



WESTRIDGE SCHOOL

# UPPER SCHOOL

2020-2021

## Curriculum Guide

GRADES 9-12

## Philosophy

The Upper School at Westridge prepares every student to handle with confidence the opportunities and challenges that she will encounter on her intellectual and personal journey. It is an environment where girls have the freedom to be themselves and are empowered to learn and grow into their best bold selves.

The program is designed to foster in girls the habits of mind and character that will enable them to engage with and connect to the subjects they study with depth, nuance, and balance. Rather than simply receiving and repeating information, students are encouraged to think critically and to view themselves not merely as beneficiaries, but as contributors to the body of human knowledge. As a girl advances from the 9th to the 12th grade, classes are designed to give her increasing responsibility for her own intellectual progress and to provide her with the academic and personal skills to succeed in Upper School, college, and beyond.

# Courses of Study

The Upper School program offers balance among humanities, mathematics and sciences, visual and performing arts, technology, physical education, and athletics. In every discipline, electives and advanced courses of study allow each girl to thrive within her areas of interest and strength.

The following list of required and recommended courses at each grade level is designed to provide you with an overview of the Westridge Upper School curriculum and its sequence. As with all things, there may be exceptions to the rule based on a student's past coursework and academic performance. Full course descriptions, elective course options, and detailed explanations of the graduation requirements can be found in our Catalogue of Courses at [www.westridge.org/upper-school](http://www.westridge.org/upper-school). Please note that course offerings may change each year.



## Westridge Global Initiative

Students passionate about global studies may, working with the faculty Global Initiative Committee, undertake in-depth study of a modern-day global issue through an intentional selection of classes, experiential programs, and directed service. While coursework and activities also meet core graduation requirements, students in the program build a digital portfolio of their work, present their work to the committee, and earn special Global Initiative transcript designation.

## 9th Grade

### Required:

English I  
World Views: Ancient & Modern  
Geometry or Advanced Geometry  
Biology  
Modern or Classical Language  
· Spanish, Mandarin Chinese, or Latin  
Physical Education/Activity Credit  
Human Development 9: Transition to Upper School

### Recommended:

Visual Art, Music, or Theatre

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## 10th Grade

### Required:

English II  
The Modern World System or AP European History  
Algebra II or Honors Algebra II & Trigonometry  
Chemistry or Honors Chemistry  
Modern or Classical Language  
Physical Education/Activity Credit  
Human Development 10: Self & Society

### Recommended:

Visual Art, Music, or Theatre

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## 11th Grade

### Required:

Honors English III or Perspectives in Literature  
Honors U.S. History or AP U.S. History  
Pre-Calculus or Honors Pre-Calculus  
Modern or Classical Language  
Physical Education/Activity Credit  
The College Process 11: Voice & Vision  
Laboratory science course  
Visual Art, Music, or Theatre (if not completed)

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## 12th Grade

### Required\*:

AP English IV or Perspectives in Literature  
The College Process 12: Your Chosen Path  
Physical Education/Activity Credit (if not completed)  
Visual Art, Music, or Theatre (if not completed)

### Recommended:

History  
Mathematics  
Science  
Modern or Classical Language  
Visual Art, Music, or Theatre

\*Seniors are required to enroll in five academic courses.

## Additional Departmental Offerings

Perspectives in Literature  
Comparative Religions  
The Modern Middle East: History, Culture, Society  
Ethics  
Global Studies  
Statistics  
Calculus I  
Physics  
Anatomy and Physiology  
Environmental Engineering  
Field Studies in Geology  
Research in Science  
Spanish: El Mundo Hispanohablante  
Literature in Spanish  
Economics

## Visual Arts Courses

The Art Department offers courses in painting and drawing, photography, 3D design, ceramics and sculpture, and Advanced Art Studio.

## Music Courses

The Music Department has seven course offerings: Chorale, Intermediate Choir (Dolces Voces), Glee Club, Madrigals, Intermediate Orchestra, Chamber Orchestra, and The Music Enigma, a non-performance class.

## Theatre Courses

In addition to extracurricular performance opportunities, the Theatre Department offers Acting I and Theatre Production, which meet the arts graduation requirement, and electives in costume design, costume construction, and technical theatre.

## Physical Education and Athletics

P.E. classes offer many fun and diverse activities, such as yoga, strength training, conditioning, and aerobic exercise. In addition, beginning, intermediate, and advanced dance courses are P.E. options. Students may receive physical activity credit for participation in competitive athletics. For information on varsity and junior varsity athletics, visit [www.westridge.org/athletics](http://www.westridge.org/athletics).

## Independent Study

Students wishing to pursue a level of study beyond that which is offered in the curriculum may enroll in an Independent Study in any discipline. The student must have a faculty sponsor and her proposed course of study must be approved by the appropriate department and reviewed by the Curriculum and Academic Standards Committee.

## Interim (Grades 9-12)

Interim is a week of off-campus learning experiences that students select from a menu of options. Some experiences are local day trips and others are overnight and international trips. Trip costs are charged to families, and some financial aid is available to families receiving tuition assistance.

## Honors & AP Courses

### Advanced Placement

Art History  
Biology  
Calculus (AB)  
Calculus (BC)  
Chemistry  
Computer Science A  
Computer Science Principles  
English Literature  
European History  
Latin IV – Vergil & Caesar  
Mandarin Chinese V  
Physics C  
Spanish Language  
Statistics  
U.S. History

### Honors

Algebra II &  
Trigonometry  
Chemistry  
English III  
Latin V  
Physics  
Pre-Calculus  
U.S. History

## Electives

Creative Writing  
Engineering & Design  
(Science Olympiad,  
Robotics, or Rocketry)  
Costume Construction  
Costume Design  
Technical Theatre  
Voice  
Speech and Debate  
Yearbook  
Newspaper  
Peer-to-Peer  
Service Learning  
Student Voices

**15** AVERAGE  
UPPER  
SCHOOL  
CLASS SIZE



## Service and Community Engagement in Upper School

The service and community engagement graduation requirement spans the four years of Upper School and culminates in senior year presentations of students' Community Action Projects (CAP). In every grade level, students are required to spend time and energy off campus providing needed community services and building relationships with community organizations.

## Student Support

With a long-block schedule of only four classes per day, girls experience student life at a manageable pace and have time built in to their schedules for clubs, free time, and meeting with teachers and advisors. All students belong to an advisory group, led by a faculty advisor, that meets regularly to support students and build community. As part of each student's course load, the Human Development class focuses on students' developmental, emotional, and physical well-being as they mature into young adults. Westridge has a full-time school counselor, a learning support specialist, and a director of health and wellness on campus to provide any additional support as needed.

# Upper School Schedule

During a typical year of full-time, on-campus learning, all grades at Westridge operate on a six-day cycle. Days are designated as 1-6 and referred to as odd or even days. In addition, each Upper School block/class time is given a letter A-H.

Our block schedule means classes meet every other day, allowing for deeper class discussions and collaboration in 80-minute class blocks. Over the course of four years in the Upper School, graduation requirements are met through a thoughtfully planned selection of courses, including honors and APs, electives, and visual and performing arts options that successfully position our students for intellectual, social, and emotional growth, as well as the college admissions process.

## 9th Grade

Ninth grade students take a balanced course load of English, history, math, science, language, the arts, and human development. Honors and AP courses are available beginning in the tenth grade year. We believe ninth grade is a time of transition and foundation-building, and the caliber of the Westridge curriculum is such that our standard courses inherently offer the appropriate level of challenge. Elective courses are offered during “H Block” once or twice a rotation, depending on the course. The last half hour of the day is dedicated to clubs, assemblies, class meetings, or 1:1 advising on odd days. There is a 25-minute block in the morning on even days for clubs, student leadership meetings, advisory, town meeting, or 1:1 advising.

### SAMPLE 9TH GRADE SCHEDULE - ODD DAYS

	7:55-9:15 A Block		9:30-10:50 B Block	11:00-12:20 C Block		1:15-2:35 D Block	2:40-3:10
<b>Day 1</b>	Geometry	Break	Visual or Performing Arts	P.E.	Lunch	World Views	Clubs
<b>Day 3</b>	Geometry	Break	Visual or Performing Arts	P.E.	Lunch	World Views	Assemblies
<b>Day 5</b>	Geometry	Break	Visual or Performing Arts	P.E.	Lunch	World Views	Class Meetings

### SAMPLE 9TH GRADE SCHEDULE - EVEN DAYS

	7:55-9:15 E Block		9:35-10:00	10:05-11:25 F Block	11:35-12:55 G Block		1:50-3:10 H Block
<b>Day 2</b>	English I	Break	Advisory	Language	Biology	Lunch	Human Development
<b>Day 4</b>	English I	Break	Clubs/ Student Leadership	Language	Biology	Lunch	Rocketry Elective
<b>Day 6</b>	English I	Break	Town Meeting	Language	Biology	Lunch	Free



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