

Mill Creek Elective Courses

Archaeology (Not offered 23/24)

Do you ever wonder about times past? Are you curious and creative? In this course, you will study ancient civilizations and the cultural universals that make them unique. Students will work in groups to make artifacts and create a unique culture of their own. Groups will also analyze and attempt to discover and decipher a culture created by previous students.

Band (7th Grade)

It's time to expand upon the musical skills we learned in the 5th and 6th-grade band. Students will study and perform a variety of music in 7th-grade band. Students will participate in Solo and Ensemble Festival and Band Festival. Festivals provide a great educational opportunity to showcase your individual and group musical talents.

Band (8th Grade)

You will continue to perfect your musical skills, participate in performances and attend festivals. The 8th-grade band will provide new and exciting challenges. We will play tougher music, but it becomes easier. The last four weeks of the year, you will be outside learning to march. This will prepare you for band camp and the high school band!

Beyond Books

In this class, you will be encouraged to stretch your mind in new ways as you examine alternatives to the traditional book structure. You will work on creative projects that will help you tell stories in unique ways. You will also read and discuss some exciting nontraditional genres of writing. Creativity, the ability to think abstractly, and a willingness to try new things are required!

Book Club

Are you excited about reading? This class is for you. Book Club is an opportunity to meet with students who share your love for reading. You will read a variety of books in small groups and then share what you've read in discussion and through creative projects. Class members will choose many of the books read throughout the quarter.

Cadet Teaching (*Prerequisite: Teacher Recommendation Required.*)

You will have the opportunity to assist a teacher or staff member at Anchor, Beacon, Wylie, or Mill Creek. The work will vary depending on your placement. You may assist with small groups of students, file papers, create bulletin boards or classroom materials, or assist in the library or office. The supervising teacher will try to match an available placement with your request but can make no guarantees that you will be placed at a building other than Mill Creek. You must have excellent attendance and citizenship to participate in this class.

Ceramics

Students will explore clay to create functional and non-functional art. Using hand-building techniques students will create a variety of objects such as tiles, bowls, mugs, sculptures, and jewelry. Students will be introduced to the potter's wheel. Glazing and firing will be part of this course. Daily studio cleanup is a shared responsibility vital to the function of the studio and safety of all students. Writing assignments will be included in the course as a way for students to critique their own work and demonstrate their understanding of the process and ceramic vocabulary.

Civil War

Civil War class will focus on three things: causes of the war, the war itself, and the positive and negative outcomes of the war. Special emphasis will be placed on slavery and what it was like to be a soldier. The way life was for all Americans during the war will also be explored.

Comics

Comics is a class about comic books and graphic novels. Students will learn various elements specific to the comic genre. During class, students will create original comics and read comics of their choice, including fiction and non-fiction graphic novels. Artistic talent might be helpful but is certainly not necessary

Community Announcements

Community Announcements class will be responsible for creating a 1-2 Minute Daily video that will be published online and available to staff and students. The elective class will create daily announcements during elective class time for the following morning/day. Small student groups (2-3) will be assigned to a bi-weekly committee. The class will be interviewing students, staff, and club groups during the afternoon elective periods to be edited and published the following morning. Students and staff will have ongoing access to past, current, and future events/activities at Mill Creek.

Community Service and Leadership (CS&L)

We need you! If you are interested in making a difference and gaining leadership skills, Community Service and Leadership is for you! You will be asked to plan and participate in special activities such as athletic pre-game festivities, spirit week activities, after-school dances, staff recognition activities, and school and community service projects. May be repeated in 8th grade.

Computer Programming

This course introduces the fundamentals of computer programming and computer science. Part 1 of the course focuses on computational thinking and problem-solving skills. In Part 2, students apply what they've learned to program a computer game of their own design. Languages covered in the course include Blockly (a visual programming language that is very accessible to beginners), HTML with cascading style sheets, and JavaScript. Students work in Code.org and Scratch for much of the initial portion of the class. Students who progress very quickly may tackle additional languages such as Ruby and Python. This course is not intended for very experienced programmers.

Creative Writing

If you like to use your imagination, this is the class for you. Creative writing is for the student who enjoys writing original pieces and sharing them with others. You will examine various creative writing selections, learn some techniques of writing, and then write your own poems, stories, or plays. You may also have the opportunity to illustrate your work. This is a class for students who like to express themselves!

Design Drafting

In this elective, you will be introduced to the fundamentals of design and design drafting. You will explore the concepts and techniques utilized by design and engineering professionals in the preparation of technical drawings and plans that are used by production and construction workers to build everything from manufactured products to structures. A variety of topics will be covered, including freehand and applied sketching, basic drafting techniques and equipment, architectural drafting, and Computer-Aided Design (SketchUp).

Drawing

Students will have an opportunity to explore their creative side. You will learn basic drawing techniques such as how proportion plays a critical role in establishing accurate sizes and angles of the subject matter, pencil shading, creating and using texture, and more. Students will have the freedom to choose a wide range of projects and practice their skills. This class is suitable for both novice and seasoned artists alike. A desire to draw, learn and improve both new and old skills alike, and have fun is essential.

Drawing and Painting

Students will explore a variety of drawing and painting techniques as well as materials. Creation of depth, form, and composition will be taught using materials such as pencil, charcoal, pastels, watercolor and acrylics. Students will learn techniques to create the illusion of form on a flat surface. Finished pieces will be created in a range of materials and subject matter. Weekly sketchbook assignments completed outside of class are required and will account for 15% of the final grade.

Ecological Restoration

What did this area look like before it was settled? How did Native Americans use the land we now call home? Which plants are native to our area? Which plants are exotic? Which are considered invasive? What can we do to control them? How can we help our local watershed and the earth by acting locally? These are the questions the Ecological Restoration course will address in a hands-on, field-based approach. You will learn about the natural consequences of land development while focusing your energy on creating and maintaining small natural areas on school grounds. You will make a difference in your community and teach others about your work. (May be repeated in 8th grade)

Flight

Students will learn about the many aspects of flight. We will investigate the history of flight and how an aircraft functions. Students will experiment with flight using paper airplanes, paper helicopters, parachutes, and potentially many more models. The final flight investigation will be to construct an air-pressurized bottle rocket. It is important for students in this class to be able to work with others as part of a team, accurately record data, and reflect on data obtained to formulate conclusions.

Foods

If you want to learn basic cooking skills, you should sign up for this class. You will plan, prepare, and eat various foods. You will learn how to maintain a clean working area. Modifications for students with special dietary restrictions and specific food allergies will be made.

Forensics (Speech & Acting) (Not offered 23/24)

Forensics is a public speaking and interpretative speaking activity in which you will have the opportunity to learn and practice various speech styles. This elective is open to everyone who enjoys performing for an audience. It is also for those of you who are nervous about performing but would like to gain experience and confidence. Students who take this class must enjoy reading and memorizing. (May be repeated in 8th grade).

French One – Year-long Course (Prerequisite: Must be an eighth-grade student.)

During this high school-level course, students will explore the French-speaking world. If you have a serious interest in French culture, people, and learning to speak French on a daily basis, this class is for you. This is a year-long course with the option of entering French 2 in 9th grade upon showing mastery at the end of both semesters. Students successfully completing the course can earn up to one high school credit. Students should expect to dedicate extra time to studying at home and to complete homework on a daily basis. Due to a large demand for this course, there may be more students who sign up than we have spots for. If this is the case, students will be selected by a random drawing.

Future Entrepreneurs

Students will be introduced to the many aspects of what it takes to become an entrepreneur. All students will be expected to participate in class sales as well as develop their own business and sell a product of their choosing. Therefore, students will be required to work before school, at lunch, or after school on multiple occasions. Class time will be spent learning about types of businesses, developing a business plan, naming a business, running a business, and many other aspects to be successful as an entrepreneur. Money made by students will go back into the class as well as a portion will be donated to a charity determined by the “best” entrepreneurs.

Hollywood Hype...or History? (Prerequisite: Parental permission to watch teacher-approved PG & PG-13 rated films.)

Do you enjoy movies? Are you intrigued by key moments in world history? In this elective, you can pursue both of these interests! You will watch movies based on real events and compare what’s shown to what actually happened. Near the end of the quarter, you will make an overall evaluation of the accuracy of Hollywood’s portrayal of history.

Holocaust History

This academic elective will give students a basic knowledge of the Holocaust in Europe during World War II. Using the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum website as the primary source for information, students will learn about the rise of fascism through Hitler, the power of institutional discrimination and propaganda, the isolation of targeted populations in the ghettos and in concentration camps, and the stories of survivors. The patterns and themes of the Holocaust will be highlighted as students widen their view at the end of the quarter to do research. Research options include studying other genocides throughout history, profiles of resistance, international activism focused on human rights. The course includes a field trip to the Holocaust Memorial Center in Farmington Hills, and we will welcome parent volunteers to attend the trip. Students will be required to read outside of class, and writing will be an integral part of the course.

Individual Learning Hour (ILH) (*Prerequisite: Teachers and Administration will identify and place students in this course.*)

This course is designed to assist you with your studies. It is limited to 10-15 students so that you can receive individual assistance with classwork. The class will help you learn to maximize your study time.

Individual and Team Sports

In this elective, you will participate in a variety of activities designed to improve physical skill, strength, and athleticism. Such activities include the team sports of football, tennis, wiffleball, basketball, badminton, volleyball, team handball, lacrosse, ultimate Frisbee, and soccer. Individual sports include track & field, cross-country, table tennis, and tennis.

Spring and fall classes will focus on outdoor sport activities while winter classes will be exclusively indoor activities. Individual and Team Sports should be taken only one time per year. (May be repeated in 8th grade)

Interior Design

Interior Design will be a course that students can take as an elective during a 9-week period sometime in their 7th and/or 8th grade year. This course will allow students to learn about design elements common in interior design. Students will also have the ability to practice designing spaces for "clients," work with a budget and present their ideas and designs, utilizing public speaking skills. (May be repeated in 8th grade by students who earned a passing grade in 7th grade.)

Introduction to Theater

This class is an acting class. Students will work on different acting techniques through a variety of activities. Students will predominantly work in groups and will perform in front of the class and others on a regular basis. Possible topics we may cover include dramatic reading, puppetry, improvisation, monologue, short plays, creative playwriting, small-scale production of a play, and more. This class is for beginners and seasoned actors alike. A willingness to work with others and perform in front of an audience is a must.

Learning Differences Leadership Team (Not offered 23/23)

In this course, students within the general education population will learn strategies to help students with learning differences engage in learning, and develop language and social skills. The students will learn about specific learning differences as well. The students will participate in activities and educational field trips to develop friendships with each other and connections within our community. Students will also develop an advocacy project and/or a building-wide inclusion project.

Life in the Rainforest

Life in The Rainforest is a fun project-based course in which students will learn about the rainforest, why and how it is being destroyed, and what we can do to help save it. Class time is devoted to project work.

Mandarin One- Year-Long Course (*Prerequisite: Must be an eighth-grade student.*)

This is a year-long course that integrates the students' prior knowledge, enhances their overall Mandarin Chinese language skills, achieves communicative competence and accuracy, and prepares them for the next level of Mandarin Chinese study. This course further enriches students' knowledge of Chinese culture and society. Students are expected to spend 30 minutes daily on homework. This course will fulfill one of the two World Language credits needed for high school graduation.

Math Mania

Do you enjoy brain teasers and playing mathematical games, or working on math-related projects? Do you love math? If so, this class is for you! In this class, you will experience many math challenges. You will learn math tricks, play a variety of math games, tease your brain with logic and math-related problems, and have the opportunity to use math in some hands-on projects. You will also learn that math can be FUN!

Math Power Hour (*Prerequisite: Teachers and Administration will identify students and place them in this course*)

Math Power Hour (MPH) is designed to increase calculation speed and accuracy, fact fluency, and increase problem-solving capability. Students will work on improving their basic skills as well as developing skills to help them be successful in their current math curriculum.

Mill Creek Makers

This is a hands-on, student-driven class, where students will have access and will be encouraged to gain the same skills but at levels that are unique to them (Ex: based on experience level, personal interest, and comfort level). Students will be charged with designing for their own real-world problems which will include student choice. Students will be exploring real-world problems and will use the engineering and design process to build solutions to those problems.

Mill Creek Singers

Seventh and Eighth graders join together to sing! In this course, you will learn songs for performances for school and parents including the Winter Concert, All Choir Concert, and the Broadway Review. This choir performs songs from all music genres including traditional choral music, musical theatre, and pop music. Mill Creek Singers also participates in MSVMA Solo and Ensemble Festival and MSVMA Choral Festival. Performances are an exciting and essential part of your class grade. Your knowledge of music theory, sight-reading, and choral singing will improve and prepare you for singing in the high school choir. Students who enroll in Mill Creek Singers take it for the entire year. Students who would like to take the course for a semester only please select S1. Those who want to take chorus all year long must select S1 & S2.

Mindfulness

Take some time to BREATHE! This class will teach you the basics of mindfulness and how it can help you to improve and maintain your well-being. Learn skills that you can use anytime and anywhere to calm your body and mind. We will practice meditation and yoga. Learn how to experience life fully in the moment. Mindfulness is meant to be a relaxing class for the end of the school day.

Movin' to the Music

This fun and energetic class will give you the opportunity to be creative through a variety of choreographed and student-created dances. You will learn dance basics, such as finding and moving to the beat of a song as well as steps to popular dances. You will also learn about various forms of dance including American Dance (Hip-Hop, country line dance, popular wedding line dances, Broadway, Disco, and Jazz), European Dance (Irish Step, Ballet, Polka, Waltz), Latin Dance (Salsa, Merengue, Cumbia, and Reggaeton) as well as other dance forms from around the world (African, Bhangra, and Bollywood). You will have the chance to choreograph your own dances in groups. Based on student interest, we may also participate in forms of fitness that follow music such as Zumba, High Fitness, Pound, and Rumble (kickboxing). Whether advanced in dance or just beginning, this will be a fun class for anyone who enjoys moving to the music! Daily class participation is a must!! (May be repeated in 8th grade).

Orchestra (7th Grade)

Open to all string players with two or more years of experience on a string instrument, as we will expand on the skills learned in the 5th and 6th-grade orchestra. Also open to any student who wishes to begin a string instrument and is willing to take some private lessons to catch up. This group may participate in Solo and Ensemble Festival in February and the District Orchestra Festival in March. Several concerts will also be performed during this year-long course. We will have the opportunity to perform as a full orchestra for the first time, as some members from the 7th grade band will join us for our Spring concert.

Orchestra (8th Grade)

Open to current string players or those who wish to begin a string instrument and are willing to take private lessons to catch up. Full participation in Solo and Ensemble and District Festival will continue, along with concerts throughout this year-long course. The music is more challenging than in previous years, though it becomes easier as we progress. We will continue to expand upon and introduce new musical skills throughout the year, as this course is designed to prepare you for high school orchestra. We also take a field trip to the Detroit Symphony Orchestra as an end-of-year treat!

Our Human Journey

This course highlights human evolution based on the fossil record and genetic patterns. Students will learn about the adaptive benefits of both dark skin and light skin in relation to latitude. They will learn about other adaptations humans have developed over the millennia. Students will learn about the patterns of human migration over time, and they will connect their learning to a culminating project in the context of our deep ancestral adaptations and migrations. Students will be encouraged to discuss the concepts they are studying with adults at home. We will go on a full day field trip in this class to the University of Michigan campus to visit the UM Museum of Natural History, The Kelsey Museum of Archaeology, and the UM Museum of Art. We welcome parent chaperones to join us on the field trip.

Personal Fitness

Personal Fitness is designed to help you become a physically educated person: one who can apply the concepts learned in the class to make wise lifestyle choices while participating in physical activity. Many different physical activities will be learned during this class including interval training, yoga, step aerobics, running, pilates, fitness tests, as well as some games. This class does NOT revolve around sports playing although some team sports may be played. This lifetime fitness-based class is for all ability levels and focuses on personal improvement and achieving personal goals. (May be repeated in 8th grade.)

Photojournalism

Calling all photographers! You are needed for an extremely important mission. The mission is to document the school year using photography. In this course, students will learn the basics of photography with an emphasis on how to tell stories through pictures. Students will also learn how to display their work using different types of programs and media. The final project is to help complete a Mill Creek Memory Book that will be sold to any Mill Creek student who would like to purchase one. *Note: Students MUST attend some events after school hours (i.e., band concerts, Poetry Slam, or sporting events). Parents are responsible for transportation to and/or from these events in Dexter. (This course is a nine-week course)

Power Typing (Not offered 23/24)

Does it take forever to type a paper because you have to find the right keys? If so, this class is for you. You will learn to type without looking at the keys, using proper fingering with speed and accuracy. This will dramatically increase your ability to type papers and reports.

Reading Buddies

Learn how to work one on one with elementary students in reading. You will study the development of kindergarten through 2nd-grade students while learning some specific reading skills to reinforce what is being taught in elementary classrooms. You will prepare at least two books to share with young readers and then walk to Anchor or Beacon to read with individual students. You do not have to be an expert reader to take this class. Reluctant readers may discover a new desire to read.

Reading Support (*Prerequisite: Administration will identify and place students in this course.*)

Reading Support is a class designed to help students whose reading ability is not as high as is expected for their grade level. Class activities will vary depending on the needs of the group, but students can be certain they'll be doing plenty of reading of both fiction and non-fiction as a whole class, in small groups, and individually. There will be an emphasis on building understanding of what is read. Fluent reading, decoding strategies, use of punctuation cues, and how to sustain attention while reading will also be covered.

Reel to Real (*Prerequisite: Parental permission to watch teacher-approved PG & PG-13 rated films.*)

Do you love getting "real" about the latest movie you've seen? REEL-TO-REAL will challenge you to become thoughtful, active viewers, and give you the opportunity to talk and write about films in new and exciting ways. We will examine many aspects of film genres, as well as focus on young adult themes (families, belonging, moral dilemmas, and fulfilling dreams). Small group discussions and written reflections will be required.

Robotics

Have fun building Lego robots. This course is a hands-on introduction to the field of robotics which brings together computer science and engineering. Students will work in small teams to build robots using Lego robot building kits. They will program them to navigate their environment and complete various tasks. They will build skills which include working in a team, creative problem solving, construction, communication and engineering design. Students will have the opportunity to complete multiple investigations integrating math, science, and technology as it relates to programming robots, using EV3 software and hardware.

School Newspaper

After learning about the kinds of writing that go into a newspaper, you will gain practice being a reporter as you brainstorm story ideas, interview students, staff and other community members, and use computers to write, revise and edit stories which will be published in the school newspaper (or online) via the Mill Creek Mariner. You may also take pictures for the school paper or illustrate stories. (May be repeated in 8th grade by students who earned a passing grade in 7th grade.)

Science Olympiad (Not offered 23/24)

One of the primary goals of Science Olympiad is to increase your interest in science and provide recognition for outstanding achievement in science education by both students and teachers. Throughout this elective course, you will use technology as you develop problem-solving skills to explore science concepts, processes, and applications. A major component of this course is problem-solving activities that encourage learning in the various science disciplines of biology, earth science, chemistry, physics, mathematics, computers and technology. Example activities include bottle rockets, bridge building, egg drop, experimental design, mission possible, mystery architecture and robo-billiards. In addition to this course, an afterschool club may be offered to provide an opportunity to participate in a regional competition.

Sculpture

Students will focus on three-dimensional forms. A variety of art materials and some surprising everyday objects will be utilized to create sculptural work. Molding, carving and fabricating techniques, to name a few will be covered. Creations will be both realistic and abstract in form. As a way to critique personal work, students will be required to do at least one writing assignment describing their process and results.

Sewing

The Sewing class is designed to help students express their creativity, develop their math skills and learn to interpret and follow written and verbal directions. Each student will make a nine square pillow and one to two other projects depending on how complex the projects are. Students may make stuffed animals, shorts, pants, pillows, sports pillows, gym bags, wall art, etc. Students have the option of purchasing kits for their projects or purchasing supplies from a fabric store. This class is designed for students of all ability levels.

Sim Money

In this course, students will learn financial skills which will help prepare them to complete tasks later in life. Students will learn to balance a checkbook, keep track of income and expenses, write checks, pay bills, and make decisions about housing and employment. They will also learn what the outcomes can be when making financial decisions throughout our class simulations.

Spanish One – Year-long Course. (*Prerequisite: Must be an eighth-grade student with strong homework completion rate and good work ethic.*)

During this high-school level course, you will explore the Spanish-speaking world. If you have a serious interest in Spanish speaking countries, culture, people, and learning to speak Spanish on a daily basis, this class is for you. This is a yearlong course with the option of entering Spanish 2 in 9th grade upon showing mastery at the end of both semesters. Students successfully completing the course will earn one high school credit. Students should expect to dedicate extra time to studying at home and to complete homework on a daily basis. Due to a large demand for this course, there may be more students who sign up than we have spots for. If this is the case, students will be selected by a random drawing.

Sports Medicine

This course will offer students an introduction to sports medicine related fields and careers. It will also give students hands-on experience for injury prevention, treatment, and first aid. Many unique and interesting guest speakers will make an appearance throughout the quarter and present their knowledge about their career in relation to Sports Medicine. As a bonus, students will also have an opportunity to learn the lifesaving skills of adult CPR/choking/AED.

TED Talk

The TED Talk course will give students myriad opportunities to quench their curiosity about hundreds of different topics. Unlike most other elective courses, in which the content is focused on a convergent topic, the TED Talk course will be divergent. Students would be able to pursue any topic of interest. Students will script and present their own "TED" talk that connects content standards to meaningful practices of effective storytelling. Students will use their passions and interests when deciding a topic and how they will present their talk. Students will spend much time in this elective watching various examples of TED talks and uncovering what exactly these presenters do to ensure an engaging and powerful message is delivered. Students will be charged with developing a rubric and evaluating the TED Talks of their peers.

Transportation Technology

In this elective, you will explore and learn how various methods of transportation are utilized in the environments of land, water, air and space in order to move or deliver passengers and/or goods from one place to another. Topics explored will include technological resources, transportation processes, propulsion and control systems, industrial applications, and the technological impact of transportation systems. Design and problem-solving projects are a major component of this course. Actual models of a variety of transportation vehicles will be designed, constructed, tested, and assessed in the laboratory. Example projects include CO2 race cars, mousetrap-powered vehicles, hot air balloons, magnetic levitation vehicles, boat hull design, and aircraft design.

Twentieth Century Culture and Conquest (Not offered 23/24)

This is a survey course of the major events of the 20th century. It is designed to equip you with a more in-depth understanding of events that have affected the United States and the rest of our modern world. At the conclusion of the course, you will be able to successfully link the role of the United States in world affairs and be equipped with a working vocabulary and understanding of these events and the effect they have on your life and the world. You will also be able to understand 20th century events from a non-American perspective.

Video Production

You will have the opportunity to work with video media to create presentations. Video-related activities will include learning to use your phone to produce content, selecting camera angles, storyboarding, and editing video and audio segments to create a polished presentation. This course requires a high level of student responsibility and self-discipline. Many activities will be performed in small groups. Your group will be expected to exhibit professional ethics, manage resources and meet deadlines. Students will also share their videos with their peers and critique one another's work.

Web Page Design

Would you like to have your very own web page? Would you like friends and family from all over the world to have access to your website? If so, this class is for you! In addition to creating a personal web page, you will have the opportunity to work on a variety of other types of web page designs such as a business web page, a web page for a teacher, or a web page highlighting one of the many elective courses offered at Mill Creek. Students will also work on computer skills that will help them in the real world, including typing and formatting.

Write Design: Expression through Language and Art (Not offered 23/24)

Students will develop connections with making art and creative writing. Papermaking, bookmaking, writing poetry, haiku, clay tablets and book illustration will be focused in depth. If you're interested in exploring the meaning of the book as an art form, take this class.

Write it Right! (Prerequisite: Administration will identify and place students in this course.)

Is writing a chore for you? Do you dread class assignments that require complete sentences, paragraphs, or longer papers? In this elective, you will receive extra help on these tasks. You will improve your writing skills as you write in response to prompts, review writing conventions (such as grammar and spelling) and edit your previous work. You may also be given time to complete writing-based homework.

