

# Saint Mary's SCHOOL



**2023-2024 Curriculum Guide**

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## Saint Mary's School Mission

Saint Mary's School, a community dedicated to academic excellence and personal achievement, prepares young women for college and life.

To accomplish our mission, Saint Mary's School:

- Challenges each young woman to embrace the habits of an intellectual life, engages her with the past and the emerging future, and empowers her to serve and shape her world.
- Fosters in each young woman a spirit of connection to others, guides her in developing her spiritual and ethical integrity, and prepares her to take responsibility for herself and her future.

## Curriculum Goals

Saint Mary's School strives, through its academic curriculum to challenge each student to embrace the habits of an intellectual life. The faculty work to prepare each student to take responsibility for herself and for her future. We intend that graduates of Saint Mary's School develop the Saint Mary's **10 Competencies**, building their skills on a foundation marked by core knowledge of a liberal arts curriculum.

The 10 key competencies fostered through Saint Mary's programs are:

- Collaboration
- Communication
- Critical thinking
- Cross cultural intelligence
- Growth mindset
- New media literacy & computational thinking
- Self-expression
- Self-directed learning
- Servant leadership
- Social-emotional intelligence

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# Graduation Requirements

## Curriculum/Graduation Requirements

To qualify for the Saint Mary's School diploma, students must meet the following requirements:

- Complete a total of 22 units with a cumulative weighted grade point average (GPA) of not less than 2.000
- Successful completion of Seminar curriculum with each semester of enrollment
- Within 22 units, have the following distribution of subject matter:

English 4 units

*(Includes English I, II, III, and IV)*

Humanities and Social Sciences 4 units\*

*(One unit of Ancient World History, one unit of Modern World History, one unit of U.S. History, one-half unit of Religion and one-half unit of choice)*

Science 3 units

*(Includes one unit of biology and one unit of a physical science)*

Mathematics 3 units\*\*

*(Includes Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II or the equivalent, plus one unit beyond Algebra II)*

World Languages Level 3/1 language\*\*\*

Level 2/2 languages\*\*\*

Visual and Performing Arts 2 units \*\*\*\*

Electives 3 units

\*Students entering after 9<sup>th</sup> grade are required to complete 4 units of Humanities and Social Sciences; specific named courses will be determined based on transcript.

\*\*Mathematics units must be taken in a high school or college program. A student who enters the 9<sup>th</sup> grade with math credits for Algebra I or beyond will need 3 units beginning at the next level. Students interested in attending a four-year college are expected to progress through Pre-Calculus.

\*\*\*For students interested in attending a selective college or university, Saint Mary's School recommends 4 units of the same World Language. Requirements for students admitted in 11<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> grades without previous World Language credits will be determined by the Academic Chair of the World Languages Department.

\*\*\*\*Students entering in the 11<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> grade without Visual and Performing Arts credits will be required to take ½ unit of Visual and Performing Arts.

## **Fulfillment of Requirements**

A candidate for the diploma must be enrolled as a full-time student during her 12<sup>th</sup> grade year. If there are unusual circumstances, the Assistant Head of School may give their permission to enroll part-time.

## **Required Courses**

Required courses must be attempted at Saint Mary's School. Credit from summer courses outside of Saint Mary's School is not accepted in lieu of courses offered in the school year, but may be used for student placement or remediation. Students must complete graduation requirements in four years and comply with the requirements stated in the Student-Parent Handbook at the time of their graduation. In unusual circumstances, with the prior approval of the Dean of Academic Innovation, exceptions may be made.

## **Grading System and Progress Reports**

Academic progress reports are made available electronically to all parents at regularly scheduled intervals and posted on the parent portal. Report cards will be available after the end of each semester. Saint Mary's School students earn a numerical grade in each course taken for credit. In addition, faculty provide narrative feedback that details more specific information about a student's proficiency in the curriculum. These narratives address accomplishments, make suggestions for further growth, and are essential to understanding the progress.

The evaluation of all academic work at Saint Mary's School rests with the teacher. Grades will be determined by the means considered to be most appropriate by the faculty member, in consultation with the academic department. Grading practices are regularly reviewed to ensure accuracy, equity, and consistency. The teacher will explain the grading policy to the class at the beginning of each course.

A student's cumulative GPA is determined by the grades earned at the end of each semester, and only at Saint Mary's School. Each of the semester grades and a final grade are reported on a student's transcript. If a student's grade is an F in either semester but her year-end grade is passing, credit is earned, but remediation may be required by the school before a student may progress to the next level. Students will be required to complete a placement test upon completion of any external credit recovery programs to ensure that the student has acquired the skills necessary to progress to the next academic course.

All academic work will be evaluated according to the following grading system:

Letter	%	Descriptor
A+ A A-	100-97 96-93 92-90	<i>Excellent:</i> The learner consistently demonstrates complete mastery of both the content and skills of the course. The work produced by the student often exceeds the requirements of the course.
B+ B B-	89-87 86-83 82-80	<i>Proficient:</i> The learner demonstrates a strong command of content and skills of the course. The work that the student produces meets the primary requirements of the course.
C+ C C-	79-77 76-73 72-70	<i>Satisfactory:</i> The learner demonstrates an adequate command of content and skills of the course. This learner creates a foundation to build on to master more complex content and develop deeper skills. The work that the student produces shows evidence of accurately focused and consistent effort even if it does not meet all the requirements of the course.
D	69-65	<i>Tenuous:</i> The learner demonstrates an unreliable or weak grasp of the content and skills of the course. She does not have a strong foundation and though credit is earned, she may not be prepared or recommended for further work in the discipline. Remedial work or intervention may be required by the school for a student with a grade of D. The work that the student produces shows some evidence of effort even if it does not meet the requirements of the course.
F	64- below	<i>Failing:</i> The learner does not demonstrate a grasp of the content and skills of the course. The work that the student produces may show some evidence of effort yet fails to meet the requirements of the course. No credit is issued. Remedial work or intervention may be required by the school for a student with a grade of F.

WP Withdrawal from a course while passing, current grade posted.

WF Withdrawal from a course while failing, current grade posted.

WM Withdrawal from a course for medical reasons, no grade posted.

INC\* Incomplete – Indicates that some part of the class work has not been completed

\* Any requests for an incomplete on a report card must be approved by the Dean of Academic Innovation.

## Grade Scale

Grade Point Averages (GPAs) are weighted and unweighted and calculated based on the following scales. A student's GPA is weighted only if the student takes Honors and Advanced Placement (AP) classes.

Grade	Unweighted	Honors*	Advanced Placement*
A+	4.3	5.3	6.3
A	4.0	5.0	6.0
A-	3.7	4.7	5.7
B+	3.3	4.3	5.3
B	3.0	4.0	5.0
B-	2.7	3.7	4.7
C+	2.3	3.3	4.3
C	2.0	3.0	4.0
C-	1.7	2.7	3.7
D	1.0	1.0	1.0
F	0	0	0

\*Course categories will be explained in the section on "course levels."

## Academic Policies

Policies concerning academic matters such as classes, class schedules, grading, academic expectations, and academic support may be found in the Academics section of the Student-Parent Handbook. Advisors are also available to discuss academic matters with students and families if there are questions.

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## Course Levels

Saint Mary's School offers high school courses at two levels: honors and Advanced Placement (AP). Placement in courses is determined through the Course Request Process - by teachers and advisors in consultation with students and parents. Each student has different strengths and weaknesses in her learning styles and subject areas. Students are strongly encouraged to select classes that enhance their learning, complement their learning styles, and allow for an overall positive school experience. All courses at Saint Mary's are designed to meet our mission of preparing students for college and for life.

### Honors Courses

Courses at Saint Mary's School are designed to enrich a student's knowledge and skills in a variety of subject areas. Students should be prepared for a variety of assignments in courses, such as homework, projects, papers, and tests. Students should be prepared for engaging and challenging high school work in Saint Mary's courses.

### Advanced Placement Courses

The Advanced Placement (AP) Program, sponsored by the College Board, is an academic program of college-level courses and examinations for high school students. A typical AP course takes a full academic year, offers a challenging curriculum, and is more rigorous than an honors course. These courses follow the College Board Advanced Placement course descriptions, and students are required to take the AP external exam at the end of the course. A passing score on the AP exam at the end of a course may earn college credit for a student depending on individual college policy. Failure to complete a national AP exam at the end of the course may have an impact on a student's enrollment in future AP courses.

Advanced Placement courses are offered to students after 9<sup>th</sup> grade. 10<sup>th</sup> grade students may request one AP course, 11<sup>th</sup> grade students may request up to two AP courses, and 12<sup>th</sup> grade students may request up to 4 AP courses. Approval for AP course loads will be determined by the Saint Mary's Faculty. The criteria for recommending students for these courses is developed collaboratively by the Dean of Academic Innovation and the Academic Department Chairs. Student performance in the prerequisite is an important factor in determining if enrollment in an AP course is appropriate. Prerequisite teacher recommendations take into account the student's demonstrated ability to: handle college-level work independently and consistently; be positively engaged with the subject; demonstrate intellectual curiosity; willingly tackle difficult material, rise to challenges, accept criticism, and work through setbacks; have a high level of written and oral discourse; have a high quality of interaction with others in pursuit of knowledge; attend class punctually and consistently; and have an ability to handle her particular combination of academic and other responsibilities. These criteria are clearly explained to all students who express interest in AP courses. All Saint Mary's School Advanced Placement courses have prerequisites. Students and parents are responsible for the fee for the AP external exam for each AP course a student takes.

Students in AP courses will be required to complete prep-work over the summer. This work must be completed by the beginning of school or the student may be asked to withdraw from the course.

Please keep in mind that courses may be requested, but when the student's entire course load is considered, some course requests may not be approved. Students who request an academic schedule that exceeds the Saint Mary's academic guidelines will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the Dean of Academic Innovation and the Assistant Head of School.



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# Course Descriptions By Department

## The English Department

The English Department helps students learn to communicate effectively by developing skills in reading, writing, listening, speaking, and viewing. Courses acquaint students with literary works from a range of periods and cultures beginning in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade with a broad global focus using interdisciplinary approaches. Students then progress to either Narrative Studies or Western Literature in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade. In the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades, students select from among AP English and a variety of literature, public speaking, and writing-focused courses.

The goals of the English program in reading, carried out in all course offerings, are to develop students' awareness of the themes and styles of literature from around the globe and to make connections among different cultures; to enable students to read any text to determine main ideas, subsidiary points, and supporting evidence; at advanced course levels, to recognize authors' techniques and strategies and begin to incorporate them into their own writing; and to find intellectual and aesthetic pleasure in reading.

The goals of the English program in writing, carried out in all course offerings, are to teach research and techniques such as precise word choice, effective sentence structure, logical transitions, unified organization of ideas, and clarity of expression that enable students to become powerful communicators on personal, academic, and public levels.

### **English I: World Literature**

World Literature introduces students to the literature of major regions of the world, emphasizing non-Western literature and making connections among cultures by exploring universal themes, symbols, and motifs. Students learn the basic skills of critical reading, analyzing literature, writing essays, using the library, using technology, and developing vocabulary. The course introduces students to the basic kinds of literature—poetry, drama, short story, novel, and nonfiction prose. Students develop oral and written responses to literature, learn the process of writing a formal essay—from prewriting to publishing—build vocabulary, and develop grammar skills. The summative assessment at the end of the course is a research paper.

*Credit: one unit.*

### **English II: Narrative Studies**

Narrative Studies is a college preparatory, discussion-based course that stimulates the development of students' reading, writing, and critical thinking skills as they explore the fundamental elements of effective storytelling in a variety of narrative forms. Including traditional literary texts as well as those that use a multimedia approach, this project-based course engages students in activities that ask them to read, understand, analyze, interpret, and synthesize the texts they encounter and to examine them in relation to their own experience and values. Students will build on their active reading skills as well as their ability to research the context and background of a literary work to increase their understanding of its significance. Students will also continue to practice and sharpen communication skills, to analyze and create various narrative forms, to use the stages of the writing process, to gain command of basic sentence structure and standard grammar and mechanics, and to begin to find a voice and style of their own.

*Credit: one unit. Prerequisite: English I or equivalent.*

### **English II: Western Literature**

Western Literature is a college preparatory, discussion-based course that asks students to read and to write extensively in the classic Western literature canon. Students examine major literary genres and engage in

opportunities that ask them to understand, analyze, interpret, and synthesize the readings and to examine them in relation to their own lived experiences and values. Students continue to build upon and sharpen writing skills introduced in 9th grade World Literature. They fine-tune their use of the stages of the writing process and recognize and produce various forms of the essay. Moving beyond a basic command of sentence structure, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics is the goal for refining students' writing style in this year-long course.

*Credit: one unit. Prerequisite: English I or equivalent.*

### **English III: Literature and Rhetoric**

Literature and Rhetoric concentrates on developing reading, writing, and critical thinking skills through a study of selected literature. This college preparatory course focuses on the development of complex thought processes, independence in learning, and creative expression through students engaging in exercises, activities, and discussions that ask them to read, understand, analyze, interpret, and synthesize the readings and to examine them in relation to their own experience and values. This course is open to 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade students.

*Credit: one unit. Prerequisite: English II or equivalent for 11<sup>th</sup>; English III or equivalent for 12<sup>th</sup>.*

### **Advanced Placement English Language and Composition**

AP Language and Composition is a college-level course with college-level requirements and expectations. In AP English Language, students learn how to read critically and complete rhetorical and stylistic analysis of texts, looking at why and how writers write what they write. Students engage in exercises, activities, and discussions that ask them to read, understand, analyze, interpret, and synthesize the readings. Students should demonstrate enthusiasm for reading, critical thinking, and writing, with particular interest in persuasive argument. The course is designed for advanced readers and writers who are independent, self-motivated, and value the learning process. AP students are required to take the AP Exam and are evaluated with standards set by the College Board, including multiple choice and timed essay writing. This course is open to 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade students.

*Credit: one unit. Prerequisite: English II or equivalent for 11<sup>th</sup>; English III or equivalent for 12<sup>th</sup>; and teacher recommendation.*

### **Advanced Placement English Literature and Composition**

AP English Literature and Composition is a college-level course with college-level requirements and expectations. In AP English Literature, students learn to recognize and critique literary style in poetry, plays, novels, and short stories. They learn how to discover meaning in literature by being attentive to language, image, character, action, argument, and the various techniques and strategies authors use. Students are expected to justify their interpretation by reference to details and patterns found in the text, to compare their interpretations with those proposed by others, and to be prepared to modify their own interpretations as they learn and think. The course is designed for advanced readers and writers who are independent, self-motivated, and value the learning process. AP students are required to take the AP Exam and are evaluated with standards set by the College Board, including multiple choice and timed essay writing. This course is open to 12<sup>th</sup> grade students.

*Credit: one unit. Prerequisite: English III or equivalent and teacher recommendation.*

## **English Electives**

### **Creative Writing: Nonfiction**

This semester-long course is designed to enhance students' reading and writing skills and to stimulate their critical and creative thinking. This class will identify and explore effective storytelling techniques that may be used in writing a variety of forms of nonfiction. While observation and experience of reality are often used to fuel fiction that "feels" true, common devices used in fiction may also help bring true stories "to life" in a

dramatic and compelling way. Journals, memoir, biography, family histories, oral histories, and interviews are some of the mediums that will be studied. This course is a workshop, so students are required to share their writing with the class, to listen carefully to their classmates' work, and to respond thoughtfully to peers with supportive feedback. Open to 11th and 12th grade students.

*Credit: one-half unit. Prerequisite: English II or equivalent.*

### **Creative Writing: Fiction**

This semester-long course is designed to enhance students' reading and writing skills and to stimulate their critical and creative thinking. Focusing on short stories, students will study the basic components of storytelling and practice using a variety of techniques and strategies to construct engaging stories of their own. Students will be asked to read works of fiction; to offer their own evaluations of the works' success; and to apply what they have learned through their analyses as they create their own original pieces. This course is a workshop, so students are required to share their writing with the class, to listen carefully to their classmates' work, and to respond thoughtfully to peers with supportive feedback. Open to 11th and 12th grade students.

*Credit: one-half unit. Prerequisite: English II or equivalent.*

### **Women's Detective Fiction**

Detective fiction, one of the most popular genres, had its roots in the 1800s and was initially written almost exclusively by men. There were a couple of exceptions, but women were actively discouraged from writing in this genre. Then, in the 1920s, a huge shift occurred, and the genre became dominated by women writers, as it still is today. What happened to allow women access to a genre formerly closed to them? How did they change and shape the genre once they attained access? The course will answer these questions, along with a look at the growing presence of women in real-life forensic detection. Readings will include novels, short stories, and a work of the student's choice.

*Credit: one-half unit. Prerequisite: English II or equivalent.*

### **Gothic Literature**

The Gothic in literature is not merely about horror: it is about what one critic calls "the return of the repressed"—all the secrets a society tries to bury come back to haunt it, sometimes in the form of literal monsters, sometimes revealing the monstrous side of human nature. Gothic is the parent genre of today's popular fiction; science fiction, romance, and mystery/detective fiction all have their roots in Gothic. We will begin with Gothic classics, then read contemporary texts in order to look at how the genre is still relevant today.

*Credit: one-half unit. Prerequisite: English II or equivalent.*

### **Speech and Communication**

This is a one-semester class designed to develop and enhance verbal and nonverbal communication skills. We will explore communication as a process through the examination of intercultural, interpersonal group, and nonverbal communication. Along with the study of the types of communication, the public speaking unit will teach how to adapt speeches to a specific audience and purpose, how to incorporate aids (visual, auditory, etc.) and research, and how to be an attentive audience member. Along with the textbook, famous orators and speeches will be analyzed.

*Credit: one-half unit. Prerequisite: English II or equivalent.*

## **The Humanities and Social Sciences Department**

The Humanities and Social Sciences Department encompasses a range of courses that include the study of history, cultures, government, religion, philosophy, economics, and psychology. Through these courses, students have the opportunity to develop a deeper understanding of themselves and their world.

The courses in Humanities and Social Sciences take students from the general view of the world, presented in the World History sequence, to the more specific and specialized, as they move to United States History, then to government, religion, and electives. In all their classes in this department, students build the skills they will need to succeed in college and are prepared to become informed and responsible citizens of the world. In addition, the Humanities and Social Sciences Department places an emphasis in all courses on the diversity of peoples, perspectives, and experiences in our world.

### **Ancient World History**

This course covers World History through the Middle Ages. The course encourages students to analyze the significant cultural, political, religious, social, and economic movements and events of Ancient World History and their role in shaping the intellect and character of the world from the beginning of history to roughly c. 1200CE. It includes the study of the ancient Middle East, Greece, India, China, Rome, the Byzantine Empire and the early Muslim world and the Middle Ages in Europe and Asia. In addition to the subject-area content, World History I develops the critical reading, writing, research, geography, and study skills needed in the high school classroom, including the use of primary sources. In addition, students in the course will write both long and short essay assignments and master the use of citations and bibliography, as well as learn to identify reliable sources.

*Credit: one unit.*

### **Modern World History**

Modern World History covers World History from c. 1200CE to the present and seeks to build on the foundation laid in Ancient World History. There is a focus on the more recent past including the Middle Ages, the Renaissance and Reformation, developments in Africa and East Asia, the Americas, and the modern world. Modern World History encourages students to analyze the significant cultural, political, religious, social, and economic movements and events of World History and their role in shaping the intellect and character of the modern world. The course utilizes primary documents and emphasizes historical analysis, reading, research, and written argumentation building on the foundation set in the Ancient World History course.

*Credit: one unit. Prerequisite: Ancient World History or equivalent.*

### **Advanced Placement World History**

Advanced Placement World History is equivalent to a college-level world history course that examines the events that make up the world's history from c. 1200 CE to 2001 consistent with the College Board requirements to prepare students for the Advanced Placement examination. The course encourages students to analyze the significant cultural, political, religious, social, and economic movements and events of World History and their role in shaping the intellect and character of the modern world. AP World History emphasizes the following AP historical thinking skills including developments and processes; sourcing and situation; claims and evidence in sources; contextualization; making connections; and argumentation. The following AP reasoning processes are also essential: comparison, causation, and continuity and change. In addition, the course will move at a faster pace than other World History courses offered and will expect more independent work from students.

*Credit: one unit. Prerequisite: Ancient World History or equivalent and with teacher recommendation.*

## **United States History**

United States History focuses on the people and events of the United States from the pre-Columbian period to the present. The course encourages students to analyze the significant cultural, political, religious, social, and economic movements and events of the country and how they shaped the United States. Current events are also considered in the light of historical experience. In addition, the course emphasizes the analysis of primary source documents and researching and writing thesis-driven papers.

*Credit: one unit. Prerequisite: Ancient World History and Modern World History or equivalent.*

## **Advanced Placement United States History**

AP United States History is equivalent to a college-level US history course and is consistent with the College Entrance Examination Board requirements to prepare students for the AP examination in United States History. The course covers the nation's history from the pre-Columbian era to the present, makes extensive use of primary documents, and emphasizes analysis, argumentation, and writing skills. The course encourages students to analyze the significant cultural, political, religious, social, and economic movements and events of the country and how they shaped the United States. In addition, the course will move at a faster pace than other US History courses offered and will expect more independent work from students and a focus on the historical thinking skills expected by the College Board.

*Credit: one unit. Prerequisite: Ancient World History and Modern World History or equivalent and with teacher recommendation.*

## **United States Government**

A one-semester course that is devoted to the practical study of the United States' government. In addition to understanding concepts such as federalism, the three branches of federal government and the separation of powers, checks and balances, and popular sovereignty, the course applies these concepts through research on current events. The course also explores contemporary topics such as media bias and social media's impact on public opinion.

*Credit: one-half unit. Prerequisite: Ancient World History and Modern World History or equivalent.*

## **Advanced Placement United States Government and Politics**

AP United States Government and Politics is equivalent to a college-level survey of the United States government. The fundamental principles of the United States government are traced in their evolution through Western civilization to the nation's founders to today's political events in the nation's capital. The course emphasizes analysis of the U.S. political system and concentrates on teaching students how to understand political events by writing about the principles of political science in the context of United States governmental history. In addition, the course will move at a faster pace than the one-semester Government course and will expect more independent work from students.

*Credit: one unit. Prerequisite: Ancient World History and Modern World History or equivalent, U.S. History and with teacher recommendation.*

## **Advanced Placement Comparative Government and Politics**

In AP Comparative Government and Politics, students practice the skills used by comparative political scientists by studying data, political writings from different countries, and the processes and outcomes of politics in a variety of international settings. Students study six countries in AP Comparative Government and Politics: China, Iran, Mexico, Nigeria, Russia, and the United Kingdom. Students will show mastery of these skills on the AP Exam by applying concepts, analyzing data, comparing countries, and writing political science arguments. In addition, the course will move at a faster pace than the one-semester Government course and will expect more independent work from students.

*Credit: one unit. Prerequisite: Ancient World History and Modern World History or equivalent, U.S. History, and with teacher recommendation.*

## **World Religions**

A one-semester course, World Religions gives students an understanding of the fundamental beliefs and practices of the major religions in the modern world: Indigenous Sacred Ways, Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Students are also presented with an overview of the discipline of the study of religion.  
*Credit: one-half unit.*

## **Ethics**

A one-semester course, Introduction to Ethics considers some of the most influential ethical schools of thought such as Kantian Ethics, natural law, and utilitarianism to improve the students' ability to make ethical decisions in a complex world. In addition, the course examines and applies ethical approaches to current events. The course also enhances communication skills, develops character and reasoning skills and written argumentation.

*Credit: one-half unit*

## **Ethnic Studies**

A one-semester course, Ethnic Studies examines current events that impact communities of color in the United States from a historical context. Using an interdisciplinary and intersectional lens, the course examines the literature, history, and artforms of communities of color to amplify diverse voices. Throughout the semester, students will connect with their own histories and consider how they fit into the larger historical context.

*Credit: one-half unit.*

## **Advanced Placement Psychology**

AP Psychology introduces students to the systematic and scientific study of human behavior and mental processes. While considering the psychologists and studies that have shaped the field, students explore and apply psychological theories, key concepts, and phenomena associated with such topics as the biological bases of behavior, sensation and perception, learning and cognition, motivation, developmental psychology, testing and individual differences, treatments of psychological disorders, and social psychology. Throughout the course, students employ psychological research methods, including ethical considerations, as they use the scientific method, evaluate claims and evidence, and effectively communicate ideas. The course prepares students to take the AP Psychology examination. As a college-level course, students will be expected to work independently and at a fast pace.

*Credit: one unit. Prerequisite: Two units of Humanities and Social Sciences. Prerequisite or co-requisite: Biology, and with teacher recommendation.*

## **Economics**

A one-semester course, Economics addresses some of the most common and most pressing concerns which humans face. This course will introduce students to the terms, concepts, and assumptions of the social science called Economics, which will help them to understand claims about the state of the economy, economic policy, and many other topics which regularly appear on the news such as taxes, government spending, interest rates, international trade, economic growth, and interest rates. Students will also understand what is at stake in decisions that individuals and corporations make daily.

*Credit: one-half unit. Prerequisite: Ancient World History and Modern World History.*

## **The Mathematics Department**

Saint Mary's mathematics program supports students as they become mathematically literate citizens who know the appropriate mathematical and technological tools to use and when to use them in various problem-solving settings. Students work in independent, whole-class, and small-group settings to increase their mathematical confidence and their communication skills. The types of problems and the learning environment in the mathematics classrooms foster persistence, critical thinking, and reflection. All courses require students to communicate conceptual understanding (both verbally and in written form), justify and explain results, and apply mathematics to real-world situations.

Students build their mathematics education through a sequential progression of courses in the math department. Recognizing students may be at different levels of mathematical development upon entering Saint Mary's School, the department uses a variety of assessments and recommendations to place students into appropriate courses for successful experiences. Regardless of where a student begins in the progression, with each new course, students come to see that the learning of mathematics includes procedural fluency, conceptual understanding, and applying both to real-world contexts. They also gain experiences to help them think critically and build a solid foundation for further study of mathematics, both in high school and college.

The use of a TI-83+ or TI-84 graphing calculator is required of all students. Other types of technology, such as GeoGebra, Desmos, Microsoft Excel, Tinker Plots, TI-89 calculators, replit, CSAwesome, TI SmartView, and a variety of online applets may be incorporated into classes.

### **Algebra I**

Algebra I introduces students to the fundamental concepts and techniques of algebra. Topics include linear relationships, equations and inequalities, systems of equations, and various types of functions, including linear, absolute value, and quadratic. Statistics and geometry are integrated throughout this course, and students will learn how to utilize a graphing calculator.

*Credit: one unit. Prerequisite: Pre-Algebra.*

### **Geometry**

This course offers an introduction to Euclidean Geometry. Early on, students focus on points, lines, planes, angles, and congruence while working with parallel lines, perpendicular lines, and a variety of triangles. The course emphasizes the study of the conjecture system using deductive and inductive reasoning, and students learn to write formal, mathematical proofs. Other topics include transformations, similarity, right triangle trigonometry, and properties of circles. Algebraic principles are integrated throughout the course and technology is used to perform constructions and discover conjectures.

*Credit: one unit. Prerequisite: Algebra I*

### **Accelerated Geometry**

Accelerated Geometry is a course intended to prepare students for advanced mathematics courses. This course offers a rigorous introduction to Euclidean Geometry. After an introduction to fundamental vocabulary and postulates, students prove theorems using inductive and deductive reasoning. Major topics include parallel and perpendicular lines and planes, angle pair relationships, transformations, congruence and similarity with triangles and quadrilaterals, right triangle trigonometry, and properties of circles. Algebra skills are reinforced and applied throughout the course. Students will apply the above topics to three-dimensional figures throughout the course and utilize parametric equations to solve problems. Students enrolled in this course need to be able to work collaboratively and independently.

*Credit: one unit. Prerequisite: Algebra I, with teacher recommendation.*

## **Algebra II**

Algebra II is a continuation of the study of algebra at the intermediate level. Major topics include solving equations and inequalities, systems of equations, and inequalities in two and three variables, operations with polynomials and rational expressions, algebraic functions (absolute value, power, polynomial, rational, exponential, and logarithmic), statistics, probability, and logarithms.

*Credit: one unit. Prerequisite: Algebra I and Geometry.*

## **Accelerated Algebra II**

This is an accelerated course intended to prepare students for advanced mathematics courses. Major topics include solving equations and inequalities, continued work with parametric equations, the study of the properties, applications, and algebra of functions (power, polynomial, rational, exponential, and logarithmic), conic sections, right triangle trigonometry with an introduction to circular functions, series and sequences, and operations with matrices. The content of the course focuses on solving real-world problems and the use of the graphing calculator is an integral part of the course. Students enrolled in this course need to be able to work collaboratively and independently.

*Credit: one unit. Prerequisites: Algebra I and Geometry, with teacher recommendation.*

## **Pre-Calculus**

Pre-Calculus is a course that helps develop students' understanding of functions and prepares them for further studies in mathematics, including Calculus. Topics include functions and their graphs (polynomials, rational, exponential, logarithmic, and trigonometric functions), and analytic trigonometry. Each topic is approached numerically, symbolically, and graphically. Technology and real-world applications are incorporated throughout this course.

*Credit: one unit. Prerequisite: Algebra II.*

## **Math Analysis**

Math Analysis is an accelerated Pre-Calculus course designed for students who will pursue AP Calculus (AB or BC) the following year. Topics include advanced algebra, functions, trigonometry, limits, and an introduction to differential and integral calculus. Technology and real-world applications are incorporated throughout this course.

*Credit: one unit. Prerequisite: Algebra II, with teacher recommendation.*

## **Calculus Topics**

This is a semester course of introductory Calculus designed to prepare students for taking Calculus in college. Students will study selected topics from differential and integral calculus, including the study of functions, limits and continuity, derivatives, and antiderivatives. One focus of the course is to explore applications of Calculus in other disciplines such as business, science, and psychology.

*Credit: one-half unit. Prerequisite: Pre-Calculus or Math Analysis.*

## **Advanced Placement Calculus AB**

AP Calculus AB is equivalent to a first semester, college level course in Calculus. The course starts with a review of the Cartesian plane and the functions studied in Pre-Calculus. Major topics covered are limits and continuity, differentiation and its applications, integration and its applications, differential equations, and slope fields. This course emphasizes a multi-representational approach to calculus, with concepts and results expressed numerically, graphically, analytically, and verbally.

*Credit: one unit. Prerequisite: Pre-Calculus or Math Analysis, with teacher recommendation.*

## **Advanced Placement Calculus BC**

AP Calculus BC is equivalent to a second-semester, college-level course in Calculus. This course is an



extension of Calculus AB and includes additional topics in differential and integral calculus including techniques and applications of integration, parametric functions, polar functions, differential equations, sequences, series, power series, and Taylor's Theorem.

*Credit: one unit. Prerequisite: AP Calculus AB or Math Analysis, with teacher recommendation.*

### **Multivariable Calculus**

Multivariable calculus is a post-AP Calculus BC course. The course focuses on (1) vectors, vector algebra, and vector functions; (2) functions of several variables, partial derivatives, gradients, directional derivatives, maxima and minima; (3) multiple integration; and (4) line and surface integrals, Green's Theorem, Divergence Theorems, Stokes' Theorem, and applications. The course relies on the use of handheld calculators and computer algebra systems.

*Credit: one unit. Prerequisite: AP Calculus BC, with teacher recommendation.*

### **Statistics Topics**

This is a semester course in introductory Statistics designed to prepare students for taking Statistics in college. Students will study selected topics from statistics, including graphing and describing one- and two-variable data sets, calculating standardized normal probabilities, performing linear regression, and designing experiments, and beginning inference. A major focus of the course is to explore applications of Statistics in other disciplines such as business, science, and psychology.

*Credit: one-half unit. Prerequisite: Algebra II.*

### **Advanced Placement Statistics**

The purpose of AP Statistics is to prepare students for the Advanced Placement Statistics examination. This course introduces students to the major concepts and tools for collecting, analyzing, and drawing conclusions from data. Students are exposed to four broad conceptual themes: exploring data and describing patterns and departures from established patterns; planning and conducting experiments using proper procedures and sampling techniques; anticipating patterns in random phenomena through the use of probability and simulation; and using statistical inference to estimate population parameters and to test hypotheses.

*Credit: one unit. Prerequisite: Pre-Calculus or Math Analysis, with teacher recommendation.*

### **Introduction to Programming**

Computing has changed the world in profound ways: it has opened wonderful new ways for people to connect, design, research, play, create, and express themselves. However, using the computer as a tool is just a small part of the power computing brings to society. This survey course offers students a hands-on introduction to computer science, and they will use programming language to translate their ideas into code. Students will learn about big programming ideas such as variables, lists, algorithms, loops, data structures, recursive functions, and general abstraction. In addition, students will explore various aspects of computing relevant to themselves and to society.

*Credit: one-half unit.*

### **Advanced Placement Computer Science A**

AP Computer Science is equivalent to a first-semester, college-level course in computer science. The course introduces students to computer science with fundamental topics that include problem solving, design strategies and methodologies, organization of data (data structures), approaches to processing data (algorithms), analysis of potential solutions, and the ethical and social implications of computing. The course emphasizes both object-oriented and imperative problem solving and design using Java language. These techniques represent proven approaches for developing solutions that can scale up from small, simple problems to large, complex problems.

*Credit: one unit. Prerequisite: Algebra II, with teacher recommendation.*

## **The Science Department**

Science plays a major role in human lives and it is vital that students understand its importance. Science courses make students aware of the vast amount of information being discovered daily about our world. Students gain enough background to be able to read with interest and understanding current literature that deals with scientific and technological topics as well as to continue science study at advanced levels with confidence.

The science program offers courses in both the biological and the physical sciences and aims to stimulate critical thinking and to teach students how to understand and interpret data and to apply the scientific method. Laboratory experiences form a major part of science study. Through them, students explore the world via the microscope, experimentation and observation, and field work, which helps them relate the more abstract concepts considered in lecture periods to their immediate experience. Opportunities for individual research programs are available for students who wish to go beyond the required courses.

The Science Department subscribes to the statement that the NSTA recognizes the inherent and strong connection of many 21st-century skills with science education. "The nature of science adopted by science education focuses on fostering deep content knowledge through active intellectual engagement and emulating disciplinary practices and thinking, and 21st-century skills focus on developing broadly applicable capacities, habits of mind, and preparing knowledge workers for a new economy (Windschitl 2009)."

### **Biology**

Biology provides an overview of the important principles and methods of the field of biology. It covers such topics as cells, genetics, evolution, microorganisms, plants, invertebrates, human biology, and ecology. This is a laboratory course.

*Credit: one unit. Prerequisite: Physics or Chemistry.*

### **AP Biology**

AP biology is designed to be the equivalent of a college biology course taken by biology majors during their first year. It covers the following major topics: molecules and cells, heredity and evolution, and organizations and populations. This is a laboratory course. The course prepares students to sit successfully for the AP Biology examination. Most students take this as a second biology course. However, advanced students may be recommended for AP Biology as an initial biology course.

*Credit: one unit. Prerequisite: Biology and Chemistry, with teacher recommendation.*

### **Chemistry**

Chemistry is an introductory course in chemistry for students who have not yet studied chemistry as a separate subject. It covers the main foundations of inorganic chemistry, both qualitatively and quantitatively. This is a laboratory course.

*Credit: one unit. Prerequisite: Physics.*

### **Accelerated Chemistry**

Accelerated Chemistry is an advanced introductory chemistry course that prepares students to take AP Chemistry and other AP science courses. The curriculum is adopted primarily from the first half of the College Board's AP Chemistry course. The course covers the main foundations of inorganic chemistry, both qualitatively and quantitatively. In addition, it includes organic chemistry primarily as a descriptive fashion. This is a laboratory course.

*Credit: one unit. Prerequisite: Physics. Co-requisite: Algebra II. With teacher recommendation.*

## **Advanced Placement Chemistry**

AP Chemistry is a second-year chemistry course that provides students with a college-level foundation to support future work in chemistry and the sciences. Students will cultivate their understanding of chemistry through inquiry-based investigations as they explore content such as: atomic structure, intermolecular forces and bonding, chemical reactions, kinetics, thermodynamics, and equilibrium. This is a laboratory course. The course prepares students to sit successfully for the AP Chemistry examination.

*Credit: one unit. Prerequisite: Chemistry. Co-requisite: Pre-Calculus or Math Analysis. With teacher recommendation.*

## **Physics**

Physics is an introduction to classical physics. Students are expected to use both their writing skills and their math skills to demonstrate their knowledge and application of physics during the course. Topics covered include measurement, kinematics in one and two dimensions, forces, energy and momentum, and electrostatics. This is a laboratory course.

*Credit: one unit. Prerequisite or Co-requisite: Algebra I.*

## **Advanced Placement Physics I**

AP Physics I is an algebra-based, introductory college-level physics course. Students cultivate their understanding of physics through classroom study, in-class activity, and hands-on, inquiry-based laboratory work as they explore concepts like systems, fields, force interactions, change, conservation, and waves. This is a laboratory course. It prepares students to take the AP Physics I examination.

*Credit: one unit. Co-requisite: Pre-Calculus or Math Analysis. With teacher recommendation.*

## **Advanced Placement Environmental Science**

AP Environmental Science is equivalent to a one-semester introductory college-level course in environmental science. It is an interdisciplinary course involving elements of geology, biology, chemistry, and physics and prepares students for the AP Environmental Science examination. This is a laboratory course.

*Credit: one unit. Prerequisite: one unit of biology and one unit of chemistry. With teacher recommendation.*

## **Principles of Biomedical Science**

In the introductory course of the Project Lead the Way Biomedical Science program, students explore concepts of biology and medicine to determine factors that led to the death of a fictional person. While investigating the case, students examine autopsy reports, investigate medical history, and explore medical treatments that might have prolonged the person's life. The activities and projects introduce students to human physiology, basic biology, medicine, and research processes while allowing them to design their own experiments to solve problems.

*Credit: one unit. Prerequisite: Biology; Co-requisite with special permission.*

## **Human Body Systems**

Students examine the interactions of human body systems as they explore identity, power, movement, protection, and homeostasis. Exploring science in action, students build organs and tissues on a skeletal Maniken®; use data acquisition software to monitor body functions such as muscle movement, reflex and voluntary action, and respiration; and take on the roles of biomedical professionals to solve real-world medical cases.

*Credit: one unit. Prerequisite: Principles of Biomedical Science and Biology.*

## **Medical Interventions**

Medical Interventions (MI) allows students to investigate a variety of interventions involved in the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of disease as they follow the lives of a fictitious family. A "How-To"

manual for maintaining overall health and homeostasis in the body, this course will explore how to prevent and fight infection, how to screen and evaluate the code in our DNA, how to prevent, diagnose, and treat cancer, and how to prevail when the organs of the body begin to fail. Through these scenarios students will be exposed to the wide range of interventions related to immunology, surgery, genetics, pharmacology, medical devices, and diagnostics. Each family case scenario will introduce multiple types of interventions, reinforce concepts learned in the previous courses, and present new content.

*Credit: one unit. Prerequisite: Principles of Biomedical Science and Biology.*

### **Astronomy**

Astronomy is a project-based course designed to be accessible to any 11<sup>th</sup>- or 12<sup>th</sup>-grade student. Topics investigated include the robotic exploration of worlds in our solar system, the effects of the sun on our planet, what does it take for humans to colonize the Moon and Mars, the life-cycles of stars, the detection of dark matter in galaxies, and the search for extra-terrestrial life. Expectations will include celestial observations of the sky and hands-on work in the laboratory. This is a laboratory course. *This course is offered on a rotational basis. Credit: one-half unit. Pre-requisite: Biology and one year of a physical science.*

### **Principles of Engineering**

Through problems that engage and challenge, students explore a broad range of engineering topics, including mechanisms, the strength of structures and materials, and automation. Students develop skills in problem solving, research, and design while learning strategies for design process documentation, collaboration, and presentation.

*Credit: one unit. Pre-requisite: Physics and Geometry. Co-Requisite: Algebra II or higher.*

## **World Languages Department**

Learning a language opens doors to other worlds and creates links between students and the cultures studied. Students develop a deeper commitment to and interest in a language through active instruction that provides a current, global, interdisciplinary perspective. In both French and Spanish, students strive for mastery in each and every aspect of language acquisition, integrating reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Progress is measured on the American Council of Teaching Foreign Language (ACTFL) proficiency standards.

### **ELL: Comprehension and Critical Thinking**

This course is designed for Saint Mary's ELL students who are continuing to refine and hone their English language skills. Students will be able to work in a small-group setting on language comprehension, grammar, essay writing, subject-area vocabulary, and critical thinking skills. If needed, students will receive support in preparation for TOEFL testing. Students will be assessed on areas of reading, speaking, listening, and writing.

### **French I**

French I is designed for the beginning language learner. Students study French through a communicative approach as they work toward the Novice High proficiency level. At this level students express themselves in simple conversations and presentations on familiar topics using highly practiced, memorized words and phrases. Students will embark on a study of both the language and the rich cultures of the French-speaking world. Participation is essential to learn a language; therefore, we create a safe environment to explore and take risks as we learn to communicate in a new language.

*Credit: one unit.*

### **French II**

French II is designed for students who have passed French I. Building on the foundation of French I studies,

students work toward the Novice high proficiency level. At this level, students speak more naturally in the target language and are prompted to add detail and variety to keep the conversation going. Students will demonstrate an ability to express thoughts and events in both past and present tenses, understand main ideas, and combine and recombine learned words and phrases to further communication. Based on the use of authentic materials, students will continue to strengthen and build upon their listening, reading, and writing skills in the target language.

*Credit: one-unit. Prerequisite: French I.*

### **French III: French Civilization and Composition**

This course is designed for students who have successfully completed two years of French. Students begin by reviewing the grammar and vocabulary taught in French I and II. Students take part in a variety of activities aimed at developing their knowledge of French culture while helping them acquire proficiency at the Intermediate Low benchmark. Students participate in traditional classroom drills, oral presentations, class discussions, and group activities. Students learn how to write compositions and read publications in French. The class is conducted primarily in French.

*Credit: one unit. Prerequisite: French II.*

### **Accelerated French III: French Grammar and Conversation**

This course is designed for students who have successfully completed two years of French. With a basis on reviewing and building upon grammar usage and improving pronunciation, this course helps students to work towards achieving benchmarks for the Intermediate-Mid proficiency level. Students at this level engage in short social interactions and communicate effectively to express different time frames (present, past, and future). Students are assessed through short presentations, completion of real-world tasks and a series of listening and reading comprehension activities from authentic French texts from the francophone world.

*Credit: one unit. Prerequisite: French II with teacher recommendation.*

### **French IV**

French IV is designed for students who have successfully completed two years of French. With a basis on reviewing and building upon grammar usage and improving pronunciation, this course helps students to work towards achieving benchmarks for the Intermediate-Mid proficiency level. Students at this level engage in short social interactions and communicate effectively to express different time frames (present, past, and future). Students are assessed through short presentations, completion of real-world tasks and a series of listening and reading comprehension activities from authentic French texts from the francophone world.

*Credit: one unit. Prerequisite: French III.*

### **French V**

Students enrolling in this course are typically in their fourth or fifth year of language study or they have had experiences with the language. This class is an immersion experience, all communication by the teacher will be carried out exclusively in the target language, and by the students as well. At this level, students are pushed to communicate in an organized and detailed way. Students can understand information from authentic materials in oral or written sources. They are often understood by listeners and readers unaccustomed to dealing with language learners.

*Credit: one unit. Prerequisite: French III or French IV with teacher recommendation.*

### **Advanced Placement French Language and Culture**

As the AP French Language and Culture class is an immersion experience, all communication by the teacher will be carried out exclusively in the target language, and by the students, primarily, in the target language; the student class participation grades reflect this. The course will use a variety of methods involving films, music, texts, listening exercises, speaking exercises, discussions (on French culture, daily life, current events,

etc.), and other communicative activities. The AP French Language and Culture exam is based on six groups of learning objectives: spoken and written interpersonal communication, audio, visual, and written interpretative communication, and spoken and written presentational communication. These learning objectives will be addressed through the study of six themes: Global Challenges, Science and Technology, Contemporary Life, Personal and Public Identities, Families and Communication, Beauty and Aesthetics. Students will continue to develop vocabulary and refine their grammar skills while focusing on communication. Students enrolling in this course are typically in their fourth or fifth year of language study or they have had experiences with the language. Therefore, they should have a good command in French grammar and vocabulary. They should also be proficient in listening, speaking, reading, writing in French and accept and be ready for the challenge of a rigorous academic curriculum.

*Credit: one unit. Prerequisite: French IV with teacher recommendation.*

### **Spanish I**

Spanish I is designed for both students with some background in Spanish and students who are beginning this language. Students strive to achieve an appropriate level of proficiency in four areas: auditory comprehension, oral expression, written expression, and reading comprehension. To achieve the desired level of proficiency, students need to develop good memory techniques and skills. These are constantly reinforced in class. Students are then able to acquire the necessary verb conjugations, vocabulary, and grammatical rules to succeed. The course emphasizes high frequency vocabulary, basic syntax, and aspects of daily life in Hispanic cultures. Spanish is used as much as possible in class.

*Credit: one unit.*

### **Spanish II**

Spanish II is designed for students who have successfully completed Spanish I. Material from Spanish I is reviewed and expanded upon in order to reach the Novice High proficiency level. At this level, students are encouraged to speak as much as possible in the target language and are prompted to add something more to keep the conversation going. Students will demonstrate the ability to express thoughts in a single time frame, understand main ideas and combine and recombine learned words and phrases to foster communication. Through their engagement with authentic materials, students will continue to strengthen and build upon their listening, reading, and writing skills in the target language.

*Credit: one unit. Prerequisite: Spanish I.*

### ***Spanish III: Hispanic Cultures and Composition***

This course includes a review of grammar and vocabulary through the study of a variety of Hispanic cultures. Students gain an increased understanding of the Spanish-speaking world and its place in an increasingly globalized world while working towards the Intermediate Low proficiency level. Writing skills are sharpened through discussions and essays based on authentic readings, journal entries and short compositions.

*Credit: one unit. Prerequisite: Spanish II.*

### **Accelerated Spanish III: Spanish Grammar and Conversation**

This course is designed for students who have successfully completed two or more years of Spanish. With a basis on reviewing and building upon grammar usage and improving pronunciation, this course helps students to work towards achieving benchmarks for the Intermediate- Mid proficiency level with increased fluency and accuracy at an intermediate/advanced level. Students are assessed through short presentations, completion of real- world tasks and a series of listening and reading comprehension activities from authentic Spanish texts and multimedia.

*Credit: one unit. Prerequisite: Spanish II with teacher recommendation.*

## **Spanish IV**

This course is designed for students who have successfully completed Spanish III. Students in Spanish IV work towards meeting the Intermediate- high level benchmark. Spanish IV students are engaged in understanding Hispanic cultures through analysis and interpretation of authentic literary texts as well as contemporary audio, video, and narrative selections. Students should be able to present and communicate in combined time frames using connected speech as well as be able to handle everyday situations with unexpected complications.

*Credit: one unit. Prerequisite: Spanish III.*

## **Spanish V**

Spanish V is designed for students who are in their fourth or fifth year of the language study. This course helps students to expand upon the ability to communicate with increased fluency and accuracy in combined time frames and moods. Students at this level should be able to handle topics that go beyond everyday life and comprehend beyond the main idea to include supporting details.

*Credit: one unit. Prerequisite: Spanish IV or Spanish III with teacher recommendation.*

## **Advanced Placement Spanish Language and Culture**

The AP Spanish Language and Culture course provides students with opportunities to develop language proficiency across the three modes of communication: Interpretive, Interpersonal, and Presentational. Students learn about culture through the use of authentic materials that are representative of the Spanish speaking world. Materials include a variety of different media, e.g., journalistic and literary works, podcasts, interviews, movies, charts, and graphs. AP Spanish Language and Culture is a language acquisition course designed to provide students with the necessary skills and intercultural understanding to enable them to communicate successfully in an environment where Spanish is spoken and as such, is an immersion experience requiring almost exclusive use of Spanish. Students in AP Spanish strive to reach the Advanced Low proficiency benchmark and should be able to create paragraph discourse which uses connected language in multiple time frames and incorporates a variety of idiomatic expressions.

*Credit: one unit. Prerequisite: Spanish IV, Spanish V or teacher recommendation.*

## **Advanced Placement Spanish Literature and Culture**

The AP Spanish Literature and Culture course is an introductory course to the study of Peninsular Spanish, Latin American, and U.S. Hispanic literature written in Spanish from the 14th century to the present day. Not only do we study the literature, but also the fascinating history and cultures of the Hispanic world connected to the six AP Spanish literature themes, which are: las relaciones interpersonales; la construcción del género; las sociedades en contacto; el tiempo y el espacio; la dualidad del ser; and la creación literaria. Throughout the course, students learn to connect each reading with historical, sociocultural, and political contexts; literary history of each movement; authors' style; and literary theory. Students also demonstrate their proficiency in the three modes of communication in Spanish (interpersonal, interpretive, and presentational) with attention to applying correct written and spoken language conventions.

*Credit: one unit. Prerequisite: AP Spanish Language and Culture, Spanish V or teacher recommendation.*

## **The Visual and Performing Arts Department**

The Visual and Performing Arts Department encompasses an extensive range of coursework that provides opportunities for students to explore and build skills in visual art, dance, theatre, and music. The **visual art** program offers students the opportunity to exercise self-expression through a range of courses. In these studio classes, students are encouraged to increase their skill levels and maximize their artistic potential by exposure to a variety of techniques and mediums in an atmosphere that embraces a high expectation of creative decision making and a high quality of

production. The **dance** program includes courses that provide solid technical training in ballet and modern, while offering opportunities for students to explore and incorporate jazz, hip hop, stretch/yoga, and conditioning. It also offers a resident student dance company, Orchesis Dance Theatre, that performs two concert programs each year. The **theatre** program has opportunities to study acting, explore dramatic literature, read and analyze scripts, and become familiar with the history of theatre. Students also work as production company members in stage management, acting, set, costume, lighting and sound design, and various technical and stage crews for the annual play and musical performed each year. In the **music** program, every level of interest and ability is supported with a rich variety of vocal and instrumental training both in performance ensembles and through individual lessons. Expert instruction in applied music is provided in voice and a wide range of instruments, which students can pursue at elementary, intermediate, and advanced levels.

## **THEATRE**

### **Theatre Arts**

Students will explore character development through improvisation and scene work. Students will participate in daily exercises to improve articulation, projection, and breath control. They will use theatre games to promote creativity and collaboration. Students will be given opportunities to work with original works and different genres of theatre, including comic and dramatic pieces. The class will perform scene work during the semester. This class is geared for beginning actors.

*Credit: one-half unit.*

### **Technical Theatre**

Students taking this class will serve as technical crew heads and crew members for the major productions. Students choose their interest areas; including costuming, hair, make-up, scenic painting, props, set construction, lights, and sound. Students will participate in the process of theatre production from interpretation and concept to opening night.

*Credit: one-half unit.*

### **Film Production**

In this course, students will work to take a script from the page to the big screen. Write, shoot, edit, and perform a short film from start to finish with total creative control. Students will explore the entire filmmaking process from both behind the lens and in front of the camera. This is a project-based course that will include significant group work and collaboration. There will also be additional opportunities for independent exploration into topics of personal interest.

*Credit: one-half unit.*

## **MUSIC**

### **Chorale**

The Chorale is an ensemble of singers at all grade levels. The course of study includes extensive music literacy skills and a challenging repertoire. The literature studied and performed includes a variety of genres. The Chorale sings for chapel services and special events on campus as well as in the community. It serves as the touring choir for Saint Mary's School.

*Credit: one-half unit.*

### **Chamber Choir**

The Chamber Choir is a small, auditioned ensemble of experienced singers in 10th-12th grades. The course of study includes extensive music literacy skills and a challenging repertoire. The literature studied and



performed includes a variety of genres. Students are expected to lead the Chorale Program in and outside of class, and individual practice is expected. The Chamber Choir will be eligible for All-State Chorus and select choral festivals and workshops. The Chamber Choir sings for chapel services and special events on campus as well as in the community.

*Credit: one unit. Participation is by invitation of the music faculty.*

### **Chamber Music Program (Instrumental Ensembles)**

This is a performance class for instrumental ensembles open to students who have achieved the intermediate to advanced level of skill with their chosen instrument. Groups are arranged according to instrumentation and ability. Examples of groups are String Ensemble, Flute Ensemble, String Trio, Violin-Piano duos, etc. The ensembles meet with a teacher once per week, and individual practice is expected. Emphasis is placed on developing listening skills, awareness of the importance of individual parts to the ensemble, intonation, and tone quality in playing chamber music that will lead to artistic performance. A variety of repertoires are explored. Repertoire will include selections from the Baroque, Classical, Romantic, and Modern eras. Popular Repertoire will also be included. Instrumental ensembles are combined into a Chamber Orchestra for special occasions.

*Credit: Pass/Fail*

### **Applied Music Instruction: Elementary, Intermediate, and Advanced Levels**

Applied music instruction is offered to students in piano, organ, voice, guitar (folk and classical), flute, clarinet, violin, viola, and cello. Other instrumental instruction is available according to demand. These lessons are designed to develop the instrumental and vocal skills of the individual student according to each student's goals and potential. Instruction is offered at the beginning, intermediate, and advanced levels. Students choosing to enroll for academic credit must play in an approved performance each semester. Students are also expected to attend professional concerts as an important part of their overall training and development as young artists.

*Credit: Pass/Fail.*

### **Applied Music—Honors Program in Music**

The Applied Music Program is available to seniors who are in at least their second year at Saint Mary's School and who will present a public recital in the spring after fulfilling the following requirements: completion of all applied music courses with significant growth, a grasp of basic music theory, and satisfactory completion of academic requirements for graduation. The culminating performance (senior recital) must be at least thirty minutes long, must represent at least three contrasting stylistic periods, and must be performed at a level satisfactory to the music faculty. Students must apply for the program in the spring semester of their junior year and must be approved by the faculty of the music department.

*Credit: one-half unit for the year.*

## **VISUAL ARTS**

### **Foundations in Art I**

Students are given the opportunity to develop creatively through exploration and learning basic skills while gaining a foundational understanding of the elements and principles of design. Through engaging assignments, students will be exposed to a variety of art media, learn different techniques, and focus on creative problem-solving skills.

*Credit: one-half unit.*

### **Foundations in Art II**

Students will develop the fundamental skills of drawing and painting. In addition to sharpening perceptual skills, the basic elements of design; line, shape, form, texture, and color will be emphasized. This course also

focuses on basic techniques, processes, and methods of working and students will be encouraged to explore drawing and painting as vehicles for thinking, perceiving, and communicating.

*Credit: one-half unit. Prerequisite: Foundations in Art I.*

### **Intermediate Art Survey**

Students will be challenged to further develop their drawing, painting, and design skills. Working at a more advanced level, students will work on developing techniques and processes while they gain a more in depth understanding of the elements and principles of design. A variety of media and process will be explored while students develop an understanding of style and their own creativity.

*Credit: one-half unit per semester. Prerequisite: Foundations in Art I and II, or teacher recommendation.*

### **Advanced Art Survey**

Working at a more advanced level, students will work to develop their conceptual abilities, creative problem-solving skills, and idea generation. Students will also be challenged to work and generate ideas independently. They will further develop their technical abilities in drawing, painting, and design. Girls will also develop a more in depth understanding of the elements and principles of design as it relates to the ideas they are exploring. This course will prepare students for portfolio courses.

*Credit: one-half unit per semester. Prerequisite: Intermediate Art Survey or teacher recommendation.*

### **Art Portfolio**

The Art Portfolio class is an upper-level studio course for students who are interested in developing their own portfolio. Whether the student is interested in developing a portfolio for colleges or for their own interest, they will work on creating a body of work, executing their own ideas, and developing a personal artistic language. This course is designed for experienced art students, who are motivated, will work at an advanced level, and are willing to challenge themselves.

*Credit: one unit. Prerequisite: Advanced Art Survey or teacher recommendation.*

### **AP 2D Art and Design**

AP 2D Art and Design is an intensely rigorous studio course in which students are challenged to develop a portfolio of works that investigate a theme through the use of the elements and principles of design such as line, shape, form, and color. Girls will develop creative problem-solving skills as they work through the creation of their ideas in the medium of their choice. This advanced course is rewarding and also requires a high degree of focus and self-motivation. Due to the quantity of works required by the College Board, this course also requires a significant time commitment.

*Credit: one unit. Prerequisite: Advanced Art Survey or Art Portfolio, or teacher recommendation.*

### **AP Drawing**

AP Drawing is an intensely rigorous studio course in which students are challenged to develop a portfolio of works that investigate a theme through the use of drawing skills such as mark making, exploration of surface, value, and light. Drawing materials include analog and digital, painting, printmaking, and mixed media. Girls will develop creative problem-solving skills as they work through the creation of their ideas in the medium of their choice. This advanced course is rewarding and also requires a high degree of focus and self-motivation. Due to the quantity of works required by the College Board, this course also requires a significant time commitment.

*Credit: one unit. Prerequisite: Advanced Art Survey or Art Portfolio, or teacher recommendation.*

### **Graphic Design and Digital Photography**

This class introduces students to the skills of graphic design and digital photography. Using the same tools as professionals, students learn how to create design layouts, capture digital imagery for use in print, and

modify digital images through Photoshop. During the year students will have regular, hands-on experience with digital SLR cameras and will learn about the publishing industry. Through the course of the year students will also plan, design, and create the Stagecoach Yearbook.

*Credit: one unit. Prerequisites: Foundations in Art I and II, with teacher recommendation.*

## **DANCE**

### **Foundations in Dance**

Foundations in Dance is taught from the perspective that students are new to either ballet or modern dance technique. In this course, students will learn the basic principles of various dance techniques including modern dance and classical ballet. Anatomy, kinesiology, dance history, and conditioning will be incorporated when appropriate throughout the course. Students will learn exercises that are fundamental to technique and typical of a classical class progression. Class material will focus on the elements involved in achieving correct body alignment, use of turn-out and parallel positions, introducing on and off-centered torso work, increasing flexibility, strength, motor-coordination, and the connection between elements. In all combinations, students will explore concepts of space, weight, and time and how they relate to dance movement. Students will explore composition and improvisation assignments, keep a journal to document personal growth, and learn dance history through research projects as well as experiential lessons. *Credit: one-half unit per semester. Prerequisite: No prerequisites required.*

### **Intermediate Dance**

In this course, students will be instructed in ballet and modern technique and be introduced to a variety of other dance forms throughout the semester. This course is for students who have had previous dance training in either ballet, modern, or jazz techniques. Anatomy, kinesiology, dance history, improvisation, and conditioning will be incorporated when appropriate throughout the course. Areas of growth include expanding dance vocabulary and identifying core concepts such as: functional alignment, fluidity and stability of the spine, expression of lines, increased flexibility/extension, and rhythm/musicality. Students demonstrate growth by showing their mastery of core concepts when performing routines and center combinations. Feedback and critique are a part of every dance class and are given to provide personal attention to the growth and development of the dancer. *Credit: one-half unit per semester. Prerequisite: Foundations in Dance and/or permission from instructor upon evaluation of level.*

### **Advanced Dance**

This course is designed for the most technically advanced dance student at Saint Mary's School. Students in advanced level courses are responsible for rigorous learning, ready to expand on a solid understanding of either modern or ballet technique and are committed to fully investing themselves in each of their technique classes. Anatomy, kinesiology, dance history, improvisation, partnering, and conditioning will be incorporated when appropriate throughout the course. Choreography and composition assignments leading to performance are a part of Advanced Dance. Advanced Dance students are expected to consistently embrace the physical and emotional demands of each class, demonstrate continued technical growth, execute given combinations in a manner that demonstrates their level of strength, and connect understanding of motor-coordination, dynamics, momentum, quality changes, variance in musicality, space, weight, and time. Feedback and critique are a part of every dance class and are given to provide personal attention to the growth and development of the dancer. *Credit: one-half unit per semester. Prerequisite: Intermediate Dance and/or permission from instructor upon evaluation of level.*

### **Orchesis Dance Theatre**

Founded in 1938, Orchesis is Saint Mary's School's performing dance course. Students who are serious about

performing participate in the company by the invitation of the Director of Dance. As co-requisites, students in Orchestis must enroll each semester in a Dance Technique course leveled Intermediate or Advanced. The total credit for one semester of this course is ½ credit and grades are evaluated on the Pass/Fail merit system. Throughout the year, students will learn choreography from Saint Mary's School instructors, guest artists, and company members. Orchestis presents two formal concerts each year, orchestrates the annual Middle School Day of Dance, and conducts the Orchestis chapel service. Students participate in all production aspects: choreographic and technical rehearsals, concert and program promotion, costuming, program copy, photographic sittings, etc.

Dancers are cast in one faculty repertory piece requiring a minimum of one weekly rehearsal after school. These repertory pieces bring sophisticated choreography/composition and challenge dancers to learn new aesthetics while advancing performance skills. Students are invited to learn, choreograph, and perform additional dance works according to their specialized areas of interest and ability.

*Credit: Pass/Fail. Participation is by invitation of the dance faculty.*

## **Seminar Program**

Students participate in Seminar as a class throughout their four years at Saint Mary's School. The Seminar course series is designed to develop the 10 Key Competencies and includes opportunities for students to partner with resources and organizations in the greater Raleigh area. Central to Saint Mary's mission of preparing girls for college and life, Seminar is a graduation requirement with completion of the Seminar curriculum required with each semester of enrollment. This course is Pass/Fail.

### **Portfolio for Life**

All students create and maintain a digital "Portfolio for Life" that chronicles their experiences at Saint Mary's and their development in the 10 Key Competencies. The portfolio gives students a tool to reflect on their growth, assess their efforts, and celebrate their successes. Required for all students, students may also individualize their portfolio by incorporating additional sections specific to their unique interests and aspirations. Time is allotted each quarter for students to work on their portfolios, with students delivering a year-end portfolio defense to their advisor, during which they share their growth and work from the past school year. Students graduate with a Portfolio for Life that gives them a clear record of their learning and growth as well as a resource to confidently talk about themselves and their skills.

### **9th Grade Seminar**

This course focuses on the individual student and how they bring their strengths to Saint Mary's. The health and wellness track of this course teaches healthy friendships, hygiene, anatomy and reproduction, while also focusing on personal strengths and core values. The social impact track teaches the students about how to be a good digital citizen as well as how to create and follow a household budget. The communication track teaches listening, self-advocacy and public speaking, culminating in a public speech. The innovation track introduces entrepreneurship and design thinking as students participate in an invention pitch challenge.

### **10th Grade Seminar**

Students in 10th grade seminar learn about how they can leverage their strengths to have a positive impact on their communities. During the communication track they focus on thorny digital citizenship issues as they learn how to craft engaging lessons which they in turn teach to students in 9th grade seminar. The innovation track focuses on what it means to be a "maker" as students use design thinking to tackle hands-on challenges including 3-d printing and visual design. The 10th grade health and wellness track is crafted to provide students with age-appropriate instruction on mental, emotional, and physical health and includes many outside guests to share their expertise. Finally, the social impact track allows 10th grade students to have an impact on their communities as they learn about grant-writing and budgeting as they complete a "mini-grant" project.

### **11th Grade Seminar**

This course provides the opportunity for students to learn how to leverage their story to create new opportunities and to understand what they have to offer for the world. The communication track focuses on the importance of communicating strengths to colleges and future employers through resumes and mock interviews. The social impact track incorporates experiences, such as engaging in difficult conversations in a civil manner with practical skills including understanding taxes and credit card scores to illustrate how students can impact and be impacted by the world. The health and wellness track discusses topics related to both personal health and community-wide safety. The innovation track helps students learn to solve a complex problem for a real business with a diverse team.

### **12th Grade Seminar**

During the first semester, students have small group instruction with the Saint Mary's college counseling team as they navigate the college admission process. In the second semester, seniors choose to complete an internship or capstone project specific to their interests and aspirations. Students must present a successful defense of their work before a panel of adults and peers at the end of the semester.

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## **Special Studies**

### **Independent Study**

Independent study is an application-based program that gives students the opportunity to engage in academic study beyond the formal academic courses offered. In collaboration with the faculty moderator of the program the student will develop a rigorous course of study that may include deep research, hands-on creation, experimentation and investigation, and/or collaboration with external organizations. Students must document and demonstrate how their work has impacted both themselves and others in their community. This type of learning is challenging and requires a high level of self-motivation, intellectual curiosity, and discipline. This program is open to 11<sup>th</sup> and first-semester 12<sup>th</sup> grade students.

*Credit: one half unit.*

### **Learning Lab/Flex Period/Tutorial**

Saint Mary's School students have opportunities throughout the week to work with faculty outside of class. All 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> graders are assigned a learning lab as one of their classes, while 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade students have the option of a flex period or a learning lab. During **learning lab** students complete work and prepare for assessments in a structured environment with learning coaches. Furthermore, students move through a study skills curriculum designed by Saint Mary's faculty, which includes topics such as time management, organization, goal setting, memory skills, and test taking strategies. **Flex period** affords students the opportunity to choose where they study and how they use this time, preparing them for college. For students who still need structure or prefer the structure they can attend a learning lab. Additionally, all students have access to their teachers at the end of the day in **tutorial**. During tutorial students can schedule an appointment or drop in for help on assignments, test preparation, or collaborate with their faculty.

### **Advisory Program**

The Saint Mary's School advisory program is a personalized, academic advising program designed to guide students as they navigate their high school experience. A student's advisor is a central connecting point for the student and provides an integrated understanding of the student's academic and personal growth and development. Each student is part of an advisory consisting of approximately six students. Advisory meets

four times a week, in addition to one weekly advisory lunch. Additionally, student's meet on a one-to-one basis with their advisor.

### **Online Courses**

Saint Mary's School is in partnership with One Schoolhouse and Laurel Springs, accredited on-line providers offering asynchronous learning opportunities. All courses offered by One Schoolhouse and Laurel Springs are taught by experienced teachers. Classes at both schools have assessments in the form of daily assignments/homework, projects, group discussions, essays, and tests. Saint Mary's students may request to enroll in an online class, providing that the course is not offered at Saint Mary's and that the course meaningfully enhances and enriches the student's academic experience. Approval to enroll in online courses is assessed on a case-by-case basis by the Academic Leadership Team. Online courses and their content are not managed by Saint Mary's School and, while these courses will be displayed on the student's transcript, the grades will not be factored into the GPA. Withdrawals from online classes will be included on a student's transcript.

While Saint Mary's School designates a faculty member to serve as the Online School advisor, Saint Mary's has no influence or authority over the curriculum or grading that occurs in an online course.

If a student is required to repeat a course she previously failed at Saint Mary's School, she may be allowed to re-attempt the class via an approved online course at the family's expense. The online course and grade earned will be listed on the student's transcript but will not be included in the calculation of the GPA. If appropriate, she will be asked to take a placement test upon returning to Saint Mary's to ensure she has the knowledge needed to move on to the next course level.

Students approved to take online courses will be required to sign a contract indicating their commitment to completing the online course.

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## **Athletics Program**

The Saint Mary's School athletics program provides a broad range of interscholastic activities for girls in all grades. In keeping with the school's values, personal traits including commitment, discipline, team cooperation, individual leadership, sportsmanship, and consideration of others, are emphasized and vital to the success of the Saint Mary's athletic program. Saint Mary's provides and encourages all its students to participate in as many interscholastic athletic activities as possible. While some of Saint Mary's sports require a limited number of players, others are open to all. The primary goal of the school's athletic program is to accentuate the development of the whole student and to achieve a personal level of excellence in the areas of fitness, team commitment, and sportsmanship.

We offer a full interscholastic athletic program, consisting of 18 teams in the following 11 sports:

- **Fall:** Cross Country, Field Hockey, Tennis, Volleyball, Golf
- **Winter:** Basketball, Swimming, Cheer
- **Spring:** Lacrosse, Soccer, Softball, Track and Field

Saint Mary's School competes as a member of the Triangle Independent Schools Athletic Conference (TISAC) and the North Carolina Independent Schools Athletic Association (NCISAA, 4A Classification). Saint Mary's, in partnership with Raleigh Orthopedics, provides an athletic trainer for all on-campus practices and games.

## **Triangle Fitness**

Designed to exercise the body, mind, and spirit, Triangle Fitness is a co-curricular program providing students with a broad range of interscholastic activities from which to choose. Each student must complete 10 seasons of a Triangle Fitness activity. Activities are scheduled in conjunction with sports seasons and the performing arts calendar and students may choose to participate on an athletic team, in after-school dance classes, in the school's theatre and/or musical performances, or any combination of these, to meet their Triangle Fitness requirement. Examples of Triangle Fitness options include training in the school's weight room to build strength and endurance in combination with activities like yoga, barre, and agility training as well as cardio activities like spinning and running.

### **Academic Office Contact List**

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