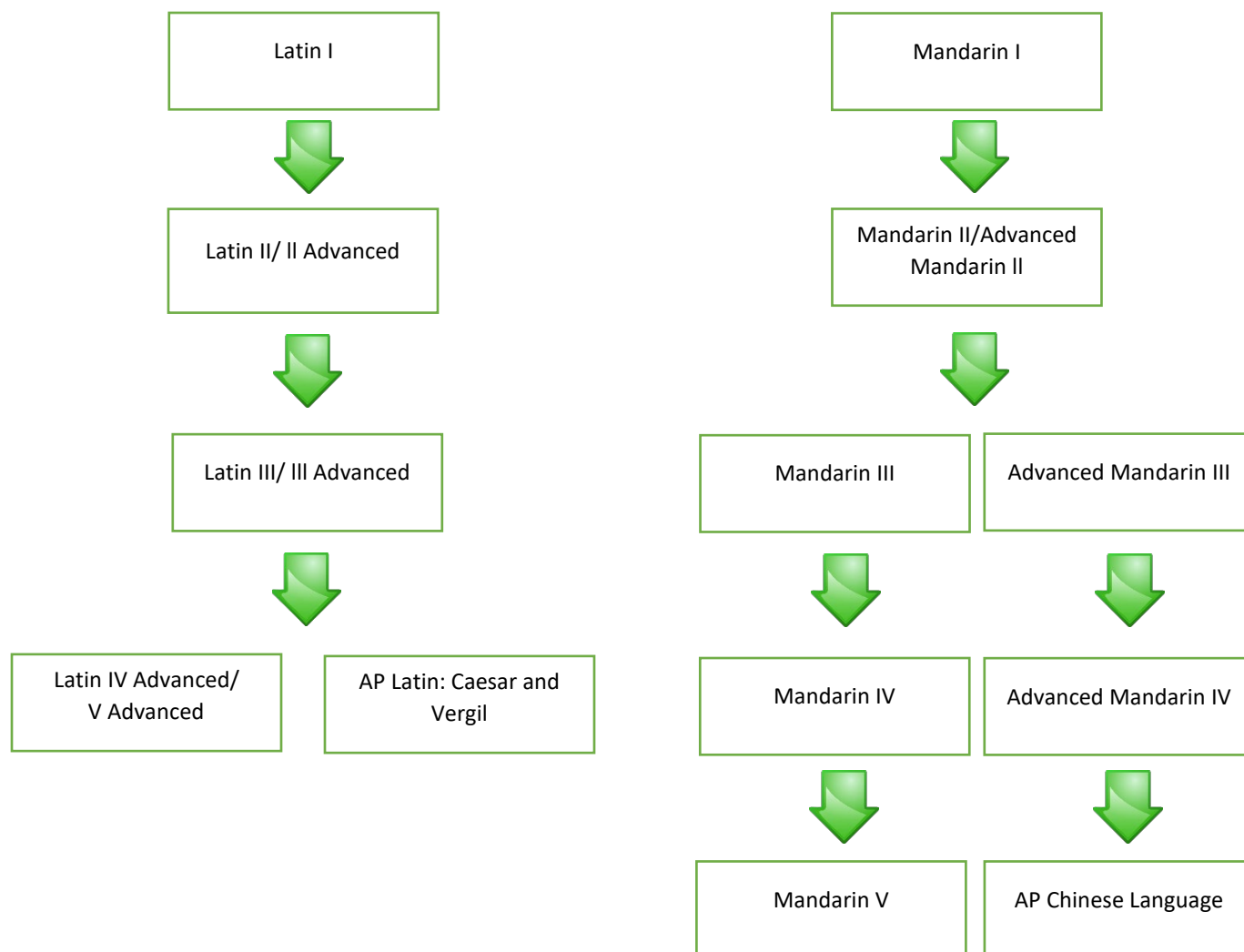
Graduation Requirement: Complete through level 3 in one language



Students can move between tracks from year to year based on the recommendation of the teacher.

# Pathways Schematics: Modern & Classical Languages Curriculum Continued

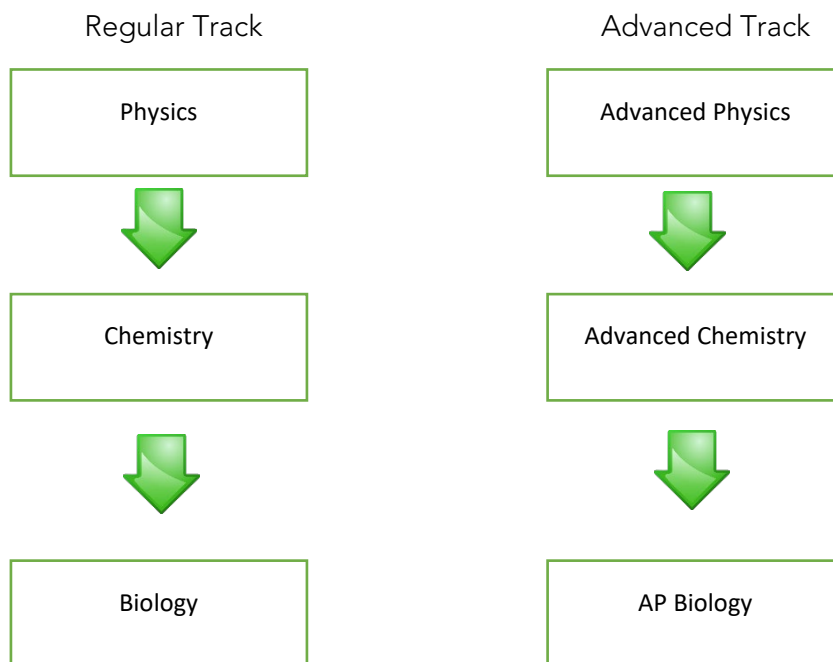
Graduation Requirement: Complete through level 3 in one language



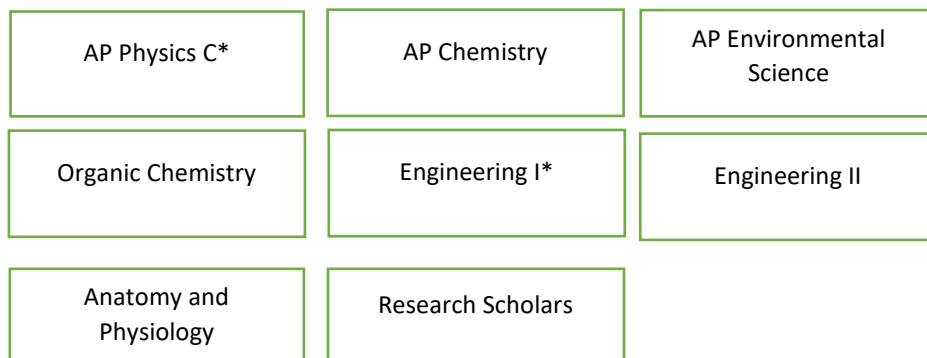
Students can move between tracks from year to year based on the recommendation of the teacher.

# Pathways Schematics: Science Curriculum

Graduation Requirement: Physics, Chemistry and Biology (3 full years)



\*Juniors may take one of these senior elective courses provided their schedule permits, if there is room in the class, with permission of the instructor, and with concurrent registration in appropriate mathematics courses. Seniors have first priority.



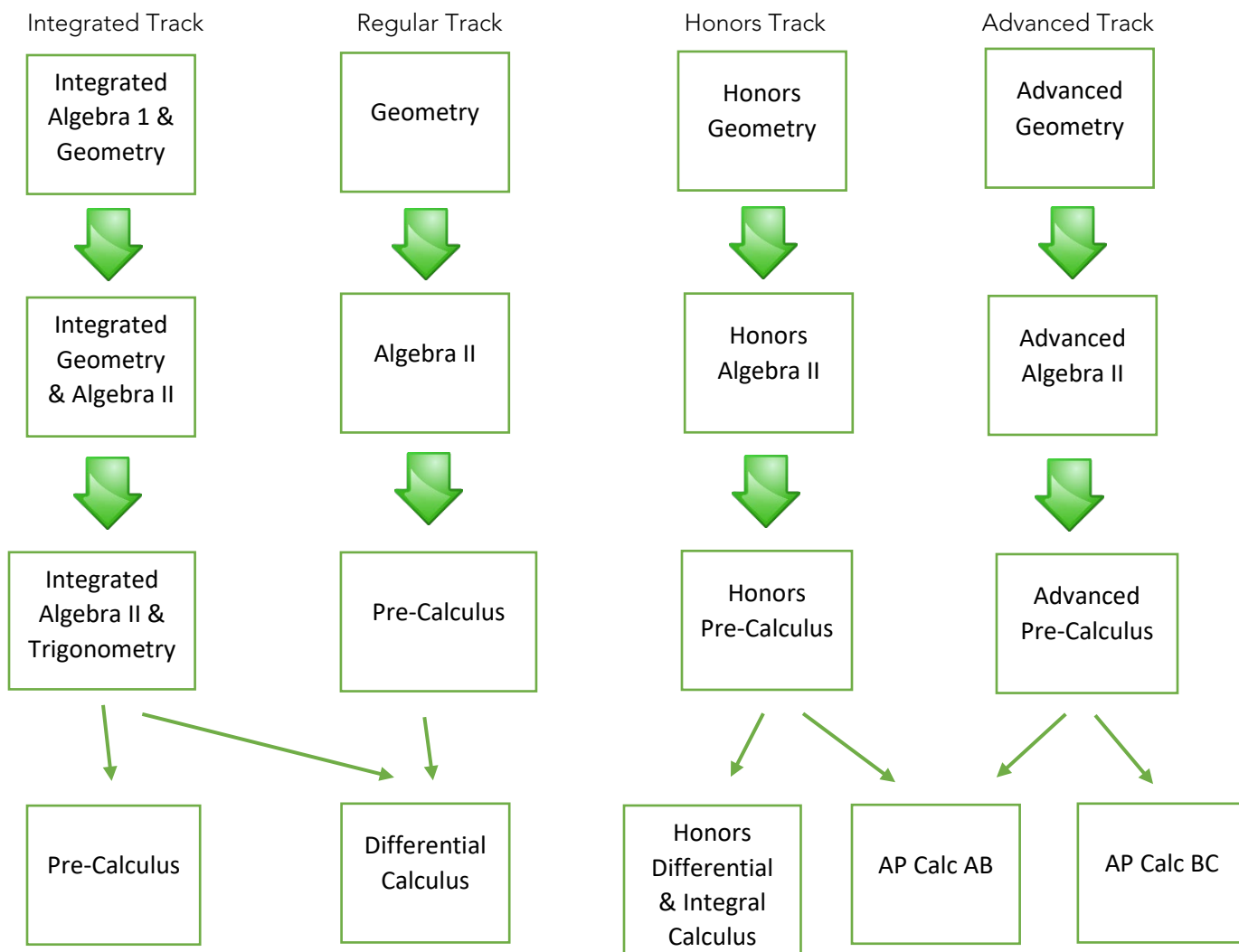
Students can move between tracks from year to year based on the recommendation of the teacher.

# Pathways Schematics: Mathematics Curriculum

Graduation Requirement: 3 full years

*Algebra I* is usually completed during Grade 8; those who take it in grade 9 enter the Geometry Sequence in Grade 10. *AP Statistics* is open to students who are in the regular track or higher.

When space is available, 11<sup>th</sup> graders who have completed *Advanced Algebra II* or *Honors Algebra II* are also eligible.



Electives:



Students can move between tracks from year to year based on the recommendation of the teacher.

# Curriculum Planning Guide

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Advisor's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## 9<sup>th</sup> Grade

English	Foundations of Literature (Reg or Adv)
History	Ancient World History (Reg or Adv)
Math	_____
Science	Physics (Reg or Adv)
Foreign Language	_____
Arts	Freshman Survey of the Arts

## 10<sup>th</sup> Grade

English	Literature of the English Language (Reg or Adv)
History	Modern World History, AP World History
Math	_____
Science	Chemistry (Reg or Adv)
Foreign Language	_____
Arts	_____
Electives	_____

## 11<sup>th</sup> Grade

English	Literature of the English II, AP English Literature and Composition
History	AP US History
Math	_____
Science	Biology (Reg or AP)
Foreign Language	_____
Arts	_____
Electives	_____

## 12<sup>th</sup> Grade

English	English VI Electives
History	_____
Math	_____
Science	_____
Foreign Language	_____
Arts	_____
Electives	_____



## INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGES



# INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGES

Nichols students have a variety of opportunities to gain a greater understanding of people and their cultures by participating in one of the many cross-cultural programs we offer.

Students have the opportunity to immerse themselves in another culture by participating in the China, France or Spain exchange programs. Students taking part in the exchange will host a foreign student for three weeks, and then will live with that same student's family when traveling abroad. The homestay aspect of the exchange is what makes the experience so unique because it gives our students the opportunity to live as a native of that country. In addition to living with a host family, students experience what life is like in a foreign school and take part in excursions that give them a better cultural understanding of the region in which they are living.

In addition to our exchanges, we offer a variety of opportunities for students to engage in experiential learning opportunities on a global scale. Tailored to support the interest of our Classics enthusiasts, our Archaeological Dig in Germany allows students to take part in an actual dig in addition to visiting various museums of archaeological interest. From the gravy smothered "poutine" to the maple-infused Sugar Shacks, students get a taste of Quebecois culture first-hand by taking part in the Montreal excursion. Our "Global Citizenship: Costa Rica" program promotes cross-cultural awareness through personal inquiry. Furthermore, the program offers students with the chance to apply global citizenship principles into action on a local and global scale.

Overall, our students have a variety of unique and exciting ways to put their language skills to use and gain a greater understanding of culture and a respect and appreciation towards people from all walks of life.

# INTERNATIONAL STUDENT PROGRAMS

Nichols School has eight international students hailing from China, Italy and the Ivory Coast. Nichols works with partner international student organizations, Nacel Open Door and Cambridge/greenplanet, and is a member of ASSIST. An International Student Coordinator is on staff and acts as an advisor and support person for these students, closely working with the faculty, deans and staff to help support students through their academic experience here, as well as with their hosting experience living with a host family. As a global community, Nichols is committed to having several international students attend each year and believes these students enrich the educational experience of their peers and the school environment on the whole.

## ADVISORY PROGRAM

In the moments when students need to talk through academic, personal or social matters, or college plans and career questions, faculty members are ready to help. Most students find a particular faculty member with whom they feel comfortable and to whom they can turn in confidence. In addition to these informal relationships, a formal advising system exists.

The formal advising system does not impede or hope to preclude the spontaneous relationships between students and teachers, but guarantees one such relationship for each student. Most students continue with the same advisor for several years assuring that students have an adult in their school life who shares their academic, extracurricular and social successes.

Each advisor meets with his or her advisee group once weekly, on Wednesday mornings in normal weeks. Advisors are also present at all-school Morning Meetings and Form-level meetings. Through these meetings and periodic one-on-one discussions, the advisor follows each advisee's academic, social and extra-curricular progress. Advisors suggest practical tactics and strategies for improvement in study habits, organization, relationships with teachers, and other academic concerns. The role of the advisor is principally as an advocate, supporter and personal faculty liaison to the student.

Advisors present a comprehensive character and leadership development curriculum comprised of 36 lessons presented over the course of a student's Upper School career. The lessons are from the CTRIS Curriculum from the The G. Frederick Zeller '47 Initiative for Ethics and Character. All lessons, selected by the grade level Deans, are chosen for their developmental and Nichols experience appropriateness.

Class Deans, key figures in a student's life at Nichols, devote the majority of their time to managing the overall concerns of a class and the needs of its individual members. Deans communicate regularly with parents, sharing information about almost anything that may concern a student's behavior, performance or well-being at Nichols.

Feel free to call your child's Dean or advisor at any time. Deans are available to field most questions related to your child, from course registration issues, to problems in a specific class. Your child's advisor, likely a teacher, may be more difficult to reach during the school day, but is often a good point of contact for personal concerns. Deans will inform advisors of pertinent information related to a student and vice versa.

## STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

A framework of academic and personal support exists at Nichols, affording students the individual consideration that distinguishes a Nichols education. Most advising at Nichols happens informally, as students seek out trusted adults for questions, concerns and conversation. The formal advising systems in the Upper and Middle Schools exist to ensure that our students have ample contact with their advisors, and advisors have ample opportunity to address a student's concerns. Frequent contact between deans and students, advisors and advisees, and parents and teachers makes certain that all Nichols students are cared for and supported. In order to support our students' mental, emotional and personal needs we have a school social worker in the Middle School and a mental health counselor in the Upper School. These positions work as early intervention specialists and crisis support for our students and families. In addition, they work to link the students and families to community resources and support.



# COLLEGE COUNSELING

The College Counseling Program at Nichols School is guided by the mission of the School: “to train minds, bodies and hearts for the work of life, and to carry into all we do the highest ideals of character and service.” The college process offers students the opportunity to examine the work they have done in high school, reflect on the person they have become, and discern their future goals and aspirations. The counseling program is designed to help students uncover and articulate their strengths and accomplishments and then apply that understanding to their college application process. We are here to help students and their parents with every step of the process including researching college options, making the most of their college applications, and, ultimately, choosing their college placement.



We hope that you will visit the College Counseling website often to explore the wealth of information included there. Up-to-date events calendars, step-by-step guidelines for students in each year of high school, comprehensive information regarding financing a college education and how to apply for financial aid, and numerous other topics are included within the site. As always, we encourage you to contact our office with any questions and the opportunity for continued dialogue.

# 2014-2018 COLLEGE DESTINATIONS

Throughout their years at Nichols School, our students discover their unique voice and the college process affords them the opportunity to share that bold, energizing, and intelligent perspective with the world beyond high school. Their path inevitably leads them to the campus that is right for them -- be it at historic Ivy League institutions, major state universities, specialized conservatories, or small liberal arts colleges throughout the United States and abroad. Guided by Nichols teachers, coaches, mentors, and counselors, they grow to appreciate the value of exceptional learning communities. They graduate ready to carry their unparalleled thirst for knowledge, exceptional academic, athletic, and artistic talent, strong character, and dynamic leadership skills to their chosen center for higher education.

University of Alabama  
Alfred University  
American University  
Amherst College  
Arizona State University  
Assumption College  
Babson College  
Barnard College  
Baruch College of CUNY  
Bentley University  
Binghamton University  
Boston College  
Boston University  
Bowling Green State University  
University of British Columbia  
Brown University  
Bucknell University  
UC Davis  
UC San Diego  
UC Santa Barbara  
Canisius College  
Carnegie Mellon University  
Case Western Reserve University  
University of Central Arkansas  
Champlain College  
College of Charleston  
Chatham University  
University of Chicago  
University of Cincinnati  
Clarion University of Pennsylvania  
Clarkson University  
Clemson University  
Coastal Carolina University  
Colgate University  
College for Creative Studies  
University of Colorado at Boulder  
Colorado College  
Columbia University  
Connecticut College  
Cooper Union  
Cornell College  
Cornell University  
Dartmouth College  
Davidson College  
Denison University  
University of Denver  
DePaul University  
Dickinson College  
Drexel University  
Duquesne University  
D'Youville College  
Eckerd College  
Elmira College

Elon University  
Emory University  
Erie Community College  
Fairfield University  
Fashion Institute of Technology  
Florida Gulf Coast University  
Florida State University  
Fordham University  
Franklin and Marshall College  
Franklin Pierce University  
Furman University  
George Washington University  
Georgetown University  
Gettysburg College  
Hamilton College  
Harvard University  
Haverford College  
High Point University  
Hilbert College  
Hobart & William Smith Colleges  
College of the Holy Cross  
Houghton College  
Howard University  
Ithaca College  
John Carroll University  
Johns Hopkins University  
Kenyon College  
Lafayette College  
Le Moyne College  
Lehigh University  
Lourdes University  
Loyola University Chicago  
Loyola University Maryland  
Macalester College  
University of Maine  
Manhattan College  
Manhattanville College  
Marist College  
Marquette University  
University of Maryland  
Marymount Manhattan College  
MA College of Art and Design  
MA Institute of Technology  
McGill University  
Mercyhurst University  
Miami Dade College  
Miami University - Oxford  
University of Miami  
Michigan State University  
University of Michigan  
Middlebury College  
Muhlenberg College  
Nazareth College

University of New England  
University of New Hampshire  
New York University  
Niagara Community College  
Niagara University  
UNC – Chapel Hill  
Northeastern University  
Norwich University  
Oberlin College  
Ohio State University  
Ontario College of Art & Design  
University of Ottawa  
Pace University  
Parsons The New School  
Pennsylvania State University  
University of Pennsylvania  
University of Pittsburgh  
University of Pittsburgh at Bradford  
Potomac State College  
Pratt Institute  
Princeton University  
Providence College  
Ramapo College of New Jersey  
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute  
University of Rhode Island  
University of Richmond  
Roanoke College  
Rochester Institute of Technology  
University of Rochester  
Rollins College  
Sacred Heart University  
San Diego State University  
Sarah Lawrence University  
School of Art Institute of Chicago  
Skidmore College  
University of South Carolina  
University of Southern California  
St. John Fisher College  
St. John's University - Queens  
St. Joseph's University  
St. Lawrence University  
Stanford University  
SUNY Alfred State College  
SUNY Brockport  
SUNY Buffalo  
SUNY Buffalo State College  
SUNY Geneseo  
SUNY Oswego  
SUNY Plattsburgh  
SUNY Potsdam

Swarthmore College  
Syracuse University  
Temple University  
University of Tennessee  
Texas Christian University  
University of Texas, Austin  
University of Toronto  
Trinity College  
Tufts University  
Union College  
United States Naval Academy  
University of Utah  
Vanderbilt University  
Vassar College  
University of Vermont  
Villanova University  
University of Virginia  
Virginia Military Institute  
Wake Forest University  
Washington and Lee University  
Wellesley College  
Wentworth Institute of Technology  
Westminster College  
Wheaton College IL  
Williams College  
University of Wisconsin, Madison  
College of Wooster  
Worcester Polytechnic Institute  
Xavier University  
Yale University



## ATHLETICS



# ATHLETICS

An overall goal of the extra-curricular athletic program is to promote the Nichols School mission. We endeavor not only to develop the students' athletic skills, but also to encourage students to be good citizens, to challenge their intellectual skills, and to teach them the value of teamwork. An important goal of any school should be to provide students with opportunities to practice leadership, and participation in athletics provides many such opportunities. Teamwork and how students relate to one another is essential for future success in school and in life. There are few places where such skills can be better learned than on the sports field. Participation in athletics is therefore not separate from the educational process, but rather an integral part of it. The Athletic Department at Nichols is committed to developing successful programs that will fulfill these objectives, and provide a challenging, competitive environment in which the ideals of sportsmanship, personal integrity, moral character and teamwork are stressed. While winning is important, participation in athletics goes beyond winning and losing games. Coaches have a tremendous influence on young men and women and our goal is to employ coaches who are not only experts in their field, but also excellent role models to our students. We expect our coaches to instill proper attitudes toward fair competition, and to teach student athletes the importance of a healthy lifestyle. The lessons learned through competitive athletics will remain with students for a lifetime

## FALL

Cross Country – Boys  
Cross Country – Girls  
Field Hockey - 7 & 8  
Field Hockey – JV  
Field Hockey – Varsity  
Football - 7/8/9  
Golf - Varsity Boys  
Sailing – Varsity Boys & Girls  
Soccer - 5 & 6 Boys  
Soccer - 5 & 6 Girls  
Soccer - 7 & 8 A Boys  
Soccer - 7 & 8 B Boys  
Soccer - 7 & 8 Girls  
Soccer - JV Boys  
Soccer - JV Girls  
Soccer - Varsity Boys  
Soccer - Varsity Girls  
Tennis - 7 & 8 Girls  
Tennis - Varsity Girls  
Volleyball – JV  
Volleyball – Varsity

## WINTER

Basketball - 5 & 6 Boys  
Basketball - 5 & 6 Girls  
Basketball - 7 & 8 A Boys  
Basketball - 7 & 8 A Girls  
Basketball- 7 & 8 B Boys  
Basketball - JV Boys  
Basketball - JV Girls  
Basketball - Varsity Boys  
Basketball - Varsity Girls  
Hockey - 5 & 6 A Coed  
Hockey - 5 & 6 B Coed  
Hockey - 7 & 8 A  
Hockey - 7 & 8 B  
Hockey - Club Boys  
Hockey - Prep A Boys  
Hockey - Prep A Girls  
Hockey - Prep B Boys  
Hockey - Prep B Girls  
Squash - 7 & 8 Coed  
Squash - Varsity Boys  
Squash - Varsity Girls

## SPRING

Baseball - 7 & 8  
Baseball - Varsity  
Crew - Boys & Girls  
Golf - Varsity Girls  
Lacrosse - 5 & 6 Boys  
Lacrosse - 5 & 6 Girls  
Lacrosse - 7 & 8 Boys  
Lacrosse - 7 & 8 Girls  
Lacrosse - JV Boys  
Lacrosse - JV Girls  
Lacrosse - Varsity Boys  
Lacrosse - Varsity Girls  
Softball - 7 & 8  
Softball - Varsity Girls  
Tennis - 7 & 8 Boys  
Tennis - Varsity Boys



## STUDENT CLUBS AND ORGANIZATIONS



# STUDENT CLUBS AND ORGANIZATIONS

Nichols provides students with many extracurricular clubs, activities, trips and community service opportunities to enrich their School experience and make them more global individuals upon graduation. We encourage our students to explore their community and a variety of interests, to get involved, and to discover their passions.

## UPPER SCHOOL CLUBS

- American Sign Language
- Amnesty International
- Anti-Gravity Club - Climbing and Outdoors
- Art Activism for Social Change
- Babel Book Club
- Backgammon Club
- Bioinformatics
- Chess Club
- Chinese Culture Club
- Conservative Club
- Fashion Design Club
- Feminism Club
- Fight Club
- Film Club
- Forensics and Chemistry Club
- Fragrance Club
- Free Draw
- French Club
- Fundraising Around the World
- Gang Green
- Gleaner - Literary Magazine
- Green Key
- HEART - Health Education
- Investment Club A&B
- Jewish Cultural Awareness Club
- Linguistics Club
- Master Minds
- Math Club
- Mock Trial Club
- Model UN
- Naked Voices
- Nichols News
- Poetry Club
- Political Debate Club
- Robotics Club - Electric Mayhem 4930
- SAGA (Sexuality and Gender Awareness)
- Science Olympiad
- SEA - Students for Environmental Awareness)
- See Art Run - Student Art
- Skate Club
- Soup Kitchen Club
- Student Union for Multicultural Awareness - SUMA
- The Big Cheese Club
- Uberbells
- USA Biology Olympiad
- Verdian – Yearbook
- Water for the World
- West Hertel Helpers
- Young Democrats of Nichols School



## COMMUNITY SERVICE AND OUTREACH



# COMMUNITY SERVICE AND OUTREACH

The School's Community Outreach Program exposes our students to the issues and problems that face many communities, especially in Buffalo and Western New York. This exposure emboldens the heart and we hope that each student's compassionate efforts produce a sense of empowerment. By participating in the service, our students realize that they can change the world for the better.

In the Upper School, students approach service in depth by researching, volunteering and work together on creating projects and presentations surrounding various issues: Freshmen focus on the environment; sophomores aid poverty; juniors center on refugee issues; and seniors treat education and literacy problems in society.