

FMS Elective Course Descriptions

| Class | Description | Grade Levels |
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| <p><u>Exploratory VAPA - Art and Drama</u></p> | <p>Two semester-long VAPA (Visual and Performing Art) classes.</p> <p>Exploratory Art: will expose students to the fundamentals of fine art including the elements of art and principles of design. We will use a variety of art-making techniques and materials to create artwork that will challenge students to explore and express their ideas and experiences. Students will develop a vocabulary that will allow them to describe, analyze, interpret, and judge the artworks.</p> <p>Exploratory Drama: will expose students to the fundamentals of theatre arts that include voice & projection, props & scenic design, costume, creating sounds and lights, choreography, acting in a play vs. a musical, sing-a-longs, and radio play to develop their theatre understanding. Through these units, students will learn how to create, perform, respond and connect to this art and develop their theatre literacy. Students will complete the course with a group performance on stage.</p> | <p>6th, 7th</p> |
| <p><u>Exploratory STEM - Robotics and Computer Science: Physical Computing</u></p> | <p>Two semester-long STEM(Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) classes.</p> <p>Robotics: In this program, students delve into the world of robotics, taking on the role of interns. Working together, they craft prototypes that cater to the unique demands of clients, while also mastering the design and evaluation of complex mechanical systems, including comprehensive learning about gear systems. The course takes students up through simple coding of microcontrollers to manage input from sensors and output to motors.</p> <p>Computer Science: Physical Computing: This course introduces students to the concept that programming extends beyond virtual environments and into the tangible world. It encourages students to explore the imaginative use of sensors and actuators in creating systems that engage with the physical environment. Alongside formulating algorithms and applying computational thinking principles, students write and transfer programs to microcontrollers capable of executing various real-world functions. This unit aims to enhance students' grasp of computer science fundamentals by emphasizing practical implementations.</p> | <p>6th, 7th</p> |

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| <p>Advanced Robotics and Computer Science: Creating Apps</p> | <p>Advanced Robotics: This course will build upon the Robotics course, having students delve into the realm of robotics and automation, simulating the role of interns. Working collaboratively, they utilize the engineering design process to design and construct solution prototypes. They construct and evaluate mechanical setups, subsequently automating them using programmed input and output mechanisms. Students will build both remote-controlled and autonomous models.</p> <p>Computer Science: Creating Apps: This course serves as an introduction to the realm of computer science and the fundamental principles of computational thinking, primarily focusing on the creation of mobile applications. Students are encouraged to unleash their creativity and innovation while collaboratively conceiving and building mobile solutions for real-life challenges. Through this process, students witness the positive impact of implementing computer science in society and across various disciplines, with a particular emphasis on the intersection with biomedical science.</p> | <p>7th, 8th</p> |
| <p>Speech and Debate</p> | <p>Do you want to learn how to win an argument? Do you want to know how to be more persuasive, more charismatic and better at thinking on your feet? If so then Introduction to Speech and Debate may be the right elective for you! Communication is over 90% nonverbal. This means HOW you speak and relay information is much more important than the actual words that you say.</p> <p>This course is intended to make students more comfortable with public speaking while learning the art and science of speech and debate. Finally, not only will students greatly improve their oration and argumentation skills, the omnipresent fear of public speaking will be alleviated through sheer repetition of speaking coupled with an overwhelmingly positive classroom environment.</p> <p>Public speaking is an excellent skill to have for one's academic, professional and personal life. Public speaking instills confidence and eloquence in people. Also, if a person can speak well they can write well. A good original advocacy speech or public forum debate follows a very similar pattern to a good argumentative essay.</p> <p>Speeches and debates that will be performed during this year long course include, but are not limited to: Impromptu, Original Oratory, Original Advocacy, Demonstration, Public Forum debate, spontaneous argument debate, improv and speech games.</p> | <p>7th, 8th</p> |

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| <p>Year-long Drama</p> | <p>In this theatre course, students will be participating further in the drama process and incorporating theatre production. Students will expand their theatrical literacy in this yearlong elective which will incorporate the skills introduced in the Exploratory Drama course. They will further learn the historical aspect of how theatre developed over the centuries to fully engage in a production. Students will be actively participating in creating, performing, responding and connecting to theatre throughout the year. This course will help the student develop both dramatic techniques and technical skills to use in production. Students in this course will be participating in 2 school productions, one in the Fall and one in the Spring. Students will be <u>required</u> to set aside several after school days (like an after school sport) to fulfill any scheduled production needs and evening commitments close to showtime. We will be using working tools and latex paints amongst other construction materials in a safe and responsible manner.. There is some lifting of heavy objects. Organizing, working as a team and the ability to problem solve under some stress are skills that students will need to have to successfully participate in theatre. A schedule will be given at the start of this performing arts course to fulfill the overall time commitment required.</p> | <p>7th, 8th</p> |
| <p>Advanced Art</p> | <p>In Advanced Art students will apply the fundamental concepts of fine art including the elements of art and principles of design to design and create artwork. We will use a variety of mediums and art-making techniques to create artworks that allow students to explore and express their own ideas. The projects will challenge students to use creative expression to create uniquely individual artworks. Students will become art literate by developing a vocabulary that will allow them to describe, analyze, interpret, and judge the artworks of master artists, classmates, and their own.</p> | <p>7th, 8th</p> |
| <p>Discovering Dance</p> | <p>This is a year-long introductory course in dance as a theatrical performing art. No experience is needed to be in the course. The class will use a textbook as an overall guide to learn dance history and then students will learn the different dance styles. For the first semester, the primary focus will be to expose students to the various types of dance styles from around the world, learn short routines, learn the vocabulary associated with certain steps, create short choreographies using instrumental music and vocalized music, among other dance topics. There will be a mandatory group performance as the final project for Semester 1 on the stage. For Semester 2, students will learn how to develop and follow choreography as it applies to a musical production. Students will get exposure to various musicals to understand how dance has shaped Musical Theatre history. Students will learn a specific choreography to perform with the Drama Class in their Spring Musical Production. Participation in the Spring Musical is required as part of the Semester 2 Dance performance activities.</p> | <p>6th, 7th, 8th</p> |

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| <p>Spanish 1A</p> | <p>This is a year long elective that satisfies the 1st semester of a Spanish 1 high school course. Students will learn to communicate in writing, reading short passages, listen to authentic text and practice speaking using the regular present tense amongst other grammar topics related to the 21 Spanish-speaking countries, Spanish influences in the U.S., classroom life, transportation in a big city, life with family & friends, and Spanish music. Students will learn to create, present, analyze and connect to the Spanish language from the 21 Spanish-speaking countries with the topics mentioned. They will also learn to compare/contrast the culture of several Spanish-speaking countries with their own culture and traditions.</p> | <p>7th</p> |
| <p>Spanish 1B</p> | <p>This is a year long elective that satisfies the 2nd semester of a Spanish 1 high school course. Students will continue to learn to communicate in writing, reading short passages, listen to authentic text and practice speaking using the regular, irregular and stem-changing verbs of the present tense amongst other grammar topics related to shopping, cultural celebrations & holidays, home architecture, home life, pastime activities, seasons, sports, weather, daily routines and foods. Students will learn to create, present, analyze and connect to the Spanish language from the 21 Spanish-speaking countries with the topics mentioned. They will also learn to compare/contrast the culture of several Spanish-speaking countries with their own culture and traditions.</p> | <p>8th</p> |
| <p>Band-Beginning</p> | <p>This is our entry level band class. It is a <u>year long class</u> where students learn traditional concert band instruments including flute, oboe, clarinet, bass clarinet, bassoon, alto sax, tenor sax, baritone sax, trumpet, french horn, trombone, baritone, tuba and percussion. This class is for new players as well as incoming 6th graders who played a band instrument in 5th grade. This ensemble performs in at least 3 mandatory concerts each year.</p> | <p>6th, 7th, 8th</p> |
| <p>Band- Intermediate (Audition to Skip)</p> | <p>This is our intermediate level band class. It is a <u>year long class</u> where students continue to craft their skill on their concert band instruments including flute, oboe, clarinet, bass clarinet, bassoon, alto sax, tenor sax, baritone sax, trumpet, french horn, trombone, baritone, tuba and percussion. This class is for students who have at least one year of band here at FMS or are in their first year at FMS but have taken at least 6 months of private lessons. Incoming 6th graders may be placed in this class by audition in the spring or fall. This ensemble performs in at least 3 mandatory concerts each year.</p> | <p>7th, 8th</p> |

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| <p>Band- Advanced (Audition to Skip)</p> | <p>This is our advanced level band class. It is a <u>year long class</u> where students continue to craft their skill on their concert band instruments including flute, oboe, clarinet, bass clarinet, bassoon, alto sax, tenor sax, baritone sax, trumpet, french horn, trombone, baritone, tuba and percussion.</p> <p>This class is for students who have at least two years of band here at FMS or have taken at least 6 months of private lessons. Students ready for this advanced level class will be placed by audition in the spring or fall.</p> <p>This ensemble performs in at least 3 mandatory concerts each year.</p> | <p>7th, 8th</p> |
| <p>Jazz Band (Application- Audition)</p> | <p>This is an intermediate/advanced level class for students ready to explore styles like jazz, rock and funk with an emphasis on improvisation and performance.. The instrumentation for this class is the standard big band format (saxes, trumpets, trombones, piano, guitar, bass guitar and drums) but may include other instruments like clarinet, baritone or tuba.</p> <p>This is a <u>year long class during zero period</u> that must be taken in conjunction with another music class (band/choir/orchestra) during the regular school day. Students audition for placement in this class in the spring/fall.</p> <p>This ensemble performs in at least 3 mandatory concerts each year.</p> | <p>7th,8th</p> |
| <p>Orchestra -Beginning</p> | <p>This is our entry level orchestra class. It is a <u>year long class</u> where students learn traditional orchestra instruments including violin, viola, cello, or bass. This class is for new players as well as incoming 6th graders who played a string instrument in 5th grade.</p> <p>This ensemble performs in at least 3 mandatory concerts each year.</p> | <p>6th, 7th</p> |
| <p>Orchestra -Intermediate</p> | <p>This is our intermediate level orchestra class. It is a <u>year long class</u> where students continue to craft their skill on their orchestra instruments including violin, viola, cello, or bass. This class is for students who have at least one year of orchestra here at FMS. Incoming 6th graders may be placed in this class by audition in the fall.</p> <p>This ensemble performs in at least 3 mandatory concerts each year.</p> | <p>7th</p> |

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| <p>Orchestra -Advanced</p> | <p>This is our advanced level orchestra class. It is a <u>year long class</u> where students continue to craft their skill on their orchestra instruments including violin, viola, cello, or bass. This class is for students who have at least two years of orchestra here at FMS. Incoming 6th or 7th graders may be placed in this class by audition in the fall.</p> <p>This ensemble performs in at least 3 mandatory concerts each year</p> | <p>8th</p> |
| <p>Chorus</p> | <p>This class is a traditional vocal ensemble that is available to all grade and experience levels. We focus on singing together in small groups as well as in large ensembles with the purpose of singing better as individuals and as an ensemble.</p> <p>This ensemble is a <u>year long class</u> and performs in at least 3 mandatory concerts each year.</p> | <p>6th, 7th, 8th</p> |
| <p>Curriculum Support</p> | <p>This class provides the space and opportunity for students to learn a variety of skills associated with engaging in their various content areas. Skills like goal setting, agendas, study techniques, and additional extracurricular skills are taught over the course of the year. Some extracurricular skills include but aren't limited to: email etiquette, financial literacy, growth mindset, etc. Students also get time to simply catch up and complete assignments as needed (2 days a week). Students are responsible for keeping an agenda and completing a journal weekly with bi or tri weekly grade checks. This is a year long class and is best used when students need the additional space and time to complete assignments.</p> | <p>6th, 7th, 8th</p> |
| <p>Leadership (Application)</p> | <p><u>**This course is required for all elected or appointed student body officials and/or class officers like Student Body President. **</u></p> <p>Students will learn how to work together and lead activities around campus. Students will plan events such as: rallies, dances, outside events like Field Day or Fall Fest, club rush, Sports-a-Rama, teacher of the month, spirit days/weeks, and then work together to make posters to advertise the activities planned. The course is designed to teach the basic concepts of democratic government, leadership skills, group process, team building, time management, and project planning. Students participating in this course must participate and attend events outside of normal school hours, including possible events during the summer, orientations, and rally/dance cleanup. Students are also required to complete a community service component. (teacher recommendation MUST be completed)</p> | <p>6th, 7th, 8th</p> |

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| <p>Yearbook (Application)</p> | <p>You are historians, journalists, and artists putting together a photojournalistic book that will be on shelves for many, many years to come. What you do in this room directly affects every person in the Folsom Middle School community. On top of content production, you will explore topics like leadership, project management, advanced design strategies, and time management. Our goal is to create remarkable content that demonstrates our commitment to excellence. Students are required to take pictures outside of school. It is an honor and a big responsibility to be a part of the yearbook staff!</p> | <p>6th, 7th, 8th</p> |
| <p>Media Production (Application)</p> | <p>The Media Production course will introduce students to building global creative, conceptual and technical competencies while gaining experience in production and design that has real world applications. The course will provide students with an introduction to the media arts by creating, producing, responding, and connecting through the use of a variety of emerging technologies. Students in this course will take a problem-based approach to production iterations, prototypes, and models and will build media and digital literacy skills. Students will gain experience in production and design that has real world relevance and applications. Through the use of sound, animation, video, graphic design, and interactive design projects, students will understand and apply various components of media production including multimedia communication, interdisciplinary integration, planning strategies, and media and digital literacies.</p> | <p>6th, 7th, 8th</p> |
| <p>TA (Application)</p> | <p>A student may request to be an assistant for a teacher, Library, or the Office. Students will be required to demonstrate skills and abilities needed to fulfill duties as determined by the teacher or staff member. Students who request to work in the office or library will learn life skills about working in an office environment such as filing, organizing, communication, as well as working with the public.</p> | <p>8th</p> |