

SYA Course Catalog

2024-2025



SYA COURSE CATALOG 2024-2025

All SYA students are required to take six courses, including host country language instruction, the Experiential Language course, English and in almost all cases, mathematics.

At SYA, English and math are taught in English. All other courses are taught in the target language. In the case of Italy, where most students arrive as beginner Italian learners, non-Classic elective courses start in English and evolve progressively to Italian.

Note: the availability of all elective courses will be subject to interest and enrollment numbers.

Important abbreviations:

H = Honors

AP = Advanced Placement

YL = Yearlong

COURSES OFFERED AT ALL SYA CAMPUSES

English (1 credit YL, 0.5 credit Semester) H

SYA offers a well-defined and comprehensive English course that prepares students to return to their home school English curriculum or to enter a competitive university program. The SYA English program is distinctly geared towards the study abroad experience and works in tandem with the overall program's mission to create globally aware, divergent thinkers prepared for a 21st-century reality. The SYA curriculum is structured to reflect the various stages of the study abroad experience and facilitates a cultural immersion experience with a series of assignments and readings created with this goal in mind.

SYA English provides a home base for student intellectual and intercultural growth abroad and is specifically designed to complement the immersion experience presented by the host country. Chosen texts challenge students to improve their critical reading and analytical writing skills and cover a variety of literary movements. The readings engage with themes of alienation, isolation, foreignness or self-discovery, as well as the notion of place and identity, both geographic and internal. Texts selected also support the students in contextualizing both their collective and individual experience throughout the program. In addition to working toward becoming closer readers and more successful writers, SYA English students also reflect on the study abroad experience in a more explicit and sophisticated way, through both informal and formal journaling and expository writing.

MATHEMATICS

NOTE: SYA will reach out to the home school current math teacher of all students enrolled at SYA for the 2024-25 year in mid-late April, share the topics covered in each course and request them to recommend the most appropriate SYA math class for their student. This recommendation, confirmed by a math skills assessment students take upon arrival to SYA, will guide their math course placement.

SPECIAL NOTE FOR SPRING SEMESTER STUDENTS: In order to enroll in any math course in the spring, the student must have completed the first semester of the same course. To enroll in an AP math course, the student must have completed the first semester of the same AP course.

Algebra 2 (1 credit YL, 0.5 credit Semester)

This course is intended for students who have had one full year of geometry and one full year of algebra. Successful completion of this course prepares students to enter a standard precalculus course when they return to their home school. Concentration is on functions and their transformations. The standard parent functions are studied from the perspective of shifts, domain and range, as well as multiplication and division. Preliminary results from rational functions, inequalities, exponents and logarithms are explored.

Precalculus (1 credit YL, 0.5 credit Semester)

The Precalculus course is intended for students who have successfully completed Geometry and an Algebra 2 course (or its equivalent). This is a standard level course covering polynomial, rational, exponential, logarithmic and introductory trigonometric functions. The goal of this course is to prepare students for a regular Calculus course or a lateral math course such as Statistics.

Precalculus Honors (1 credit YL, 0.5 credit Semester) H

The Precalculus Honors course is intended for students who have successfully completed Geometry and an honors level Algebra 2 course (or its equivalent). This fast-paced and demanding course will cover the functions covered in the regular Precalculus course with a more in-depth expanded curriculum which includes polar functions. The goal of this course is to prepare students for an AP Calculus AB course or its equivalent.

AP Calculus AB (1 credit YL, 0.5 credit Semester) AP

This course will be offered contingent on sufficient enrollment. Even with insufficient enrollment, this course will be available for qualified and interested students either through a hybrid model or online through our partner, One Schoolhouse.

The prerequisite for this course is successful completion of an honors level Precalculus course or its equivalent. This course offers a rigorous introduction to differential and integral calculus, covering all topics included on the Calculus AB outline. The course aims to have the students understand the theory that underlies the various rules and applications of differentiation and integration treated in the

course. All major theorems are proved and their derivations discussed in class. Students must explore the calculus concepts from multiple perspectives: algebraically, graphically and numerically, and in the context of a variety of applications. Students are expected to be able to offer clear justifications of their work that show a deep understanding of the fundamental ideas. Students are eligible to take the AP Calculus AB exam in May.

AP Calculus BC (1 credit YL, 0.5 credit Semester) AP

This course may be offered if there is sufficient enrollment. Even with insufficient enrollment, this course may be offered online through our partner, One Schoolhouse.

The prerequisite for this course is successful completion of AP Calculus AB or an advanced and comprehensive Precalculus course including natural logarithms, series / sequences, parametric / polar functions, vectors, and limits. The AP Calculus BC course is roughly equivalent to both first- and second-semester college calculus courses and extends the content covered in Calculus AB to different types of equations and expands upon the topic of sequences and series. The course covers topics in differential and integral calculus, including concepts and skills of limits, derivatives, definite integrals, the Fundamental Theorem of Calculus and series. The course teaches students to approach calculus concepts and problems when they are represented graphically, numerically, analytically and verbally, and to make connections between these representations. Students are eligible to take the AP Calculus BC exam in May.

Courses listed by campus are found in the following pages.

SYA FRANCE

LANGUAGE COURSES

Experiential French (1 credit YL, 0.5 credit Semester) H

Experiential French is a place-based course that provides students with opportunities to practice their growing language and cultural skills in real-world contexts at school as well as via experiences within the city and region on fieldwork days. This interdisciplinary course begins with an in-depth immersion into the host city and region, focusing on the use of resources of the host country and its unique and challenging learning environments. The immersion continues throughout the course with weekly experiences outside the classroom called fieldwork. This course leads up to a culminating project at the end of semester 1 and builds up to a Capstone project at the end of the year.

French Language (1 credit YL, 0.5 credit Semester) H

The goal of this language course is for students to achieve a degree of fluency and spontaneity in French that enables them to have meaningful interactions with their host families and others in the community. In doing so, students come to know the French people and their culture. The learning process consists of a variety of activities both in and out of the classroom, including speaking with locals, writing in various genres, researching contemporary topics and deciphering news from a selection of Francophone media. Through these experiences, students apply language skills and learn to express their opinions about cultural and social issues that matter to them.

ELECTIVES

Art History (1 credit YL, 0.5 credit Semester) H

Throughout this course, students will learn about many aspects of art history from the Middle Ages to present-day France. The aim of the course is to help students not only exercise their eyes, but also to develop their analytical and critical thinking skills. Part of this course will involve visiting museums, monuments and other historical sites, in order to take advantage of local resources and better understand the environment in which they are living.

Environmental Science (1 credit Yearlong, 0.5 credit Semester) H

This is an interdisciplinary course set up to appeal to a wide range of student interests, relevant to their everyday lives, both in France and at home. The dual goal is for students to analyze current environmental issues globally and locally and to design and implement small-scale scientific investigations using an inquiry-based lab approach with Rennes and the environs as the laboratory.

Through lectures, readings, videos, field trips, discussions and debate, students learn about important environmental issues while conducting scientific investigations. Topics include biodiversity and environmental systems, demographics and populations, local and global resources of food, water and energy and global changes and sustainability.

Students who would like to use this course to fulfill a science requirement at their home school are advised to check with their school's Academic Office.

Political Science and Global Issues (1 credit YL, 0.5 credit Semester) H

This course introduces students to political issues that are currently discussed on the news and in the media. It is designed to enable students to better understand many of the concepts which are shaping the world today such as globalization, fundamentalism, nationalism or terrorism. The themes explored in this course include but are not limited to: education, cultural exception, immigration, the European Union, feminism, political institutions, modern wars, new colonialism and fair trade and local economy. The course looks mainly at how France and Europe are dealing with these issues at the dawn of the 21st century and how their perspective might differ from the rest of the world. Coursework takes place both in and outside the classroom with the opportunity for the students to attend special exhibits, lectures and conferences. Students are expected to participate on a regular basis in class. The course also facilitates the students' participation in collaborative projects with French high school students and members of local organizations.

French Cinema (1 credit) H

In this course, we will explore the history of French cinema from its birth in the 19th century to the present day. We will cover the origins of cinema, its technical and aesthetic innovations, as well as the major movements that have marked its evolution. We will learn about many directors and actors, and in doing so, we will explore several key periods of the French society.

We will watch a selection of films in collective projections, and then study them in class, focusing on some of the most striking aspects of each piece.

We will learn to manipulate the instruments of filmic analysis: through close observation of scenes and audio sequences, students will develop critical thinking skills and become more conscious of their role as viewers.

Finally, students will be given opportunities to exercise their creativity and self-expression through practical exercises that will put the knowledge acquired in class into perspective. The creative field of experimentation will be the city of Rennes.

SYA ITALY

LANGUAGE COURSES

Experiential Italian (1 credit YL, 0.5 credit Semester) H

Experiential Italian is a place-based course that provides students with opportunities to practice their growing language and cultural skills in real-world contexts at school as well as via experiences within the city and region on fieldwork days. This interdisciplinary course begins with an in-depth immersion into the host city and region, focusing on the use of resources of the host country and its unique and challenging learning environments. The immersion continues throughout the course with weekly experiences outside the classroom called fieldwork. This course leads up to a culminating project at the end of semester 1 and builds up to a Capstone project at the end of the year.

Italian Language (1 credit YL, 0.5 credit Semester) H

The goal of this course is for students to achieve a degree of fluency and spontaneity in Italian that enables them to have meaningful interactions with their host families and others in the community. In doing so, students come to know the Italian people and their culture.

The learning process consists of myriad activities both in and out of the classroom, including speaking with locals, writing in various genres, deciphering news from countless media and researching contemporary topics in order to debate political, ethical and economic topics. Through these experiences, students learn to express their opinions about cultural and social issues that matter to them.

Latin Reading (1 credit YL, 0.5 credit Semester)

Depending on enrollment, SYA will offer the following course or its equivalent.

This course is designed for students with a strong background in Latin grammar who have completed at least two years of Latin. It aims to facilitate reading skills to the point in which students can read primary texts in the original language. Emphasis will be placed on reading comprehension and deeper understanding of the texts rather than rote translation. The class affords an excellent opportunity to appreciate some of the classical masterpieces in the original language.

Advanced Topics in Latin (1 credit YL, 0.5 credit Semester) H

Depending on enrollment, SYA will offer the following course or its equivalent.

This course is designed for students who are not quite ready to enroll in AP Latin. Prerequisites are a solid foundation in Latin grammar, syntax and vocabulary, some background in rhetorical and metrical analysis, some exposure to Roman political history and at least one year of experience reading authentic Latin texts.

AP Latin (1 credit YL, 0.5 credit Semester) AP

Depending on enrollment, SYA will offer the following course or its equivalent.

The AP Latin course focuses on the in-depth study of selections from two of the greatest works in Latin literature: Virgil's *Aeneid* and Caesar's *Commentaries on the Gallic War*. The course requires students to prepare and translate the readings and place these texts in a meaningful context, which helps develop critical, historical and literary sensitivities. Throughout the course, students consider themes in ancient literature and bring these works to life through classroom discussions, debates and presentations. The use of additional English readings from both of these works will complement the Latin readings.

Introductory Greek (1 credit YL, 0.5 credit Semester)

Depending on enrollment, SYA will offer the following course as an Independent Study.

Course only available for Fall and Year-long students. Students attending SYA in the Spring may enroll only if they are taking Intro to Greek at their home school in the Fall. Prerequisite is one semester of Intro to Greek.

This course provides an introduction to Ancient Greek language, history and culture, using a combination of traditional and modern methods. The primary text, *Athenaze*, gradually introduces students to all the basic Ancient Greek grammar while reading and learning about the social and political context that led to the Peloponnesian War between Athens and Sparta. Students also read and translate excerpts from Sappho, Herodotus, Sophocles, the New Testament, Homer and others.

Greek Reading (1 credit YL, 0.5 credit Semester)

Depending on enrollment, SYA will offer the following course as an Independent Study.

This course begins with a review of topics from the Greek grammar text, *Athenaze II*, to ensure firm footing before reading Ancient Greek text selections. A thorough outline of Greek literature and mythology will accompany and complete the original texts. The aim of the course is to read, understand and translate a variety of texts, ranging from historians to tragedians to epic poetry. Readings are chosen to suit students' initial skills and progress throughout the year. In addition, students are introduced to speaking Ancient Greek, using the Polis Method developed by Professor Christophe Rico.

ELECTIVES

Ancient History Through Art (1 credit YL, 0.5 credit Semester) H

This course focuses on three ancient civilizations that influenced the local territory: the Greeks, the Etruscans and the Romans. Students read, analyze and comment on written primary sources, archaeological remains and artifacts of the area in order to refine critical thinking skills. Students explore topics in the European tradition by building a chronology and content background combined with student-centered work and research. Students also learn to become more confident public speakers through re-enactments, presentations and group activities, while interacting with Etruscan tombs, Greek statues and Roman ruins as vehicles to better understand modern Italian people, culture and language.

Applied Agroecology (1 credit YL, 0.5 credit Semester) H

This course combines such science disciplines to examine rich agricultural traditions and processes that make Italian food known the world over. With a focus on sustainability, students will experiment to understand the role of food locally. Viterbo's fertile soil, 12-month growing season and rich culinary customs will provide systematic comparisons between age-old practices and the applications of modern science in order to cultivate many of the local products Italy is known for, such as olive oil, wine, bread, cured meats and cheese. Students will ask research questions and employ laboratory methods in order to understand problems that present both local and global challenges. The course methods will concentrate on inquiry, hands-on experimentation, observation, statistical analysis and discovery.

Local Global Perspectives (1 credit YL, 0.5 credit Semester) H

This course introduces students to the most pressing challenges faced by Italy, Europe and the world: economic crises; technological transformations; conflict; human rights and discrimination; migration and demographic change; education, political systems; environmental issues. Students examine these topics through various lenses – local (Viterbo), national (Italy vs. United States) and global– and learn a valuable reality: different cultures view “problems” in very different ways. Coursework takes place both in and outside the classroom. Students have the opportunity to visit national institutions in Rome and around Italy. The course seeks to help students better understand the challenges facing all of us.

SYA SPAIN

LANGUAGE COURSES

Experiential Spanish (1 credit YL, 0.5 credit Semester) H

Experiential Spanish is a place-based course that provides students with opportunities to practice their growing language and cultural skills in real-world contexts at school as well as via experiences within the city and region on fieldwork days. This interdisciplinary course begins with an in-depth immersion into the host city and region, focusing on the use of resources of the host country and its unique and challenging learning environments. The immersion continues throughout the course with weekly experiences outside the classroom called fieldwork. This course leads up to a culminating project at the end of semester 1 and builds up to a Capstone project at the end of the year.

Spanish Language (1 credit YL, 0.5 credit Semester) H

The Spanish Language course at SYA emphasizes communication in real-world contexts so that students can improve their proficiency level and have increasingly meaningful interactions with their host families and the community at large during their time in Spain. The learning process consists of myriad activities both in and out of the classroom, including speaking with locals, writing in various genres, deciphering news from varied media outlets and having debates and discussions about current events. Grammar and vocabulary are taught and learned in context and communication is emphasized so that students gain confidence in their abilities and are motivated to grow their skills both in and outside of the Spanish Language classroom.

ELECTIVES

Art History (1 credit YL, 0.5 credit Semester) H

This course lays a foundation of historical art movements up to the time of Goya and then shifts focus to contemporary art movements such as Impressionism, Cubism, and Surrealism, which began as reactions to or revivals of prior art movements. Students learn to approach Contemporary Art with an open mind and also have the opportunity to do creative exercises in class. Visits to museums and monuments in and around Zaragoza plays an important role in the class.

Environmental Science (1 credit YL, 0.5 credit Semester) H

This course examines how the world works and how people can alter the delicate balance of the earth's life-support systems. It is set up to appeal to a wide range of student interests, relevant to their everyday lives, both in Spain and at home. Through readings, videos, lectures, discussions, projects, debate and field trips, students learn about important environmental issues while conducting scientific investigations.

Students who would like to use this course to fulfill a science requirement at their home school are advised to check with their school's academic office.

Macroeconomics and the Global Consumer (1 credit YL, 0.5 credit Semester) H

This course introduces students to the basic principles of macro- and microeconomics and their application to national and international public policy. Students examine the development of the contemporary economy and use basic theoretical tools to analyze current issues. Classes consist primarily of discussions, although the course also employs role-playing, films, lectures, case studies and student reports and projects. This course does **not** directly prepare students for the AP Microeconomics or Macroeconomics exam in May.

Spain: History and Culture in the Global Context (1 credit YL, 0.5 credit Semester) H

In this course, students explore the cultures and civilizations of Spain via both the historical and modern contexts presented in Zaragoza and throughout the country of Spain. Specifically, you will learn about Spain history and how it affects present day Spain, society, politics, art, languages and habits. Further, you will learn more nuanced topics that can only be noticed by people like you who are living a long-term experience in the country. This course involves work outside the classroom which will help you understand the multiple questions that will emerge about Spanish culture and history from your own experiences.

Spanish Theater through Literature and Writing (1 credit YL, 0.5 credit Semester) H

In this course, students will explore prominent theatrical works of Spain through detailed readings and discussions. In addition, students will engage in creative writing and adapt narrative and theatrical texts for stage presentations and study theatrical performance. Students will also develop, adapt, or create theatrical pieces which will be staged. Musical and visual expression will be encouraged as part of creative theater.

Political Science and Philosophy (1 credit YL, 0.5 credit Semester) H

In this course, students will explore main political science concepts through the study of the works of political philosophers. Key influences on different political systems-- from classical to contemporary currents--will be analyzed as well as their social and economic implications. Overall, this course will provide a comprehensive overview of the theoretical and practical foundations that underpin the political and social structures of the modern world.