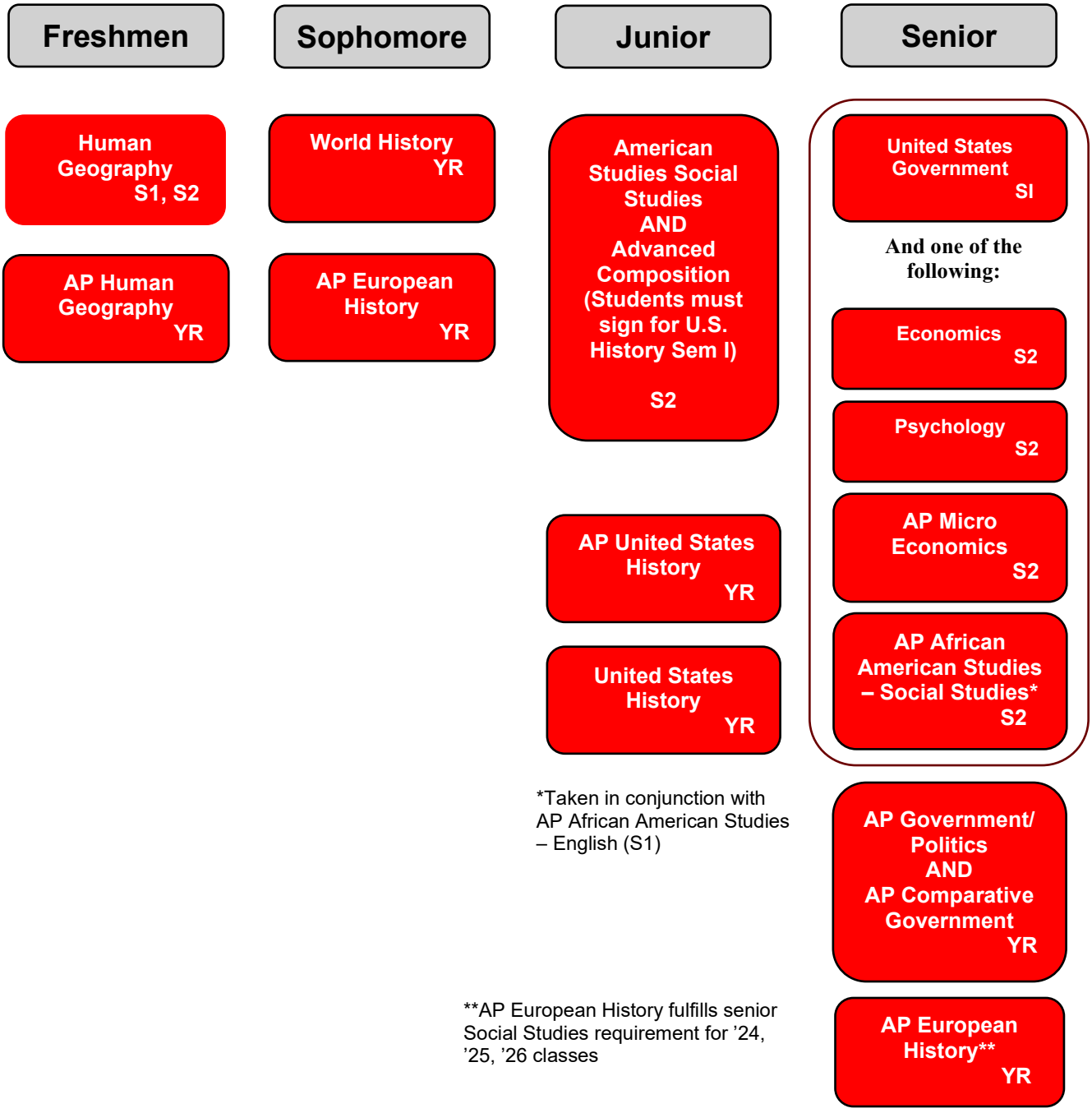
Social Studies

The social studies program at BSM is designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to actively participate in our democracy and our increasingly interconnected world. Courses in the social studies department will focus on both essential content as well as skills such as critical thinking, discussion writing, and analysis.
CLASS OF 2026 and earlier: The graduation requirement is 3 years of social studies.
CLASS of 2027 and beyond: All students must take 3.5 years of social studies starting with human geography Freshman year. Contact your counselor with any questions on courses.

Department Chair: Cherie Vroman cvroman@bsmschool.org

S = Semester Course YR = Year Long Course



*Taken in conjunction with AP African American Studies – English (S1)

**AP European History fulfills senior Social Studies requirement for '24, '25, '26 classes

Social Studies

Freshmen

Enrollment in one semester of Human Geography is required. Students with above average reading and writing skills may take AP Human Geography (year-long) instead.

Human Geography (S1) or (S2)

One semester, one credit, taken the same semester as physical education

This semester course serves as an introduction to the study of human geography, which is the study of humans and their interaction with their surroundings. Using global examples, students will study important 21st century topics such as population, the political organization of space, agriculture, development, and culture. Maps will be frequently used to study various regions at different scales. Skill emphasis will focus on reading nonfiction text, note taking, and map analysis.

AP Human Geography (YR)

Two semesters, two credits

A summer assignment is required and must be completed to maintain enrollment in the course. This assignment is due on the first day of school.

Human Geography focuses on the distribution, use, and effects of human populations on the planet. Using global examples, students will study topics such as population, migration, culture, agriculture, development, industry, and the political organization of space. A focus on current events around the world and in the United States will occur as we examine these topics in depth. Maps and spatial data will be frequently used to study regions at different scales. In addition, students must be willing and able to work with college-level materials and topics.

Social Studies

Sophomore

World History (YR)

Two semesters, two credits

This course explores early modern world history and the historical events that continue to influence the contemporary world. Students will investigate the historical events that led to European domination of the globe and the ensuing consequences. The first semester will start with the Medieval era and end on the eve of WWI. The second semester explores the causes and effects of two global wars and then will focus on case studies of various regions around the world.

The themes emphasized are cross-continental interactions and intellectual movements/theories that still impact the world today including individualism, marginalization of others, self-determination, constitutionalism, authoritarianism, communism, and nationalism. Skill emphasis will be on reading non-fiction text, note-taking, analyzing primary sources, and effective persuasive writing.

AP European History (YR)

Two semesters, two credits

A summer assignment will be required and must be completed to maintain enrollment in the course. This assignment is due on the first day of school.

Advanced Placement European History is designed to provide the student with a fundamental understanding of the development of Western Society and culture from 1450-present. The course focuses on the politics, social, economic, intellectual, and diplomatic history of Europe. Critical thinking and writing skills are emphasized as students analyze historical documents and utilize historical thinking skills. This course is taught at a level commensurate with an introductory college course, and it is expected that the student comes prepared for that level of commitment. A significant amount of reading and writing are required for the course, and all course work is geared toward preparation for the AP exam in May. Students with acceptable scores on this exam may be awarded college credit for this course.

Social Studies

Junior

United States History (YR)

Two semesters, two credits, required for juniors

This course explores the history of the United States of America as a land founded upon high principles. Students will explore the achievements and success of the United States, as well as its failures and challenges from the Reconstruction to the present. The course is designed to give students a fundamental knowledge of major themes in United States history: state and federal control, expansion and conflict, industrial growth and global economic interest, immigration, struggle for rights of marginalized Americans, war and peace, domestic policy, and world politics.

Ongoing skill development in reading comprehension, critical thinking, original source document analysis, source bias, writing for the social studies and research, note taking, and integrative technology are the study skills that are developed in this course.

American Studies/Social Studies (S2)

One semester, one credit

Prerequisite: Successful completion of World History OR AP Human Geography IN ADDITION TO both semesters of English 10 OR Honors English.

IN ADDITION, students must enroll in first semester Advanced Composition. Second semester students must enroll in American Studies English and American Studies Social Studies. This course fulfills the second semester English requirement.

Students must enroll in first semester United States History. Semester two students must enroll in American Studies English and American Studies Social Studies. This course fulfills the second semester United States History Social Studies requirement.

This course blends US historical events and themes in American literature to provide students with a comprehensive social, political, economic, and literary history. Five time periods each reflecting different epochs will be team taught: Great Depression, World War 2, Civil Rights, Cold War Conflict, and Challenges of Modern American Society. Having both literary and historical figures illuminating the human experience, American Studies fosters a deeper understanding of the principles, problems, and issues basic to the establishment of our country. This understanding is essential for students to fully appreciate the complexities of history as it unfolds in modern times. Students enrolled in this course will meet two consecutive class periods.

AP United States History (YR)

Two semesters, two credits fulfills U.S. History requirement

A summer assignment will be required and must be completed to maintain enrollment in the course. This assignment is due on the first day of school.

This college-level course is designed for juniors who have strong academic abilities, time management and study skills, along with a keen interest in United States History. The course is presented in chronological order from the Colonial Period to the Present. Various topics and events will be examined with an emphasis being placed on in-depth analysis of cause-and-effect relationships. The course will also focus on the “Course Themes” and “Historical Thinking Skills” required by the College Board for the APUSH class. Special emphasis is placed on learning the writing skills needed for the different types of essays required for the AP exam. Students are expected to actively participate in debates, simulations, speeches, presentations, and other classroom activities.

Social Studies

Senior

All seniors are required to take U.S. Government unless enrolled in AP European History(Class of 2026 only) or AP Government

United States Government and Politics (S1)

One semester, one credit, open to seniors

This course consists of a survey of political thought and experience in the United States. American government at local, state, and federal levels will be studied, with an emphasis placed upon the institutions of the federal government. Course topics include the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution of the United States of America, political process, political philosophy, civil rights, the role of government, current events, and the duties of a United States citizen

Economics (S2)

One semester, one credit

This survey course covers macro- and microeconomic theory, and it is designed to prepare students for an intro-level college economics course. Students will study the fundamental concepts of economics and the national economy and their links to the changing global economy. Course work will include the study of "consumerism," decision-making, various product markets, economic models, and the student's role in the factors of production and consumption. An ongoing analysis and discussion of current economic policies and trends is also a significant aspect of this course.

Psychology (S2)

One semester, one credit

This course is a survey of the science of human behavior. Topics include psychology as a science, the psychology of learning, and biological influences on behavior, personality development, and abnormal psychology. Students will discover the many applications that psychology has on their life.

AP African American Studies – Social Studies (YR)

One SS credit, one English credit, *Open to juniors and seniors*

Yearlong course: one English credit and one Social Studies credit.
Juniors must enroll in required grade-level English & Social Studies courses.

This year-long course will explore the historical, political, cultural, and economic developments that have shaped North American people of African descent. Students will learn about the diversity, strength, and complexity of medieval African societies before the emergence of transatlantic slavery, the slave economy, reconstruction, the civil rights movement, and contemporary issues facing African Americans today. Using a multi-disciplinary approach, students will identify major themes that inform literary and artistic traditions of the African diaspora and understand the contributions of diverse Black communities in the United States.
Students will read both secondary and primary historical materials, poetry, essays, and novels. There will be a required summer reading assignment.

AP European History (YR)

Two semesters, two credits

A summer assignment will be required and must be completed to maintain enrollment in the course. This assignment is due on the first day of school.

Advanced Placement European History is designed to provide the student with a fundamental understanding of the development of Western Society and culture from 1450-present. The course focuses on the politics, social, economic, intellectual, and diplomatic history of Europe. Critical thinking and writing skills are emphasized as students analyze historical documents and utilize historical thinking skills. This course is taught at a level commensurate with an introductory college course, and it is expected that the student comes prepared for that level of commitment. A significant amount of reading and writing are required for the course, and all course work is geared toward preparation for the AP exam in May. Students with acceptable scores on this exam may be awarded college credit for this course.

Social Studies

AP Microeconomics (S2)

Two semesters, two credits

Advanced Placement Microeconomics is a course designed to provide students with a thorough understanding of the principles of economics as they apply to individual decision-making units, including individual households and firms. Students taking the course will spend time examining the theory of consumer behavior, the theory of the firm, and the behavior of profit-maximizing firms under various market structures. Students will evaluate the efficiency of the outcomes with respect to price, output, consumer surplus, and producer surplus. Students will have an opportunity to examine the behaviors of households and businesses in factor markets, and learn how the determination of factor prices, wages, interest, and rent influence the distribution of income in a market economy. Students will also consider instances in which private markets may fail to allocate resources efficiently and examine various public policy alternatives aimed at improving the efficiency of private markets.

AP US Government and Politics & AP Comparative Government and Politics (YR)

Two semesters, two credits

This year-long course provides students with an in-depth understanding of the American government as well as various political systems around the world. Students will understand what factors contributed to the development of the American political system as well as the structure of the U.S. government. They will also focus on the American political process including how different agencies within the government interact, and how these agencies and their policies affect the daily lives of Americans. In addition, students will also be introduced to the methodology of comparative politics and engage in an in-depth study of six different countries: Iran, Nigeria, China, Russia, Mexico, and Great Britain. They will recognize major comparative political concepts and how to apply them. Finally, students will be able to compare political institutions and processes from across the world and form sound conclusions based on those comparisons. This course prepares students for both AP Exams in the spring.