

HISTORY

2024-2025 **COURSE CATALOG**



Department Chair: Sarah McDowell (smcdowell@sch.org)

In today's dynamic global environment, a strong knowledge of history and the ability to think critically are an essential part of a 21st century education. SCH students study history in inquiry-driven classrooms that promote experiential learning and develop historical empathy. In 9th and 10th grades, students spend two years studying world history, beginning with the Neolithic Agricultural Revolution and ending in today's complex and rapidly changing world. Eleventh graders study American history from colonization onward. In 11th and 12th grades, students may choose from a diverse array of elective courses. Placement in Honors or AP sections is determined by the department.

Required History Courses

9th Grade Foundations Of The Modern World

Grade 9; full-year course; 1 credit

Prerequisite: Departmental approval for Honors

This course examines the interactions among major societies that helped shape the modern world. The course begins in the Neolithic Revolution and continues to the Age of Exploration. Using a global perspective, students will explore the issues arising from interactions between humans and the environment, the development of social structures, the interaction of cultures, the creation and expansion of economic systems, and empire building. Research skills, creative analysis, and persuasive writing will be core components of the course.

10th Grade Modern World History

Grade 10; full-year course; 1 credit

Prerequisite: Departmental approval for Honors

This course examines the interactions and connections among major societies of the world from the 1400s to the present day. Students will explore new human and environmental connections, increasingly complex economic systems, innovative ideas arising from technological innovation, the rise of the nation-state, worldwide warfare, and the development of international systems. Research skills, creative analysis, and persuasive writing will be core components of the course.

11th Grade U.S. History

Grade 11; Full-year course; 1 credit

Prerequisite: Departmental approval for Honors

The course covers the history of the United States from colonial times to the present, focusing on political, economic, and social issues. Students will explore how the United States developed over time into a world power as well as contemporary foreign policy issues. The course will examine the turning points in American history, including the American Revolution, the origins of our Constitution, reform movements, Westward Expansion, the Civil War and Reconstruction, the Gilded Age, World War I, the Great

Depression, World War II, the Cold War, and issues in the United States today. Research skills, creative analysis, and persuasive writing will be core components of the course.

11th Grade AP U.S. History

Grade 11; Full-year course; 1 credit

Prerequisite: Departmental approval

AP U.S. History will cover content and chronology similar to that covered in 11th grade History. Due to the breadth of material and the depth of understanding that students will be expected to obtain in AP U.S. History, there will be a significant summer assignment and regular extensive reading assignments during the school year. Nightly reading may be as much as 10 pages or more. Students will use primary and secondary readings in addition to their text. Students will engage in regular class discussions, research, and regular assessments, primarily based on AP-type questions. Students will also spend time writing in a variety of styles, including AP Free Response, responding to document-based questions, expository essays, and research-based essays.

HISTORY ELECTIVES

International Relations: Managing Anarchy in a Globalized World

Grades 11, 12; elective; fall semester; ½ credit

The world is an anarchic system; no one country or organization is in control. How can nations achieve peace and security in a globalized anarchic world? Thanks to the information technology revolution and the growth of international governance and economics, the world has become closely tied together in ways we never imagined possible. This course serves as an introduction to the theoretical tools necessary to analyze actions of countries and the nature of the international systems. Students explore how nations interact through IR theories and case studies, with an emphasis on history and political science. This interactive course provides students with the opportunity to apply their understanding of key concepts to historic, current, and fictional events through simulations and research-based projects. In addition to reading Daniel Drezner's *Theories of International Politics & Zombies*, all students engage in the Statecraft simulation and conduct an in-depth research project.

Honors Global Slavery and Emancipation

Grades 11, 12; fall semester; ½ credit

Prerequisite: Departmental approval

This course will study slavery as a social and economic system over time, beginning with the slave societies of ancient Greece and Rome, through the rise of African slavery and the Atlantic slave trade under the Spanish and Portuguese empires, through the growth and expansion of slavery in the U.S. South. The course will conclude by focusing on the global elimination of slavery in the second half of the nineteenth century and its tragic reemergence in recent decades, both in the United States and the world. The class will use David Brion Davis' *Inhuman Bondage* as a

textbook, and pair it with a selection of primary sources and academic articles. In addition to regular assessments, students will conduct an in-depth research project.

Pop Culture in America

Grades 11, 12; elective; fall semester; ½ credit

In this course students will take a critical approach to examining the evolution of American popular culture in various forms, including television, film, advertising, and theatre. Students will begin the semester by exploring definitions of pop culture and high culture before embarking on a study of how popular culture has developed and changed in the century between the 1880s and the 1980s. Special emphasis will be put on how pop culture has both shaped and reflected ideas of race, gender, and sexuality. Students will conduct an in-depth research project.

World War II in Europe and Beyond

Grades 11, 12; elective; fall semester; ½ credit

Unlike broader survey courses, this course is intended to allow students to learn about one topic in considerable depth by spending the entire semester on a relatively short period of time and focusing on the theaters of WWII. Students will explore the origins of WWII in Europe and Asia, military strategies developed during the war, how the war affected those on the homefront, and the long-term consequences of the war. Sources include primary and secondary text sources as well as non-traditional sources, such as film, poetry, and music. Students will have the opportunity to conduct an in-depth research project.

21st Century America—Challenges and Choices

Grade 11 and 12 combined; elective, fall semester, ½ credit

When the Cold War ended at the end of the 20th century, America entered a world of intense global and digital change. Threats of terrorism and climate change became part of everyday life, American industry and economic systems were globalized, immigration caused demographic shifts and controversy, and racial and economic disparities remained. Twenty-first century Americans became deeply divided politically, leading to intense debate over policy choices to address these issues. This course will explore contemporary American issues and policy choices using the tools of debate, student-led discussion, presentation, and simulations. Students will be responsible for keeping up with current events, including the 2024 presidential election. Critical media literacy will be an important part of this course. There will be a culminating in-depth research project.

Civil Rights Movements

Grades 11, 12; elective; spring semester; ½ credit

This course will examine barriers to equality that have existed in America at various times during the nation's history and the strategies employed by those who sought to dismantle those barriers, with a focus on the second half of the 20th century. While the experiences of numerous groups will be examined, the primary focus will be on the

efforts to guarantee equality to African Americans (from abolitionism to the Black Lives Matter Movement), women and the LGBTQ Rights Movement. In addition to regular assessments, students will conduct an in-depth research project.

Rock and Soul of America

Grades 11, 12 combined; elective; spring semester; ½ credit

This course seeks to integrate the history of America with the history and progression of Rock and Roll. Students taking this class will be able to trace the history of Rock and Roll and understand the influences it had on major historical events within the United States. The class will cover issues of race, gender, age, and other issues and how Rock and Roll helped to spur rebellion in those areas in an attempt to create equality. The course covers United States History from the mid-1950s through a study of the Blues' progression from its origins to its growth to Rock and Roll and related genres. The course is inclusive of African Americans, Asian Americans, Chicanas/os and Latinas/os, and Native Americans, and their experiences and contributions through music to the history of Rock and Roll. Students will conduct an in-depth research project

Sports and Society in The U.S. and the World

Grade 11 and 12 combined ; elective; spring semester; ½ credit

Athletics are often seen as an escape from the real world, but they are also a reflection of that world. Athletics often intersects with controversies over race, class, and gender, and frequently connects to issues of social power and global economics. This class explores the history of sports, focusing on moments in time that speak to profound societal changes in the United States and the world. Topics include the fight for equal pay for the U.S. women's soccer team, the controversy surrounding Colin Kaepernick and kneeling during the National Anthem, geopolitical sports rivalries like India versus Pakistan in cricket and the U.S. versus the USSR in the Olympics, and the Supreme Court's recent decision against the "amateur" status of the NCAA. Particular attention will be paid to the history of sports in Philadelphia. Students will conduct an in-depth research project.

Advocacy and Debate- Exploring Controversial Issues

Grade 11 and 12 combined ; elective; spring semester; ½ credit

In today's divided political world, it is important to engage with different viewpoints thoughtfully, respectfully, and critically. Rather than having students stay in a comfortable bubble, this course will ask them to stretch their ideas, explore multiple perspectives, and advocate for various points of view. Students will research and discuss contemporary controversial topics and will have a voice in selecting the topics the class explores. Written and oral advocacy skills will be developed along with the art of civil and respectful debate and public speaking skills. Students will be responsible for keeping up with current events. Critical media literacy will be an important part of this course. There will be a culminating in-depth research project.

AP United States Government

Grade 12; elective; full-year course; 1 credit

Prerequisite: Departmental approval

This yearlong class will provide a conceptual framework and an understanding of the United States government and politics that will enable the student to think critically about the political processes at work in American society. This is a political science course that studies the interconnectedness of the different parts of the American political system and the behaviors and attitudes that shape and are a byproduct of this system. Though this course is designed to help prepare students for the Advanced Placement U.S. Government and Politics exam, its ultimate goal is to provide students with knowledge and skills to understand and actively participate in American politics and society. This course will focus on cultivating the skills of research, analysis, argumentation, and written and verbal communication. All students will engage in a civic action project of their choice. Students will differentiate between political and constitutional issues, as well as engage in nonpartisan and multi-partisan examination of content. Topics to be explored include: the Constitution & foundations of American representative democracy, roles of the state and federal governments, political ideologies and beliefs, the political roles played by public opinion, the media, private interest groups, political parties, and social movements, elections and voting, interactions between the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of the federal government, civil liberties, and civil rights. Special attention will be paid to the 2024 election and the results.