

VES Curriculum Guide

2025-26



VIRGINIA EPISCOPAL SCHOOL

Curriculum Guide

2025 - 2026

The VES Curriculum Guide has been designed to provide students and parents with information about course offerings and basic requirements necessary for VES graduation.

Through our academic program, students will pursue STEM disciplines, explore diverse perspectives in the humanities, enjoy artistic endeavors, and build their fluency in another language and culture. VES courses are designed to develop curious, innovative thinkers and producers, who:

- create, transform and apply knowledge and come to see the disciplines as powerful lenses to understand the world.
- ask compelling questions and think critically.
- bring people together to collaborate in solving multifaceted problems.
- express their ideas with confidence and clarity.

Please thoroughly review this information. Thoughtful and deliberate planning of your coursework will ensure that you are well-prepared for your future. We encourage you to work closely with your advisor and, when appropriate, our college counselors to develop a clear path and specific course selections that excite and challenge you as you strive Toward Full Stature.

Please Note: We have the intention of offering these courses for the coming year; however, please understand that if the course is under-enrolled, we might not be able to offer it. In addition some of our semester courses are only offered in the fall or in the spring.



VES Four Year Academic Planner

2025-26

Each course is 1 credit unless otherwise noted; students are expected to be enrolled in 6 classes each semester (must be approved to take 5). All 9th graders are enrolled in ARCH. This collaborative course provides an interdisciplinary introduction to four, quarter-long subject areas that students can apply across their VES experience and future studies. 'A' stands for the Arts, which students engage with the Introduction to the Arts course; 'R' stands for Reasoning, which is the focus of the Critical Thinking course; 'C' represents their study in Computer Science I; 'H' stands for Health and Life Skills. The ARCH course is a meaningful segment in the path of our ninth graders' high school experience.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS	ENGLISH 4 credits Must be enrolled in an English course every semester	HISTORY 3 credits Including U.S. History	MATH 3 credits Chosen from Algebra I - Multivar. Calc	SCIENCE 3 credits Biology and Chemistry or Physics	WORLD LANGUAGES 2 credits	FINE ARTS 1 credit (excludes ARCH)	RELIGION .5 credit	COMPUTER SCIENCE
Grade 9 No APs recommended; may petition for one if highly accelerated in Math or World Lang.	English 9: Culture and Identity	Global Cultures	Algebra I Geometry Honors Geometry	Biology Honors Biology	French Spanish Honors Spanish	Intro to the Arts - ARCH (.25) Studio Art options (.5) Public Speaking (.5) Acting & Theater Tech options (.5) Jazz, Chamber, and Vocal Ensembles (.5 - evening meetings)	New Testament (.5) World Religions (.5 each)	Computer Science I - ARCH (.25)
Grade 10 No more than 1 AP recommended; may petition for two if highly accelerated in Math or World Lang; In addition, an Arts AP can be added for recommended students.	English 10: Ethics, Inquiry, and Rhetoric	Mod. World Hist. AP Options - AP World Hist	Geometry Algebra II-Trig Hon Algebra II-Trig Math Analysis Honors Math Analysis AP Options - AP Calc. AB (if qual.) - AP Calc. BC (if qual.)	Chemistry Honors Chemistry Physics (most 10th graders take Chemistry)	French Spanish Honors Spanish AP Options - AP French Lang - AP Span Lang	Glee Club (.5) Studio Art options (.5) Public Speaking (.5) Acting & Theater Tech (.5) Jazz, Chamber, and Vocal Ensembles (.5-- evening meetings) Filmmaking options (.5) AP Options - AP Music Theory - AP Studio Art	New Testament (.5) World Religions (.5 each)	Intro to Porgramming (.5) AI Literacy (.5) Intro to Graphic Design (1)

* Application required; *italics indicates a light homework course, which can be added as a 7th class.*



GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS	ENGLISH 4 credits Must be enrolled in an English course every semester	HISTORY 3 credits Including U.S. History	MATH 3 credits Chosen from Algebra I - Multivar. Calc	SCIENCE 3 credits Biology and Chemistry or Physics	WORLD LANGUAGES 2 credits	FINE ARTS 1 credit (excludes ARCH)	RELIGION .5 credit	COMPUTER SCIENCE
Grade 11 No more than 3 APs recommended; may petition for four if highly accelerated in Math, World Lang, or Arts. In addition, an Arts AP can be added for recommended students.	English 11: Ethics, Inquiry, and Rhetoric II AP Option - AP English Language & Composition	US History Economics International Relations AP Option - AP US History AP Psychology	Algebra II-Trig Math Analysis Hon Math Analysis, Statistics AP Options - AP Calculus AB - AP Calculus BC - AP Statistics	Physics Physics in the Modern Age Bio-Medical Science Anatomy & Phys Sports Medicine (.5) AP Options - AP Biology - AP Chemistry - AP Physics - AP Environ. Science	French Spanish Honors Spanish AP Options - AP French Lang - AP Span Lang Post-AP Spanish VI: Adv. Seminar	Glee Club (.5) Studio Art options (.5) Public Speaking (.5) Acting or Theater Tech (.5) Jazz, Chamber, and Vocal Ensembles (.5 - evening meetings) Filmmaking options (.5) AP Options - AP Studio Art - AP Music Theory	New Testament (.5) World Religions (.5 each)	Intro to Programming (.5) AI Literacy (.5) Intro to Graphic Design (1) AP Computer Science (1)
Grade 12 No more than 5 APs recommended without petitioning for an additional AP course.	English Seminars Archetypes in Myth Experimental Literature Literature as Art AP Option - AP English Literature Post-AP - Advanced Studies*	US Government and Politics Economics International Relations AP Option - AP Government - AP Comparative Government AP Psychology Post-AP - Advanced Studies*	Math Analysis Calculus, Statistics AP Options - AP Calculus AB - AP Calculus BC - AP Statistics Post-AP - Advanced Studies*	Physics Modern Physics Biomedical Science Anatomy & Phys Sports Medicine (.5) AP Options - AP Biology - AP Chemistry - AP Physics - AP Env. Science Post-AP - Advanced Studies*	French Spanish Honors Spanish AP Options -AP French Lang -AP Span Lang Post-AP Spanish VI: Adv. Seminar Advanced Studies*	Glee Club (.5) Studio Art options (.5) Public Speaking (.5) Acting or Theater Tech (.5) Jazz, Chamber, and Vocal Ensembles (.5 - evening meetings) Filmmaking options (.5) AP Options - AP Studio Art - AP Music Theory Post-AP - Advanced Studies*	New Testament (.5) World Religions (.5 each)	Intro to Programming (.5) AI Literacy (.5) Intro to Graphic Design (1) AP Computer Science (1)

* Application required; italics indicates a light homework course, which can be added as a 7th class.



Graduation Requirements

Each student must earn at least 19 credits to graduate. All VES students must carry a course load of at least six classes per term, unless an exception is approved by the Academic Dean and Associate Head of School. Students must choose at least five core classes each year, and they may choose from a variety of electives each term. Not all electives are available each term, so students need to consult with their advisors and/or College Counseling when making selections.

Note: All courses listed below are one credit, unless otherwise noted.

ENGLISH

4 credits required. Students must be enrolled in an English class at all times.

English 9: Culture & Identity

English 10: Ethics, Inquiry & Rhetoric

English 11: Ethics, Inquiry & Rhetoric II

AP Literature & Composition

AP Language & Composition

English Seminars

Archetypes in Myth

Experimental Literature

Literature as Art

HISTORY

3 credits required, including US History. The third credit can include two one-term courses.

Global Cultures

Modern World History

AP World History: Modern

US History

AP US History

US Government & Politics

AP US Government & Politics

AP Comparative Government & Politics

International Relations

Economics

AP Psychology

MATHEMATICS

3 credits required, including Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II/Trigonometry

Algebra I

Geometry

Honors Geometry

Algebra II/Trig

Honors Algebra II/Trig

Math Analysis

MATHEMATICS (CONT.)

Honors Math Analysis	AP Calculus AB
Statistics	AP Calculus BC
AP Statistics	Multivariable & Vector Calculus
Calculus	Math Topics

SCIENCE

3 credits required, including Biology and either Chemistry or Physics

Biology	
Honors Biology	Physics
AP Biology	AP Physics
Chemistry	Physics in the Modern Age
Honors Chemistry	AP Environmental Science
AP Chemistry	Biomedical Science
Human Anatomy & Physiology	Introduction to Sports Medicine (.5 credit)

WORLD LANGUAGES

2 credits required in the same language

French I - V	Spanish I - V
AP French Language & Culture	Honors Spanish III & IV
	AP Spanish Language & Culture
	Spanish VI: Advanced Seminar

RELIGION

.5 credit required; all courses are .5 credit

New Testament	World Religions I
	World Religions II

THE ARTS

1 credit required; all courses below are .5 credit per semester; AP courses are two semesters and count for 1 credit.

Introduction to the Arts	Chamber Ensemble
Ceramics I	Glee Club
Ceramics II	Jazz Ensemble
Advanced Ceramics	Vocal Ensemble
Digital Photography	Filmmaking I
Studio Art I	Filmmaking II
Studio Art II	Acting
Portfolio Prep	Technical Theater
AP Studio Art	Stage Combat
AP Music Theory	Public Speaking

COMPUTER SCIENCE

(.5 credit required)

Computer Science I - Computer Applications
(included in the 9th grade ARC Collaborative curriculum: see p. 5)

Intro to Programming (.5 credit)

Intro to Graphic Design (1 credit)

AI Literacy (.5 credit)

AP Computer Science (1 credit)

Distinctive Academic Programs

ADVANCED STUDIES PROGRAM

Juniors and Seniors achieving the most advanced course in a particular discipline VES offers and who seek to explore a related topic in greater depth may be approved to pursue Advanced Studies credit in that specific discipline. Advanced Studies students complete a rigorous application process, gain the support of a faculty mentor, and set their own deadlines and goals as they develop a project to present to the VES community. Grades are based on the final project, the presentation and on their process, especially their ability to work independently and display mature habits of mind as they pursue their goals.

ADVANCED PLACEMENT PROGRAM

VES offers 17 AP courses. While students must meet requirements to enroll in certain AP courses, others are open to any interested student. Over the past five years, VES students have been recognized by the AP Scholar Program as:

- Scholars 101
 - Scholars with Honors 53
 - Scholars with Distinction 91
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9TH GRADE ARCH COLLABORATIVE

The 9th Grade ARCH Collaborative provides an interdisciplinary introduction to four subject areas that students can apply across their VES experience and future studies. 'A' stands for the Arts, which students engage with through a quarter-long Introduction to the Arts course; 'R' stands for Reasoning, which is the focus of their quarter in the Critical Thinking course; 'C' represents their study in Computer Science I (see p. 58); 'H' stands for quarter of the year during which students focus on Health and Life Skills.

The ARCH Collaborative enriches students' learning in core subject areas while exposing them to other aspects of our curriculum that may spark a new interest, talent or passion to pursue further over the course of their VES career. In short, the ARCH courses are a meaningful segment in the path of our ninth graders' high school experience.

Honors & AP Admission Criteria

HONORS & ADVANCED PLACEMENT COURSES

Because of the demands, rigor and focus of AP courses, it is important that we help students make thoughtful decisions with regard to AP classes and the Honors courses that often lead into them. The first step is establishing a thoughtful pattern of academic growth and maturity. Therefore, VES has set the following limits on the number of AP courses a student may take without seeking approval from the Associate Head of School.

- **Grade 9** – no AP classes (Students may apply for a waiver if they are exceptionally advanced in a subject area.)
- **Grade 10** – 1 (Students accelerated in math or a world language may appeal to take 2.)
- **Grade 11** – 3 (Students accelerated in math or a world language may appeal to take 4.)
- **Grade 12** – no limit

We also encourage the student, the advisor and the parents to consider the demands of Honors-level courses as they plan for and review the student's overall schedule.

Note that most every AP course has required summer work.

HONORS & AP COURSE ADMISSION CRITERIA

To determine the student's strong aptitude, achievement and interest in the particular subject matter, and to aid students in making thoughtful academic decisions with regard to Honors/AP coursework, the Academic Departments present the Honors/AP course options and course admission criteria listed on the following pages.

ENGLISH

The following criteria are considered for admission into either **AP Literature** or **AP English Language & Composition**:

1. Support of the department and recommendation of the student's current English teacher, which emphasizes the student's demonstrated interest in reading and writing well
 2. Average grade of 90 or higher in the student's current English class
 3. PSAT Evidence-Based Reading and Writing score of 550 or higher (or an equivalent score on the SAT, Pre-ACT or ACT)
 4. Satisfactory writing sample
 5. Scores > 3 on any previous AP exams
- Meet all criteria – Approved
 - Meet 4 of 5 criteria – Approval Likely
 - Meet 3 of 5 criteria – Approval Unlikely
 - Meet < 2 of 5 criteria – Not Approved

FINE ARTS

The following criteria are considered for admission into an AP Fine Arts course:

- **AP Music Theory**
 1. Assessment of musical skills, literacy and working knowledge of basic music theory
 2. Ability to sing or whistle on pitch
 3. Recommendation of the teacher

- **AP Studio Art**
 1. Completion of an entry-level art class with a grade of 90 or better
 2. Successful evaluation of the student's work by the instructor
 3. Completion of a satisfactory number of pieces for the AP Studio Art portfolio in the year preceding enrollment in the actual class
 4. Satisfactory completion of summer work
 - Meet all criteria – Approved
 - Meet 4 of 5 criteria – Approval Likely
 - Meet 3 of 5 criteria – Approval Unlikely
 - Meet < 2 of 5 criteria – Not Approved

WORLD LANGUAGES

The following criteria are considered for admission into Honors/AP Language courses:

- **AP Spanish Language & Culture**

Completion of Honors Spanish IV with an average grade of 90 or better, the support of the department and the recommendation of the current teacher are required.
- **AP French Language & Culture**

Completion of French IV with an average grade of 90 or better, the support of the department and the recommendation of the current teacher are required.

HISTORY

The following criteria are considered for admission into an AP History course:

- **AP World History: Modern**

10th graders must have:

 1. Average grade of 88 or better in their previous English and history classes
 2. Support of the department and recommendation of their current history teacher

12th graders must have:

 1. Average grade of 88 or better in their previous English and history classes
 2. PSAT Evidence-Based Reading and Writing score of 530 or better (or an equivalent score on the SAT, Pre-ACT or ACT)



3. Support of the department and the recommendation of their current history teacher
 4. Score of > 3 on any previous AP exams
- **AP US History**
 1. Average grade of 88 in previous English and history classes
 2. PSAT Evidence-Based Reading and Writing score of 530 or better (or an equivalent score on the SAT, Pre-ACT or ACT)
 3. Support of the department and the recommendation of their current history teacher
 4. AP score of > 3 on any previous AP exams
 - Meet all criteria – Approved
 - Meet 4 of 5 criteria – Approval Likely
 - Meet 3 of 5 criteria – Approval Unlikely
 - Meet < 2 of 5 criteria – Not Approved
- **AP US Government & Politics**

12th graders must have:

 1. Average grade of 88 or better in their previous English and history classes
 2. PSAT Evidence-Based Reading and Writing score of 530 or better (or an equivalent score on the SAT, Pre-ACT or ACT)
 3. Support of the department and the recommendation of their current history teacher
 4. Score of > 3 on any previous AP exams
 - Meet all criteria – Approved
 - Meet 4 of 5 criteria – Approval Likely
 - Meet 3 of 5 criteria – Approval Unlikely
 - Meet < 2 of 5 criteria – Not Approved
- **AP Comparative Government & Politics**

12th graders must have:

 1. Average grade of 88 or better in their previous English and history courses.
 2. PSAT Evidence-Based Reading and Writing score of 530 or better (or an equivalent score on the SAT, Pre-ACT, or ACT)
 3. Support of the department and the recommendation of their current history teacher
 4. Score of > 3 on any previous AP exam
 - Meet all criteria – Approved
 - Meet 4 of 5 criteria – Approval Likely
 - Meet 3 of 5 criteria – Approval Unlikely
 - Meet < 2 of 5 criteria – Not Approved

MATHEMATICS

The following criteria are considered for admission into Honors/AP Mathematics courses:

- **Honors Geometry**
Students must have successfully completed Algebra I with an average of 85 or better.

- **Honors Algebra II**
 1. Completed Honors Geometry with an average grade of 85 or better or Geometry with an average grade of 90 or better
 2. The support of the department and the recommendation of their current teacher

- **Honors Analysis**
 1. Completed Honors Algebra II with an average grade of 85 or better or Algebra II with an average grade of 90 or better
 2. The support of the department and the recommendation of the current teacher

- **AP Calculus AB**
 1. A grade of 90 or better in Honors Analysis
 2. The support of the department and the recommendation of their current teacher
 3. PSAT Math score of 550 or better (or an equivalent score on the SAT, Pre-ACT or ACT)

- **AP Calculus BC**
 1. 1. Successfully completed the AP Calculus AB course by scoring 3 or better on that exam
 2. 2. The support of the department and the recommendation of their current teacher

- **AP Statistics**
 1. An interest in pursuing higher-level mathematics
 2. Completed Algebra II/Trigonometry with an average of 85 or better
 3. The support of the department
 4. PSAT Critical Reading score of 500 or better (or an equivalent score on the SAT, Pre-ACT or ACT)

SCIENCE

The following criteria are considered for admission into Honors/AP Science courses:

- **Honors Biology and Chemistry**
 1. The support of the department and the recommendation of their current teacher
 2. Evidence of a keen interest and strong performance in the study of science



- **AP Biology**

1. Support of the department and recommendation of the current science teacher
2. Completion of both regular/Honors Biology and regular/Honors Chemistry with an average of 88 or better on each
3. PSAT Evidence-Based Reading and Writing score of 530 or better (or an equivalent score on the SAT, Pre-ACT or ACT)
4. Score > 3 on previous AP exams taken

- **AP Chemistry**

1. Support of the department and recommendation of the current science teacher
2. Completion of a previous chemistry course, earning 90 or better in Chemistry or 85 or better in Honors Chemistry
3. Completion of Honors Algebra II/Trigonometry with an average of 85 or better
4. PSAT Math score of 550 or better (or an equivalent score on the Pre-ACT, SAT or ACT)
5. Score > 3 on previous AP exams taken

- **AP Environmental Science**

1. Support of the department and recommendation of the current science teacher
2. Completion of Algebra II
3. Completion of Biology and Chemistry with grades of 90 or better (Honors Biology and Honors Chemistry with grades of 85 or better)
4. PSAT Evidence-Based Reading and Writing score of 550 or better (or an equivalent score on the Pre-ACT, SAT or ACT)
5. Score > 3 on previous AP exams taken

- **AP Physics**

1. Support of the department and the recommendation of the current science teacher
2. Completion of Honors Algebra II/Trigonometry or Honors Math Analysis with an average grade of 85 or better and/or
3. Algebra II/Trigonometry or Math Analysis with an average of 90 or better
4. Completion of Physics or Honors Chemistry with an average grade of 90 or better
5. PSAT math score of 550 or better (or an equivalent score on the SAT or ACT)
6. Score > 3 on previous AP exams taken

- Meet all criteria – Approved
- Meet 4 of 5 criteria – Approval Likely
- Meet 3 of 5 criteria – Approval Unlikely
- Meet < 2 of 5 criteria – Not Approved

English Courses

For eighteen years, Nelson Mandela was imprisoned on Robben Island, South Africa. In his possession, shared among the other prisoners, was a copy of the complete works of William Shakespeare, a forbidden copy of the complete works of William Shakespeare. Like all the prisoners, Mandela would secretly read from the book and even sign his name to his favorite passages. What has an anti-apartheid revolutionary to do with a son of a glovemaker, who lived on a different island, six thousand miles away and four hundred years ago? In a word, everything.

Reading and writing is dangerous - it thrills, it allures, it makes you feel alive. And that's what we want, for our students to feel alive, to pull words from the corners of themselves they haven't explored, or are scared to explore, and compress those words into charged images, metaphors, and syntactical patterns that surprise and delight.

We believe that in reading we might discover the world; and in writing, we might reintroduce the world to itself.

Literature ought to include everything, and it does at VES.

ENGLISH 9: CULTURE & IDENTITY

ENGLISH 10: ETHICS, INQUIRY & RHETORIC

ENGLISH 11: ETHICS, INQUIRY & RHETORIC II

AP ENGLISH LANGUAGE & COMPOSITION

AP ENGLISH LITERATURE & COMPOSITION

ENGLISH SEMINARS

ARCHETYPES IN MYTH

LITERATURE AS ART

EXPERIMENTAL LITERATURE

ENGLISH 9: CULTURE & IDENTITY

No prerequisite. Required of 9th grade students.

Focused on the theme of Culture and Identity, students in English 9 read literature from around the world, working to understand what makes different cultures distinctive and also to see the qualities of humanity that transcend place. Students learn to read, think and write with enthusiasm and skill, and develop scholarly habits in group discussions and team projects. This course asks students to strive to ask excellent questions, think critically about themes and literary devices and express their ideas with strong supporting evidence, clarity and style. By the end of the year, students will be on their way toward mastering the analytical essay and developing their authorial voice.

ENGLISH 10: ETHICS, INQUIRY & RHETORIC

Prerequisite: English 9. Required of 10th grade students.

Students engage with literature as a lens through which they can explore and understand the complexities of the human experience. This course is rooted in the conviction that ethical reasoning, critical inquiry, and rhetorical analysis are essential skills for navigating the challenges and dilemmas of our world. This course is not just about studying literature; it is about cultivating thoughtful, ethical, and engaged individuals who are prepared to contribute positively to society. Through the exploration of impactful texts and the development of rhetorical skills, students will be encouraged to become critical thinkers, empathetic listeners, and effective communicators.

ENGLISH 11: ETHICS, INQUIRY & RHETORIC II

Prerequisite: English 10. Required of 10th grade students.

"Every man has within himself the entire human condition," wrote Michel de Montaigne over 400 years ago. In many ways, this course explores the reasons his statement still holds water. We pick up where English 10 finished, but turn inward, and in doing so, in writing about the self, we explore the human condition, from the ethical to the philosophical to the emotional. With the personal essay as our

guidepost, we'll examine voice and style, analyzing rhetorical strategies writers use to move an audience, while developing the skill to do the same in our own writing. We'll come to believe in the power of pushing the envelope of our own perceptions; we'll come to believe that words have such power, that our words have such power; we'll delight in inquiry and find comfort in ambiguity; but mostly, we'll recognize that reading and writing can slow us down, can help us breathe into the small moments of our lives that can dazzle. And then we'll describe the dazzling.

AP ENGLISH LANGUAGE & COMPOSITION *

Prerequisites: See pages 6 - 7

AP English Language & Composition prepares students for writing at the college level. Through extensive writing practice and reading of essays by professional writers, students will develop their own style and gain greater confidence in their ability to express themselves in writing. Students will learn various forms of composition: the definition essay, the descriptive essay, the narrative essay, the expository essay, the persuasive essay and the critical review. Students also will practice the college application essay. This course prepares students to take the AP Language & Composition exam. The primary objectives are for students to take joy in what they read and delight in what they write.

AP ENGLISH LITERATURE & COMPOSITION *

Prerequisites: See pages 6 - 7

Advanced Placement English Literature and Composition is a rigorous, college-level course that challenges students to strengthen their depth and independence as readers, writers, and thinkers. Italo Calvino described a "classic" as "a book that has never finished saying what it has to say." With this in mind, students will explore a range of classics, canonical and contemporary, in the forms of fiction, poetry, and essays, peeling back the layers of meaning, exploring the continued, even shifting, relevance of texts that have resonated with readers throughout time. Through the exploration of challenging texts, students will develop mature habits of critical thinking as well as the ability to examine and articulate their ideas meaningfully through vibrant class discussions, close readings, and analytical essays. The ultimate goal is for students to approach new work with a curious, critical lens, sensitive to the complexity of human experience and the nuanced craftsmanship of language used to capture it. Students work to refine their voice and choose their words with precision and intention, not only developing a meaningful interpretation and well-supported analysis, but also offering a clear sense of the greater relevance of their ideas and how they engage with larger questions about life, society, and the self.

** Students are required to take the AP exam but may apply for an exemption in consultation with the teacher and the College Counseling Office.*

ENGLISH SEMINARS

These elective courses are only open to 12th grade students. Students in the AP English track may take a seminar as a second English course with the approval of the administration, the department and their advisor.

ARCHETYPES IN MYTH: EVERYTHING OLD IS NEW AGAIN

Once upon a time, the young male heir to a kingdom discovered that his noble father had been killed by a wicked uncle; after a brief exile with two fun-loving companions, the prince returned to the kingdom to avenge his father's death. Sounds like *The Lion King*, doesn't it? It's actually the storyline to Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. Hmm. Ever run across the character of a wise old man with a long gray beard wearing long gray robes? Could be Gandalf, could be Merlin, could be Dumbledore. Hmm. Did we use up all the good ideas early on, so that we had to keep repeating storylines and character types? Or does something else explain our tendency to tell the same ancient stories about the same well-known characters over and over again? The answer lies in the fact that these stories are as old as humans themselves, and tell us all about ourselves and our place in the universe: these stories are myths. And yes, we love to tell them again and again, no matter where and no matter when we live. In the first semester of this course we will get reacquainted with our favorite characters and adventures from classical myth and re-examine one important story through contemporary eyes. We'll begin second semester by studying the archetypes—the character and plot patterns themselves—as they resurface in the myths of a variety of world cultures. We'll then finish the year by reading a selection of contemporary science fiction that still draws much of its thematic power from the ancient archetypes.

LITERATURE AS ART

Which was better - the book or the movie? Literature as Art is a course designed to answer the "how" behind this question, but even more so the "why," helping students unpack the choices artists make in crafting their own work, and then in reimagining others' ideas.

Students will review literary techniques and explore the basics of literary analysis to compare a written work with another's interpretation on screen. They will communicate their findings in a variety of ways, including class discussions, written papers, presentations, and creative projects. Some of the possible texts for this class include Cinderella Stories Around the World, No Country for Old Men, The Color Purple, The Clockwork Orange, Pride and Prejudice, or Beloved.

EXPERIMENTAL LITERATURE: TOYS WRITERS PLAY WITH

(like ending things with a preposition)

A writing intensive course designed to introduce students to the myriad ways in which writers have made evolutionary leaps with the written word. Prompted by daily selections (or whole pieces) of canonical works, spreading from early civilization to the current age, students will use these models in their own creative work of prose. The course hopes to be an antidote to the habitual ways of perception. To that end, the goal for the class is to compose a Roman à Clef. This is a work where real people and life are disguised as fiction. It means "a novel with a key." Of course, this class does not expect you to write a novel. You will be writing a novella. A novella is typically 20-40,000 words. A novel is over 40,000. Don't be too intimidated by those numbers. We will write every day and it adds up. You can do as little as average a hundred words a day and still hit the mark. This paragraph alone has 97 words. Wait, 103. 105...

History Courses

The History department is dedicated to developing critical, independent thought and expression among its students through a progressive and developmental sequence of courses. Faculty focus on preparing students for the challenges of a university education: reading texts, implementing strategies for note-taking, and writing critical essays and research papers. The skills required for each course in our curriculum build on those learned in prior courses.

Teachers and students form strong relationships in the History department as a result of optimal student-to-teacher ratios and small class sizes. The Hopkins Writing Center houses our faculty offices and provides a meeting place for students and teachers to work with one another.

Students are required to complete three years of history for graduation. Most students take Global Cultures in ninth grade, followed by Modern World History or US Government and Politics, US History, then senior electives including other options like Economics. Advanced Placement courses are offered in World History, US History, US Government and Politics, and Comparative Government and Politics.

After completing the sequence of courses in the History curriculum, students should understand the motives and ideas of historical figures and events, which will help them think critically and create logical and coherent arguments in their work in college and life.

GLOBAL CULTURES

MODERN WORLD HISTORY

AP WORLD HISTORY: MODERN

UNITED STATES HISTORY

AP US HISTORY

US GOVERNMENT & POLITICS

AP US GOVERNMENT & POLITICS

AP COMPARATIVE GOVERNMENT & POLITICS

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

ECONOMICS

LEGAL STUDIES

AP PSYCHOLOGY

GLOBAL CULTURES

No prerequisite. Required of 9th grade students. A limited number of 10th grade students have taken this course by student request with permission of the Department Chair.

In this course students learn about the history of the world from the beginning of civilization to the Renaissance through different global spheres: Europe, the Middle East, Africa, India, East Asia and the Americas. Content is taught through themes, including: What does it mean to be civilized? How do themes such as law, military, freedom, wealth and piety influence cultures? Why do cultures in different areas differ? Why are they similar?

The course further develops the academic skills and critical and independent thinking necessary for success in a college-preparatory environment. In addition to a common text, students read primary and secondary sources, conduct their own research on smaller and larger research projects and write persuasive essays. Course activities are designed to facilitate discussion among classmates and an understanding of the issues across the world in the past and present.

MODERN WORLD HISTORY

No prerequisite. Requirements: Students must be in the 10th grade to take the course.

This course will continue to study topics introduced in the 9th grade Global Cultures course, and offers a survey of the Modern World. After a study of the Enlightenment, students will study the Age of Napoleon and the implementation (and failed implementation) of many of these ideas. Afterward, students will study changes brought about by industrialization, the changes of relationships between European and non-European nations, and how resulting nationalist pride begins a cause and effect that results in World War, economic and political instability, another World War and a resulting Cold War. Yet the truly modern aspect of the course examines how changes from war and suffering result in greater rights for individuals, the desire and need for stability in life, and how some populations succeed in a post-war capitalist society. At the center of this course will be a guiding question: *What makes a modern nation, and how does this*

impact the relationship between people and the government? A key aspect of this course includes connections across English and History departments. This course will continue to build common skills across both departments.

AP WORLD HISTORY: MODERN

Prerequisites: See pages 6, 8

This course will generally follow the prescribed AP World History: Modern College Board curriculum guideline, spanning from c. 1200 CE to the present day through an investigation of significant events, individuals, developments and processes through analyzing historical sources and evidence, making historical connections, inducing chronological reasoning, and creating and supporting a historical argument. As this is an Advanced Placement course, there will be considerable depth and breath in covered content, and thus the pace of the course will move quickly. Students will be prepared to take the AP exam in World History at year's end, although the course will not be specifically taught to this exam.

Underclassmen are required to take the AP exam.

US HISTORY

Required of all 11th grade students not taking AP US History

United States History is a thorough course, ranging from the late prehistoric period through the beginning of the 21st century. The course covers traditional political and diplomatic history, as well as social, economic and cultural history. Major themes covered include, but are not limited to, exploration and colonialism, the early Republic, the causes and history of the Civil War, Reconstruction, industrialization and immigration, Populism and Progressivism, Imperialism, World War I, the Great Depression and the New Deal, World War II, the Cold War, civil rights and Vietnam, Liberalism and the "New Conservatism," and the Clinton-Bush period. United States History is required for graduation.

AP US HISTORY

Prerequisites: See pages 6, 9

AP US History is a college-paced survey of American History from 1607 to the present. While preparing for the AP exam is one of the goals, we hope to create an experience that brings relevance of American history to the lives of students. Students will learn solid communication skills through appropriate and effective analytical writing, public speaking and discussion opportunities, blogging and the basics of media literacy. Students also will gain a firm understanding of America's past, place in the world and how this relates to their lives regardless of where they were born.

Underclassmen are required to take the AP exam.

US GOVERNMENT & POLITICS

Prerequisites: US History or AP US History

Students are given an introduction to the functions, powers and properties of the American governmental system. Particular emphasis is placed on how the government has functioned from its founding to the present. Topics covered throughout the year include the inner workings of federalism, checks and balances, civil rights and national security. Through assigned readings, campaign ads and Supreme Court cases, students explore and analyze foundational elements of the American government, giving them the knowledge and skills necessary to become engaged citizens of America and the world in the 21st century.

AP US GOVERNMENT & POLITICS *

Prerequisites: See pages 6, 9

AP US Government & Politics abides by the rubrics set forth by the College Board. This course begins with a focus on the theories of government and the creation of the United States Constitution, separation of powers, and the system of federalism. Additional areas of focus include linkage institutions such as political parties, campaigns and elections, interest groups, and the media, the three branches of American federal government and its bureaucracy, an understanding of civil liberties and civil rights, and how these structures and institutions affect public policy.

AP COMPARATIVE GOVERNMENT & POLITICS *

Prerequisites: See pages 6, 9

This College Board-approved interdisciplinary (Political Science and History) course examines the political institutions and processes of six different countries—China, Iran, Mexico, Nigeria, Russia, and the United Kingdom—and compares the ways they address problems. Students learn essential social and data science analysis skills alongside traditional historical thinking and communication practices to draw conclusions about political systems. The course is divided into 5 units where students learn how to think, research, and communicate using political science and history best practices.

** Underclassmen are required to take the AP exam. Seniors are required to take the exam but may apply for an exemption in consultation with the teacher and the College Counseling Office.*

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Open to 12th grade students and selected 11th graders who need a fifth full-year course or have a desire to pursue an international relations degree in college

This course will introduce students to the academic discussion about contemporary world politics. This field aims to provide meaningful discourse and to critically examine contrasting international relations theories in order to explain both the historical and modern context of foreign policies. Students will be introduced to traditional realist, constructivist, and liberal theories, as well as key concepts pertaining to state behavior. Why do states behave the way they do? What drives states to join international organizations such as NATO or the UN? How do issues of nuclear proliferation, climate change, human rights/security, globalization, migration, national security, and sports, affect international diplomacy? These central questions offer students a survey into the world in the global context of the 20th century and help them to identify the distinguishing characteristics of the unfolding global order of the 21st century.

ECONOMICS

Open to 12th grade students and selected 11th graders who need a fifth full-year course or have a desire to pursue an economics degree in college

This course is designed to provide students with an introduction to microeconomics, macroeconomics and business-related fields associated with an economics degree. The class emphasizes skill development such as note taking, reading a college-level text, the application of charts and graphs, and writing essays. In addition, the class incorporates numerous project-based learning assignments that require students to use technology in and outside of the classroom as a means for providing materials necessary for completing the project. The underlying purpose of the course is to give the students an emphasis on the application of theory and principle to contemporary business and consumer practices.

AP PSYCHOLOGY

Open to 12th grade students and selected 11th graders who need a fifth full-year course or have a desire to pursue a psychology degree in college

AP Psychology is a college-level course that introduces students to the systematic and scientific study of human behavior and mental processes. Through an exploration of psychological theories, research methods, and key concepts, students will gain a deeper understanding of how biological, cognitive, and social factors shape human thought and action. Major topics include neuroscience sensation and perception, learning and memory, developmental psychology, abnormal behavior, and treatment of psychological disorders.

Mathematics Courses

Our Math classes focus on the exploration of mathematical topics to develop logical reasoning, critical thinking, and analytical skills in our students. In each course, students will be investigating, predicting, calculating, analyzing, verifying, problemsolving, and presenting results. We place value on academic risk-taking and the productive struggle that takes place during learning in order to empower students to become curious, innovative thinkers and producers.

ALGEBRA I

GEOMETRY

HONORS GEOMETRY

ALGEBRA II / TRIGONOMETRY

HONORS ALGEBRA II /
TRIGONOMETRY

MATH ANALYSIS

HONORS MATH ANALYSIS

STATISTICS

AP STATISTICS

CALCULUS

AP CALCULUS AB

AP CALCULUS BC

MULTIVARIABLE & VECTOR CALCULUS

MATH TOPICS

ALGEBRA 1

No prerequisite

Algebra I, the introduction to mathematics at VES, is a vast world of functions, graphs and the fascinating exploration of numbers and their invaluable uses and qualities. The course seeks to develop a facility in working with numbers, variables, graphs, inequalities, tables and various equations. Particular emphasis is placed on solving word problems and reading questions carefully. This process helps build algebraic skills and strengthens the understanding of needing to solve problems in a context, rather than from drill and practice alone. Topics include the study of equations and graphs (linear and quadratic), linear data versus nonlinear data, exponents, inequalities, radicals, solving fractional equations, special products and factoring.

GEOMETRY

Prerequisite: Algebra I or permission of the Department Chair

This course is designed to integrate algebra with the foundations of geometry. Topics include, but are not limited to angles, triangle congruences, parallel lines, polygons and polyhedrons, area, volume, circles and spheres, similarity, right triangle trigonometry and transformations. Independent thinking and discovery are encouraged throughout the course, as well as the study of and defending geometric proofs. This course seeks to demonstrate math's usefulness and encourages students to see connections to real-world problems. Problem solving, logical reasoning and critical thinking skills will be emphasized through the use of cooperative learning, manipulatives and technology.

HONORS GEOMETRY

Prerequisite: Algebra I or permission of the Department Chair

The study of Honors Geometry encompasses far more than its definitions, postulates, and theorems. Students will consistently be challenged to reason analytically. The process of formal proof is emphasized early in the course, and direct proofs are investigated extensively. Proofs include parallel and perpendicular lines, congruent triangles, parallelograms, and geometric inequalities. Emphasis is also placed on applications. Topics include circles, right triangle trigonometry, coordinate geometry, areas, and volumes. Technology is used to model and explore the geometry presented within the course.

ALGEBRA II / TRIGONOMETRY

Prerequisite: Algebra I and Geometry or permission of the Department Chair

This course provides an extension of the basic algebraic concepts from Algebra I and Geometry. Students discuss, represent, and solve increasingly sophisticated problems using more advanced algebraic techniques, bringing opportunities for doing mathematics into focus. Incorporating appropriate technology, they study the properties and algebra of quadratic, exponential, logarithmic, and rational functions, systems of equations, and inequalities, and applied right triangle trigonometry. This course provides a sound understanding of basic linear, polynomial, and trigonometric functions.

HONORS ALGEBRA II / TRIGONOMETRY

Prerequisite: Honors Geometry or permission of the Department Chair

The main topics of Honors Algebra II / Trigonometry are basic number theory, algebraic properties and proofs, formal notation, word problems, and applying the algorithms used to solve them. As the course progresses, students solve higher-order equations, polynomial, logarithmic, and exponential functions and work with more extensive word problem applications. The trigonometry section of the course focuses on radian and degree trigonometric concepts including basic right triangle trigonometry, the unit circle, graphs of trigonometric functions, and word problems and applications.

MATH ANALYSIS

Prerequisite: Algebra II / Trigonometry

Math Analysis helps students understand the fundamental concepts of algebra, trigonometry, and analytic geometry. Topics covered in this course are the study of functions (polynomial, rational, trigonometric, exponential, and logarithmic), systems of equations and inequalities, and solving triangles in anticipation of the student continuing to AP Statistics, Calculus, or a post-secondary mathematics course. A balance is maintained among the algebraic, numerical, graphical, and verbal methods of representing problems and solutions. Students use technology to visualize topics from numerical and graphical representations.

HONORS MATH ANALYSIS

Prerequisite: Algebra II / Trigonometry or permission of the Department Chair

The mathematical spectrum heightens as students enter into the world of honors analysis. This course is aimed at those who have demonstrated mathematical ability in their previous coursework to prepare them for Advanced Placement Calculus or college mathematics the following year. The first term begins with an emphasis on mathematical reasoning with a specific focus on general functions and their properties. After a guided tour of the functions, students begin to explore the concepts of complex numbers, exponential and logarithmic functions, polynomial and trigonometric functions, and as time permits, sequences and series.

STATISTICS

Prerequisite: Algebra II / Trigonometry or permission of the Department Chair

The course concentrates on application rather than formal theory. Students learn to formulate questions that can be addressed with data, and to collect, organize and display relevant data to answer them. They learn to select and use appropriate statistical methods. Students develop and evaluate inferences and predictions, and apply basic concepts of probability.

AP STATISTICS *

Prerequisites: See pages 6, 10

Statistics is the most widely applicable branch of mathematics, used by more people than any other kind of math both in the workplace and by consumers. Students study lists of raw data, graphical displays and charts, rates, probabilities, percentages, averages, forecasts and trend lines. Advanced Placement Statistics provides the opportunity for students to acquire statistical literacy. This course is designed to be the equivalent of an introductory college-level Statistics course. The syllabus has been constructed under the guidelines of the College Board and will prepare the student to take the Advanced Placement examination in the spring.

CALCULUS

Prerequisite: Math Analysis or permission of the Department Chair

Students learn the mechanics behind solving derivatives and integrals both by hand and using a graphing calculator. Interspersed among the lessons throughout the year are applications of the course material in the form of physical motion, product package design, architecture, finance, flowing water, medication, populations, swings, springs, see-saws, police radars, wrecking balls, balloons, ballistics, bacteria and rocket science, to name a few. This is not a class about theorems or mathematical rigor as is the AP Calculus class, but is an excellent basis for college calculus.

AP CALCULUS AB *

Prerequisites: See pages 6, 10

This is a rigorous course aimed at building a strong foundation in differential and integral calculus along with its various applications. Topics include the study of limits and continuity, differentiation and integration of polynomial, logarithmic, exponential, and trigonometric functions. Various applications of these topics are studied, including position, velocity, acceleration, optimization, related rates, accumulation, slope fields, exponential growth and decay, and area and volume. Techniques of integration also are studied with a particular emphasis placed on the fundamental theorem of calculus and its applications. The course prepares students for the College Board AP examination and their continued study of mathematics in AP Calculus BC, or a course at college and provides the potential for students to begin their college mathematics at a more advanced level of calculus.

AP CALCULUS BC *

Prerequisites: See pages 6, 10

This course is highly rigorous and aimed at building a strong foundation in differential and integral calculus, along with its various applications. The curriculum includes all of the material covered in the AP Calculus AB course, with more emphasis on the underlying proofs. Additional topics include the study of Euler's method, logistical growth models, integration by parts, partial fractions, volumes by cylindrical shells, arc length and indeterminate forms. Focus is put upon polynomial approximations and series (Taylor and Maclaurin), as well as polar, parametric and vector functions and the analysis of planar curves. Students prepare for the College Board AP examination, and have the potential to begin their college mathematics at a significantly more advanced level of calculus.

** Underclassmen are required to take the AP exam. Seniors are required to take the exam, although an exemption may be obtained from the College Counseling Office. (Aside from potentially receiving college credit, exam scores can provide useful information for selection and placement in post-VES math courses.)*

MULTIVARIABLE & VECTOR CALCULUS

Prerequisite: AP Calculus BC with a score of 3 or higher on the AP Calculus exam and permission of the Department Chair

The course begins with a thorough review of analytic geometry, polar coordinates and parametric equations, then proceeds to vectors in both 2-space and 3-space. The topics include tangent and normal vectors, curvature, dot product, cross product, curves and planes in 3-space and quadric surfaces. Further topics include the analysis of cylindrical and spherical coordinates, partial derivatives, gradients, directional derivatives, and double and triple integrals. Stokes' and Green's theorems as well as the related underpinnings of vector theory will be discussed and studied as time permits.

MATH TOPICS

Prerequisite: Algebra I, II, and Geometry

Math Topics is a course restricted to seniors that is designed to fit into the course sequence of the student who has completed the required Alg. I, Geometry, Alg. II sequence and who needs an additional review of Algebra topics and an introduction to basic statistics and data manipulation topics before taking a post-secondary math course. Topics will focus on a solid review of Algebra II and Geometry topics at a pace geared to promoting mastery. Students will also be introduced to basic statistical concepts, including the collection, analysis, interpretation, and reporting of data. Calculator use will be featured prominently to support a conceptual understanding of the topics. The class will also introduce Excel to manipulate and interpret data and data sets. If time permits and depending on the interest of the class, units on personal finance are an option including financial management and decision-making with the potential to discuss budgeting, saving, investing, and credit management, complementing and taking a deeper math dive into the topics addressed in the VES Economics course.

Science Courses

Science is everywhere. Our students begin with the notion that the fundamental systems that guide our world and society build upon each other and are reinforced by our actions. Students develop a deep understanding of the interconnectedness of the principles that govern the universe within a broader ethical vision of society in which rationality is used for the mutual benefit of all. As citizens of a world where every personal decision has influence far beyond the individual, we aim to provide students with the skills and knowledge they need to live their lives in a way that best serves themselves, their community, and our world.

Our Science department fosters curiosity about the world and creates students able to succeed in future scientific study. Through discussions, active discovery, experiments and group projects, we encourage our students to think, take intellectual risks and try, even if the outcome leads them to revise their understanding. Our students learn to work together, respect each other's ideas and talents, and celebrate the camaraderie and success that comes with like minds involved in critical thinking and problem solving.

Most students begin with the study of Biology and advance to Chemistry as their mathematical proficiency increases. After the first two years of study, their interest and skills guide them as they explore the wide range of science courses offered.

BIOLOGY

HONORS BIOLOGY

AP BIOLOGY

CHEMISTRY

HONORS CHEMISTRY

AP CHEMISTRY

HUMAN ANATOMY & PHYSIOLOGY

PHYSICS

AP PHYSICS

PHYSICS IN THE MODERN AGE

AP ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE

BIOMEDICAL SCIENCE

INTRODUCTION TO SPORTS MEDICINE

BIOLOGY

No prerequisite. Open to all who have not already taken Biology, mainly students in grades 9 and 10 In Biology, students explore the fundamental structures of life, beginning with the principles that control atoms and molecules and building upon those principles as they journey through cells, genetics, the evolution of living organisms and culminating with the complexity of the human body. In the lab, students improve their observation skills and learn to use the scientific method to analyze complex natural systems and a variety of organisms. Students improve study habits and develop the critical thinking skills necessary to grasp intricate biological concepts.

HONORS BIOLOGY

Prerequisites: Algebra I and success in previous science courses

Honors Biology is an introduction to the study of living things and their interdependence with other organisms and their environment. Upon completion of this course, students should have gained an understanding of basic biological concepts. Topics to be covered include biochemistry, cells, metabolism, genetics, evolution, nucleic acid synthesis and function, and plant biology. Regular work in the laboratory, along with analysis of results and formal presentation of findings, will be an important component of this course.

AP BIOLOGY

Prerequisites: See pages 6, 11

Students are guided through an exploration of the recurring themes of biological processes in the equivalent of a college introductory Biology course. By making connections among biological principles, complex topics are simplified. For instance, the large area of respiratory surfaces serves the same function as the highly convoluted inner mitochondrial membrane—more space to do cellular work. Students also are required to put their knowledge into practice through review and discussion of current scientific findings. Learning is reinforced with demonstrations, animations, simulations and labs. Topics covered include biochemistry, cell structure and function, energetics, heredity, molecular genetics, DNA technology, evolutionary biology, diversity of life, human biology, plant biology and

ecology.

Underclassmen are required to take the AP exam. Seniors are required to take the exam but may apply for an exemption in consultation with the teacher and the College Counseling Office.

CHEMISTRY

Prerequisite: Successful completion of Biology. Open to all grade levels, mainly students in grades 10 and 11.

Students studying chemistry examine the makeup of all atomic and molecular forms of matter and the laws that guide matter's interactions. This allows students to understand some of nature's seemingly magical transformations, like the fact that two caustic and volatile substances such as chlorine and sodium combine to form a fundamental requirement for human life—salt. To build on these fundamental principles, students develop mathematical tools that allow them to predict how matter will behave. Through strengthening their mathematical skills, students gain confidence in their ability to grasp complex chemical concepts. In the lab, students practice the principles of scientific research as they conduct various experiments, collect data, and report their findings.

HONORS CHEMISTRY

Prerequisite: Completion of Biology (90% or better) or Honors Biology (85% or better)

In Honors Chemistry, students examine the makeup of all atomic, elemental, and molecular forms of matter and the laws that guide matter's interactions. They develop an understanding of atomic structure and the elemental properties that arise from that structure, recognizing the patterns and distinctions between materials. Understanding fundamental principles of the universe like the electric force between charges and conservation of matter, honors students learn to predict the outcome of complex chemical reactions. Students also calculate the required amounts of reactants and the expected amounts of products using stoichiometry. In the lab, students use various methods to analyze compounds. Additionally, students will create their own hypotheses and will design experiments to test these predictions, and will refine their understanding of results through data analysis.

AP CHEMISTRY

Prerequisites: See pages 6, 11

Advanced Placement Chemistry covers many topics from previous studies in greater detail and new subjects are explored. Particular attention is placed on predicting if a reaction will happen and why some reactions, like rusting, are terribly slow, while other reactions, like the explosion of dynamite, are incredibly fast. Problem-solving skills will develop significantly as students answer complex and multi-layered problems. Laboratory experiments require students to master lab techniques and to properly use various pieces of lab equipment. Students will be challenged to empirically analyze the results and explain sources of error in experiments. The work and level of thinking required in AP Chemistry are equivalent to that required in a college-level class. Underclassmen are required to take the exam. Seniors are required to take the AP exam but may apply for an exemption in consultation with the teacher and the College Counseling Office.

HUMAN ANATOMY & PHYSIOLOGY

Prerequisite: Successful completion of Biology/Honors Biology and Chemistry/Honors Chemistry. Open to students in grades 11 and 12.

This course is designed to provide students a detailed and comprehensive look at the human form and its individual systems (anatomy) as well as how those systems function physically, mechanically and biochemically (physiology). Students will learn more than just the bones and muscles of the human body. It is our goal that students gain a strong understanding of each of the body's systems as well as a familiarity of how the body moves, responds to stimuli and deals with adversity in the form of injury, infection and disease. As part of the body's total functioning, some basic nutrition and exercise information will be discussed.

PHYSICS

Prerequisite: Algebra II. Open to students in grades 10 through 12.

In Physics, students explore the fundamental laws of the universe. They refine their algebraic abilities as they learn problem-solving techniques that apply to many scenarios and translate to many others, including a water balloon launched out of a slingshot, a rollercoaster rounding a loop, a sound wave striking the eardrum, a beam of light bouncing through fiber optic cable, a light bulb in an electric circuit and an electromagnetic motor. Toward the end of the year, students research the physics involved in any topic they choose and present their findings to the class. Students develop self-confidence in their ability to effectively retain challenging material,

and they strengthen critical thinking skills through engaging classroom discussion and challenging self-directed laboratories.

AP PHYSICS

Prerequisites: See pages 6, 12

AP Physics stretches students to become self-directed learners by reinforcing skills to think critically, analyze situations and make informed connections. Students refine their ability to understand the effect a variable has on any system, conceptually and mathematically. They master fundamental principles and problem-solving techniques that, when applied appropriately, help them solve any physical problem. Whether designing and building a soda can barge, determining the coefficient of friction for a material or predicting the motion of a charged particle in a magnetic field, students expand their abilities in creative problem-solving and experimental design as they explore the first semester of introductory algebra-based, college level Physics.

Underclassmen are required to take the AP exam. Seniors are required to take the exam but may apply for an exemption in consultation with the teacher and the College Counseling Office.

PHYSICS IN THE MODERN AGE

Prerequisites: Biology and Chemistry

This course investigates a breadth of physics topics not commonly taught in high school physics courses with an emphasis on concepts rather than mathematics. Topics include: astronomy/astrophysics, quantum mechanics, special/general relativity, magnetism, nuclear physics/radiation, thermodynamics, waves, and circuits. Each semester will cover one major topic and at least two minor topics. Because this course focuses on topics that are less math intensive, it is also ideal for a student who wants to take or needs to take physics, but doesn't have the requisite algebra or trigonometry skills to find success in Newtonian Physics. Alternatively, this course could be taken by a student after Newtonian Physics if the student was not interested in AP Physics 1. Additionally, students who have completed AP Physics 1 could take this course to investigate topics not included in the AP curriculum.

AP ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE

Prerequisites: See pages 6, 11

This course is designed to give students a diverse view of how our natural world affects us as individuals, as a species and all organisms as a planetary whole. The interconnection of organisms, environments and the systems of each are central to our understanding of how to best live within the natural world, not control it. We will cover many diverse topics ranging from the scientific, at a micro and macro scale, to data gathering and analysis, to US and world government policies and our own morality, role and responsibilities as inhabitants of this planet. Underclassmen are required to take the AP exam. Seniors are required to take the exam but may apply for an exemption in consultation with the teacher and the College Counseling Office.

BIOMEDICAL SCIENCE

Prerequisites: Biology and Chemistry

This course provides foundational knowledge and skills in biology, anatomy & physiology, genetics, microbiology, and epidemiology. It engages students in how this content can be applied to real-world situations, cases, and problems. Students will tackle real-world challenges biomedical professionals face through individual and collaborative team activities, projects, and issues. They will work with the same tools and equipment used in hospitals and labs as they engage in relevant hands-on work. Students will develop skills in technical documentation to represent and communicate experimental findings and solutions to problems. In addition, students will explore how connections to other disciplines such as computer science and engineering, shape the future of medicine and practice collaboration techniques that will help them connect with professionals across any field.

INTRODUCTION TO SPORTS MEDICINE

No prerequisite. Open to students in all grade levels.

Introduction to Sports Medicine is a semester-long course that provides the student with a basic knowledge of athletic training. This course is not intended to be "all inclusive," rather a course directed at the practical aspects of taking care of oneself. The course is designed to help students understand what their bodies are telling them when they participate in athletics. The techniques included in this course—particularly the taping, wrapping and rehabilitative exercises—expose students to the skills of athletic injury prevention.

World Languages Courses

While words and phrases can be learned in any number of ways, the Department of World Languages offers an authentic and playful experience within the classroom, breaking down its fourth wall. This way, not only do our students learn to confidently communicate in the target language, but they also become culturally literate in the customs and traditions of the people and places studied. We aim to engage our students through an immersive pedagogy, with real-world topics and resources in order to create life-long language learners.

The lessons of our courses are readily applicable as soon as the students leave the classroom and encounter native speakers, within the community or while traveling, adept in their target language. Francophone learners will be able to order lunch for themselves and their families at Deux Magots in Paris or ask the prices of market items on the island of Martinique. In Spanish, they might learn about Pachamanca, a Peruvian dish that is buried in a burlap sack while cooking over hot stones. When a student takes a trip to the Central Andes over Spring Break, they will knowingly anticipate a meal from the earth, a tradition that is delicious, savory and 600 years old. Erasmus once taught that in Latin you can say “thank you” in 150 different ways. We teach all our languages with the same gracious spirit.

FRENCH I - IV

AP FRENCH LANGUAGE & CULTURE

SPANISH I - IV

SPANISH III HONORS

SPANISH IV HONORS

AP SPANISH LANGUAGE & CULTURE

SPANISH V

SPANISH VI: ADVANCED SEMINAR

FRENCH I

No prerequisite. Open to students in grades 9 through 12.

French I emphasizes an integrated approach and a balanced development of the four language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Instruction at the first level stresses the fundamentals of French through contextual presentation of theme-based vocabulary, grammar and verb conjugations. The textbook we use exposes students to life in contemporary France and Francophone countries. Various Internet sites, music, magazines, movies, cookbooks, comic strips and children’s stories are used to facilitate the development of elementary skills by which students can listen and read in the target language. French I is designed to highlight proficiency in communication by giving students meaningful, everyday expressions they can use immediately in real-life situations.

FRENCH II

Prerequisites: French I or approval by the Department Chair

The second level of French builds upon the fundamental skills learned in French I. Students study advanced grammar and idiomatic structures as well as read and write passages of increased length and difficulty. The textbook and supplementary web-based materials used in this class enhance students’ cultural knowledge of real-life situations in contemporary France and Francophone countries. French II is designed to expand proficiency in communication, give students meaningful expressions they can use immediately in everyday situations and prepare them to communicate in both the spoken and written form at an intermediate level.

FRENCH III

Prerequisites: French II or approval by the Department Chair

The third level of instruction is designed to teach further advanced aspects of grammar as well as to polish skills in reading, writing, listening and speaking. Through the use of a college-level textbook and corresponding web-based materials, students explore the French language through the lens of a native speaker as they are exposed to a wide variety of authentic resources and are challenged to interpret and synthesize ideas in multiple ways. Overall, the lessons learned in French III add sophistication and real life context to students’ knowledge of modern French culture, and teach them to write well-organized and substantive essays, to communicate effectively in a conversation, and to become proficient readers of French.

FRENCH IV

Prerequisites: French III or approval by the Department Chair

French IV is offered to students who have demonstrated continued excellence and interest in the study of French. French is used almost exclusively as a means of communication to help students transition into a college-level environment with greater ease and to prepare them for progression into the AP French Language & Culture course the following year. Students complete a thorough review of complex grammatical structures, idiomatic expressions and vocabulary as well as explore a variety of historical, political, literary and cultural movements in Francophone countries around the world. A college-level text is used, supplemented by a variety of web-based materials and authentic resources to support and guide progress. Formal and informal writing, literary analysis, organized debates, projects and conversational exchange (both prepared and spontaneous) are many of the activities used to engage students and help them to develop a greater proficiency in listening, speaking, reading and writing.

AP FRENCH LANGUAGE & CULTURE

Prerequisites: See pages 6, 8

Centered around six overarching themes established by the College Board, the AP French Language & Culture course is designed to challenge the advanced French student to reach beyond traditional grammar and vocabulary acquisition to apply presentational, interpretive and interpersonal skills to a real-world context. Through the exclusive use of authentic resources, students broaden their understanding of the French-speaking world through the lens of native-born speakers. Through exposure to the many products, practices and perspectives that make each culture unique, students are challenged to think critically as they work to compare and contrast their own native cultures to those corresponding to Francophone countries worldwide.

The course is designed in such a way to use various literary and cinematic works to allow students to develop the three types of communication while exploring the six cultural themes. The academic year is divided into units based upon major works of literature or collections of more modern excerpts. Within each unit, students work to improve their competency through formal and informal reading, writing and listening activities.

Underclassmen are required to take the AP exam. Seniors are required to take the exam but may apply for an exemption in consultation with the teacher and the College Counseling Office.

SPANISH I

No prerequisite. Open to students in grades 9 through 12.

Spanish I provides students a solid foundation in the basic structures of Spanish grammar, pronunciation and vocabulary. This knowledge is actively put into practice as students develop basic skills in written and oral communication. The course emphasizes an integrated approach and a balanced development of the four language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Students also become familiar with the geography, customs and the diversity of the Spanish-speaking world. A combination of textbook and web-based materials is used to facilitate students' progress through the curriculum.

SPANISH II

Prerequisites: Spanish I or approval by the Department Chair

Spanish II is an intermediate course in which students continue to strengthen their vocabulary, grammar and conversation skills. Students work through regular and irregular verbs in all tenses of the indicative mood, including all forms of the preterit and imperfect, as well as learn to incorporate theme-based vocabulary into both the written and oral context. Creating dialogues based on specific situations and role-playing are an important aspect of oral assessment. Students also expand their understanding of the history and culture of all Spanish-speaking countries. Spanish II is highly interactive and much of the course is conducted in Spanish. A combination of textbook and web-based materials is used to facilitate students' progress through the curriculum.

SPANISH III

Prerequisites: Spanish II or approval by the Department Chair

Spanish III is an intermediate-level language course. The goal of this course is to bridge the gap between elementary and advanced levels in the further development of listening, speaking, reading and writing skills. Students will be encouraged to attach meaning directly to Spanish without depending on English for understanding. For this reason, Spanish will be the language used for communication at all times. Students should continue to become better learners of language by continuing to apply useful learning strategies to their work. Students conjugate regular and irregular verbs in all tenses of the indicative and subjunctive moods and all forms of the imperative mood. Authentic texts, both auditory and visual, expose students to a wider variety of cultural, political and social

aspects within the Spanish-speaking world. To facilitate their learning in a variety of facets, students work from a college-level textbook and accompanying web-based materials.

SPANISH III HONORS

Prerequisites: Spanish II, recommendation from the student's previous Spanish teacher or approval by the Department Chair. Designed for those students who have shown superior aptitude and interest in the study of Spanish.

The goal of this course is to bridge the gap between elementary and advanced levels in the further development of listening, speaking, reading and writing skills. Students will be encouraged to attach meaning directly to Spanish without depending on English for understanding. For this reason, Spanish will be the language used for communication at all times. Students should continue to become better learners of language by continuing to apply useful learning strategies to their work. They read, write and converse in a variety of situations through the use of extensive, theme-based vocabulary and advanced grammar concepts, and learn to synthesize ideas in a variety of forms. In addition, students will be exposed to cultural, political and social information from throughout the Spanish-speaking world and will be expected to acquire an appreciation of the diversity and richness of Hispanic culture by means of directed reading assignments and creative projects. Broadening students' knowledge and exposing them to a more in-depth view into Spanish-speaking countries and their cultures is accomplished with a college-level textbook and corresponding web-based materials.

SPANISH IV

Prerequisites: Spanish III or approval from the Department Chair based on testing. Offered to students who have demonstrated continued excellence and interest in the study of Spanish.

In this course, Spanish is used almost exclusively as a means of communication to help students transition into a college-level environment with greater ease and to prepare them for progression into the AP Spanish Language & Culture course the following year. Students complete a thorough review of complex grammatical structures, idiomatic expressions and vocabulary as well as explore a variety of historical, political, literary and cultural movements in the Spanish-speaking world. A variety of web-based materials and authentic resources are used. Formal and informal writing, literary analysis, organized debates, projects and conversational exchange (both prepared and spontaneous) are many of the activities used to engage students and help them to develop a greater proficiency in listening, speaking, reading and writing.

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Prerequisites: Spanish III or approval from the Department Chair based on testing. Offered to students who have demonstrated continued excellence and interest in the study of Spanish.

In this course, Spanish is used almost exclusively as a means of communication to help students transition into a college-level environment with greater ease and to prepare them for progression into the AP Spanish Language & Culture course the following year. Students complete a thorough review of complex grammatical structures, idiomatic expressions and vocabulary as well as explore a variety of historical, political, literary and cultural movements in the Spanish-speaking world. A variety of web-based materials and authentic resources are used. Formal and informal writing, literary analysis, organized debates, projects and conversational exchange (both prepared and spontaneous) are many of the activities used to engage students and help them to develop a greater proficiency in listening, speaking, reading and writing.

AP SPANISH LANGUAGE & CULTURE

Prerequisites: See pages 6, 8

Centered around six overarching themes established by the College Board, The AP Spanish Language & Culture course is designed to challenge the advanced Spanish student to reach beyond traditional grammar and vocabulary acquisition to apply presentational, interpretive and interpersonal skills to a real-world context. Through the exclusive use of authentic resources, students broaden their understanding of the Spanish-speaking world through the lens of native-born speakers. Through exposure to the many products, practices and perspectives that make each culture unique, students are challenged to think critically as they work to compare and contrast their own native cultures to those corresponding to Spanish-speaking countries worldwide.

Underclassmen are required to take the AP exam. Seniors are required to take the exam but may apply for an exemption in consultation with the teacher and the College Counseling Office.

SPANISH V

Prerequisites: Spanish IV, Spanish IV Honors, or Spanish III Honors (for rising seniors only)

Spanish V is an advanced-level language course designed to bridge the gap between intermediate and advanced levels and further students' development of listening, speaking, reading and writing skills. The main focus in the class is on culture and conversations. Students are encouraged to attach meaning directly to Spanish, without depending on English for understanding. For this reason, Spanish is the language used for communication at all times. Students should continue to become better learners of language by continuing to apply useful learning strategies to their work.

SPANISH VI: ADVANCED SEMINAR

Prerequisites: AP Spanish Language & Culture course, completion of Spanish V, or approval by the Department Chair

A seminar-style course, this class challenges students to continue to develop second language acquisition through natural progression as they increase cultural awareness and appreciation for the rich history and culture of Spain and Latin America. The students explore a variety of authentic resources (film, poetry, prose, short novels, media, music, and art) as they work to expand their knowledge and awareness of the culture of the Spanish-speaking world. The course is centered around main themes that challenge the students to think globally and critically:

- Social issues
- Immigration
- Women's rights and the female "voice" in Latin American society
- Drug trafficking
- Revolutions, dictatorships and political regimes

Through class debates and discussions, students continue to expand and develop their interpersonal communication skills. The hope is for students to become more proficient in each of the four key components of second language acquisition (reading, writing, speaking and listening) while developing a more advanced ability to synthesize what they have learned for a broader and more complex understanding of the world in which they live. Students analyze Latin American literary excerpts, current events and contemporary cinema and use their discoveries as the basis for active class discussion, presentation and composition.

The Arts Courses

The Dead Leaf is a butterfly that possesses two arts. With wings open, it reveals glossy stripes of black, orange, and blue. While lovely, this does not distinguish it in an order known for iridescence. It is when the butterfly closes those opulent wings that it earns its name. It looks like a dead leaf, brown, of course, but complete with veins, slight nicks on the sides, small pale circles to look like boreholes. A famous lepidopterist once noted that this sort of excessive mimicry was like art, “a form of magic ... a game of intricate enchantment and deception.”

At Virginia Episcopal School, our Fine and Performing Arts department, much like this butterfly, seeks to produce and inspire art that appeals to both experts and novices. We believe art holds a special place in the story of man, for the thing is, once you have learned about the Dead Leaf butterfly, you tend to watch your step. Like art, you are observant for it everywhere.

Note: Fine Arts elective classes are offered based on student interest and enrollment. Therefore, some courses may not be offered every term.

INTRODUCTION TO THE ARTS

CERAMICS I & II

DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY

STUDIO ART I & II

PORTFOLIO DEVELOPMENT

AP STUDIO ART

AP MUSIC THEORY

CHAMBER ENSEMBLE

GLEE CLUB

JAZZ ENSEMBLE

VOCAL ENSEMBLE

FILMMAKING I & II

ACTING

TECHNICAL THEATER

ADVANCED PERFORMANCE

STAGE COMBAT

PUBLIC SPEAKING

INTRODUCTION TO THE ARTS

No prerequisite. 9th grade students only.

Introduction to the Arts is part of our ARC Collaborative curriculum (see p. 5). An interdisciplinary study of music, theater and the visual arts, this course provides students the basic knowledge and applied skills necessary for developing an appreciation for each of the fine arts disciplines. Students will experience the visual and performing arts through live performances, gallery and museum tours, creative projects and classroom demonstrations in each subject area.

CERAMICS I

No prerequisite. Open to students in grades 9 through 12.

Ceramics is a semester-long course that enables students to recognize the properties and possibilities of clay by creating artworks using hand-building techniques. Development of technical skills and artistic vocabulary includes scoring, slipping, hand-building, slab, coil and pinch techniques, bisque firing, painting and glazing. Students learn to approach ceramic artwork as both functional and decorative sculptural objects. Project assignments stress craftsmanship, following the assignment guidelines and creativity. Students participate in critiques in both individual and group settings.

CERAMICS II

Prerequisite: Completion of Ceramics I with an 85 average or better, or by teacher assessment. Open to students in grades 9 through 12.

Ceramics II is an advanced semester-long course in which students become more artistically creative and visually literate. Students will explore throwing on the wheel, layering glazes and working with high fire porcelain. This course contributes to students' development in the four content areas of art production, art history, art criticism and aesthetics. Students familiar with the basics of ceramics have the opportunity to become more confident in their visual literacy and production of functional and sculptural ceramic art.

ADVANCED CERAMICS

Prerequisite: Completion of Ceramics II with an 85 average or better, or by teacher assessment. Open to students in grades 10 through 12.

Advanced Ceramics is a semester-long course in which students will create a body of work that represents their unique visual voice as a ceramic artist. The class will reinforce fundamental hand-building construction techniques and include wheel-thrown projects, as well. Students will continue to develop their design and glazing applications, logging their progress in their sketchbook. They also will apply their knowledge of moisture content and care to forms for storage and optimal working conditions at clay's various stages of production. Students will identify, examine and understand the aesthetic, stylistic and functional considerations of designing objects and communicating ideas. Project research, studio preparation and maintenance, time management and self-evaluation are essential elements to the individual's success in this course.

DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY

No prerequisite. Open to students in grades 9 through 12. Student must have a basic DSLR camera to use for the course.

Digital Photography is a semester-long course designed to develop skills in pixel-based photographic design and printing. Students create, edit, post and share their images electronically. This class includes frequent field trips into the Lynchburg community. Digital Photography includes the ability to see, appreciate and create self-expression through the lens and Photoshop. Students synthesize these elements to create a portfolio of work that reflects their newly developed skills. The assignments require students to think creatively and imaginatively, and encourage them to solve problems in an individual manner. Students participate in critiques in both individual and group settings.

VES provides the latest version of Photoshop. Students wishing to edit on their personal computers will want to purchase a one-year subscription to Creative Cloud Photography. Make sure you select the discounted plan for students to take advantage of reduced pricing.

STUDIO ART I

No prerequisite. Open to students in grades 9 through 12.

Studio Art I is a semester-long course in which students examine art as media and criticism for the first-year art student. Attention is given to creative thinking and problem-solving skills. Beginning art students develop the ability to "read" and utilize the principles of art and elements of design to communicate ideas. A first-year art student will become familiar with the vocabulary, the tools and the media used by artists and designers, as well as develop an understanding and appreciation of art.

STUDIO ART II

Prerequisite: Completion of Studio Art I with an 85 average or better, or teacher assessment. Open to students in grades 9 through 12.

Studio II is an advanced semester-long course in which students become more artistically creative and visually literate. Students who have completed Studio Art I may continue in Studio Art II, where they work in two- and three-dimensional works. This course contributes to students' development in the four content areas of art production, art history, art criticism and aesthetics. Students familiarized with this basic core of information have the opportunity to become more confident in their visual literacy and production of art.

PORTFOLIO DEVELOPMENT CLASS

Prerequisites: Completion of Studio Art I & II or Ceramics I & II

This course is designed for students who plan to pursue AP Studio Art in the following year. In this course students will spend their time working independently on their portfolio preparation. This course requires approval from the studio art teacher and is designed for

serious and dedicated art students.

AP STUDIO ART

Prerequisites: See pages 6 - 7

This course is designed to guide students in the creation of a portfolio that addresses three major concerns in the study of art:

1. **Quality:** A synthesis of form, technique and content in the student's work.
2. **Concentration:** An in-depth investigation and process of discovery centered on a particular and compelling visual interest or problem.
3. **Breadth:** A breadth of experience that exhibits serious grounding in visual principles as well as formal, technical and expressive means of the artist.

Students may select drawing and painting, two-dimensional design or three-dimensional design for the portfolio that all students taking this course are required to submit to the College Board for evaluation.

Formal visual concerns, technical skills and conceptual issues are addressed through creative means in both teacher-directed assignments and student-directed projects. The creation of an AP Studio Art portfolio is an involved and personal process of discovery dependent on the student's unique thinking and problem-solving skills. It is hoped that this course will not only help students to produce an excellent body of artwork, but also will introduce them to the richness of the creative process on a personal level, opening the door to personal discovery and allowing them to make meaningful contributions to the greater culture.

AP MUSIC THEORY

Prerequisites: See pages 6 - 7

AP Music Theory is an intense year-long course that focuses on mastering listening, reading and writing music skills. Students acquire the knowledge and skills needed to complete successfully the Advanced Placement examination. The course of study includes the fundamentals of music theory and the application of those components through composition, ear-training and sight-singing practice. Students learn to understand and respond to the structure of music intellectually, physically and aesthetically.

All students who take AP Music Theory are required to take the AP exam.

VOCAL ENSEMBLE

Students must have prior vocal music experience and be selected through audition to register for the class. Open to students in grades 9 through 12.

Vocalists may participate in this class to earn elective credit in the Fine Arts. One credit is earned for a full year's participation. Vocal Ensemble meets two days per week outside the class schedule and may perform on Fall and Spring Family Weekends and in Lessons and Carols services at Christmas. Students are responsible for learning their individual parts outside of class so rehearsal time may be used to perfect the ensemble performance.

GLEE CLUB *

No prerequisite. Open to students in grades 9 through 12.

Glee Club meets during the academic day and provides students with a comprehensive choral experience. The choir performs at chapel services and special events on and off campus. Repertoire includes sacred and secular choral music ranging from the Renaissance period through 21st-century composers.

CHAMBER ENSEMBLE *

Students must play at an intermediate level to register for the class. Open to students in grades 9 through 12.

String players and pianists may participate in this class to earn elective credit in the Fine Arts. Students learn a classical repertoire, enhance their musicianship, and practice ensemble skills and performance techniques. Chamber Ensemble meets one evening per week outside the class schedule and may perform on Fall and Spring Family Weekends and in the Lessons and Carols services at Christmas.



JAZZ ENSEMBLE *

Students must play at an intermediate level to register for the class. Open to students in grades 9 through 12.

Musicians in the VES Jazz Ensemble enjoy pushing themselves out of their comfort zone to learn the harmonics, rhythms and melodies of jazz, as well as exploring the art of improvisation. The repertoire ranges from big band jazz to Latin pieces to contemporary works. The Jazz Ensemble invites students with a range of experience and instruments, including beatboxers, classically trained vocalists, pianists and other string instrumentalists interested in applying their talents to jazz stylings. Jazz Ensemble meets two evenings per week outside the class schedule and may perform on Fall and Spring Family Weekends.

** Each semester's participation in a VES ensemble earns .5 credit. Students are encouraged to engage with the program for the full year.*

FILMMAKING I

No prerequisite. Open to students in grades 9 through 12.

Filmmaking I is a semester-long online introduction to filmmaking. Students learn how to build a successful video project from the initial stage to the final product, including how to narrow a topic, create a storyboard and shot sheet, write a script, shoot creative video in a timely fashion, edit the video, and publish the finished project. Students also will learn how to use iMovie and Final Cut editing programs.

FILMMAKING II: SPECIAL EFFECTS & ANIMATION

Prerequisite: Filmmaking I. Offered Spring 2023.

Filmmaking II is a semester-long online course with a focus on Special Effects and Animation. Students will use school-owned DSLR cameras, professional camcorders, microphones and lighting equipment to capture their scenes. Students also will use Adobe Premiere Pro, Motion and Final Cut Software to produce animations, school promotional films and student activities videos, such as the End-of-the-Year Video, and will serve as leaders in live streaming events and supporting the Bishop TV channel on YouTube.

ACTING

No prerequisite. Open to students in grades 9 through 12.

This semester-long course is an introduction to fundamental acting techniques. Students will develop an understanding and appreciation for the art of acting through improvisation, scene work, monologues and script analysis. The class will provide students the opportunity to strengthen those powers of concentration, focus, analysis, imagination, creativity and empathy that are critical to every art form.

TECHNICAL THEATER

No prerequisite. Open to students in grades 9 through 12. Offered Spring 2023.

In this semester-long program, students work in an entirely project-based environment, with activities that include carpentry, sound engineering and design, and lighting. With a small class size, the students benefit from individualized instruction as they learn hands-on both technical knowledge and safe operation of theatre equipment. In addition, students may choose to apply their skills by participating in departmental productions and projects, school events, concerts and guest performances based on the school activities schedule during the semester.

ADVANCED PERFORMANCE

Prerequisite: Open to students who show continued interest in their study of Acting and Theater Tech following the completion of intro level courses and/or independent practice.

STAGE COMBAT

No prerequisite. Open to students in grades 9 through 12.

This course is a semester-long examination of stage combat, concentrating on hand-to-hand and rapier. Storytelling is the essential purpose of stage combat, and the balance must be found between realism and narrative. A prime focus will be on safety and the need for move-by-move choreography. Students will examine several films and will be asked to analyze combat sequences for precision, story, clarity, and realism. Students will examine industry-standard practices and policies, and they will learn the basic principles of unarmed

combat, focusing on the idea that the “victim” is in control. The class will cover punches, slaps, stomps, hair-pulling, and others.

PUBLIC SPEAKING

No prerequisite. Open to students in grades 9 through 12.

This semester-long course is an introduction to the principles and practices of public speaking. In addition to listening to, reading and analyzing notable historic and modern speeches by individuals from a broad cross-section of society, students will learn how to write, prepare and deliver a variety of speeches. Speeches such as informative, demonstrative, persuasive, humorous and extemporaneous will be investigated.

Computer Science Courses

Computers can be manipulated for almost infinite possibilities, yet a computer's greatest service is to help us communicate our ideas with clarity and style. Our students learn that computers are not mere functional items. As such, we embrace the essential skills of creativity, invention, collaboration and communication throughout the Computer Science curriculum. Students also learn practical application skills that can be put to use immediately in the world of technology today.

ARCH - COMPUTER APPLICATIONS

INTRO TO PROGRAMMING

INTRO TO GRAPHIC DESIGN

AI LITERACY

AP COMPUTER SCIENCE

ARCH - COMPUTER APPLICATIONS

Required of all 9th grade students.

The Computer Applications Course is an 8-week introduction to computer science, blending digital literacy, computing fundamentals, and hands-on technology applications. Students will explore computer systems, cybersecurity, software, and web design, gaining essential skills for responsible and ethical technology use. Through interactive projects and real-world applications, they will develop problem-solving abilities and a deeper understanding of how technology shapes the digital world. This course emphasizes practical application, critical thinking, and digital citizenship, preparing students to navigate and create in today's technology-driven society.

INTRO TO PROGRAMMING

No prior experience required.

This course provides a comprehensive introduction to programming with a focus on the Python programming language. Students will explore fundamental concepts such as variables, data types, operators, control flow, functions, and modules, building a strong foundation in computational thinking and problem-solving. Through hands-on coding exercises and interactive lessons, they will develop the skills needed to write and execute Python programs confidently. By the end of the semester, students will apply their knowledge to create their own projects, demonstrating their ability to design, develop, and troubleshoot programs independently.

INTRODUCTION TO GRAPHIC DESIGN

No prior experience required

The Introduction to Graphic Design course is a year-long program that immerses students in the fundamentals of visual communication, digital design, and creative problem-solving. Students will develop technical proficiency in industry-standard software, with a strong focus on Adobe Photoshop, while exploring design principles such as typography, color theory, composition, and branding. Beyond the classroom, students will gain real-world experience by collaborating on projects for local businesses, school initiatives, and community organizations, building a professional portfolio that showcases their creativity and technical skills. Through hands-on projects, client-based work, and critiques, students will learn how to create impactful designs for print, digital media, and marketing. This course prepares students for future studies in graphic design, marketing, or multimedia careers while fostering critical thinking and artistic expression in a professional design environment.

AI LITERACY

No prior experience required

The AI Literacy Course introduces high school students to the fundamentals of artificial intelligence, exploring its impact on society, ethics, and real-world applications. Students will learn how AI systems work, including machine learning, data processing, and automation, while critically examining issues such as bias, privacy, and responsible AI use. They will also explore practical ways to use AI in everyday life, from virtual assistants and smart recommendations to content creation and productivity tools. Through hands-on

activities, case studies, and discussions, students will develop the skills to engage with AI thoughtfully and ethically, preparing them for a future where AI plays an increasingly significant role in daily life and various career fields. No prior experience required.

AP COMPUTER SCIENCE

Intro to Programming course required

The AP Computer Science Course is a rigorous, year-long program that combines both AP Computer Science Principles (AP CSP) and AP Computer Science A (AP CSA), providing students with a comprehensive foundation in computer science. Designed for students who have completed an Introduction to Programming course, this class begins with AP CSP, where students explore computing concepts, digital information, cybersecurity, and problem-solving through real-world applications. In the second half of the year, students transition to AP CSA, focusing on Java programming, data structures, object-oriented programming, and algorithm development. Through hands-on coding projects, collaborative problem-solving, and preparation for both AP exams, students will develop the skills necessary for college-level computing and careers in technology. This fast-paced course is ideal for motivated students looking to challenge themselves in a structured and engaging computer science curriculum.

Religion Courses

The study of religion at VES—along with our tradition of corporate worship and prayer—challenges and empowers students in the search for the ultimate meaning of human existence.

In recognition of our school's connection to the Episcopal Church, the significant role Christianity has played in the development of human culture, and because the Bible serves as a foundational document of the church, the Religion Department will offer a New Testament course each semester. Further recognizing our place in a pluralistic and multi-religious world, the department will offer two World Religions courses (World Religions I and II), asserting that exposure to a variety of religious traditions is essential for meaningful global citizenship. The role of the Religion Department is to deepen student engagement with the broader world manifested in expressions in compassion, service, humility, and universal goodwill.

NEW TESTAMENT

WORLD RELIGIONS II

WORLD RELIGIONS I

THE NEW TESTAMENT

No prerequisite. Open to students in grades 9 through 12.

The semester-long New Testament class surveys the New Testament and the fundamental teachings of Christianity. Old Testament/Hebrew Bible history and themes will be introduced as a foundation for understanding the first-century world and the writings of the New Testament. Particular attention will be paid to the life and teachings of Jesus. Connections will be made to the life of the Early Church, the teachings of the Apostles and traditional Christian beliefs.

Upon completion of the course, students are expected to:

- Understand the basic history and culture of the Old Testament and the first century world as a foundation for interpreting the New Testament.
- Think critically and discuss intelligently topics related to religious beliefs.
- Be able to read, understand and interpret the authorial intent of New Testament texts.

WORLD RELIGIONS I

No prerequisite. Open to students in grades 9 through 12.

This semester-long course functions as part of a non-sequential, two-part offering intended to address greater breadth of topics across more varied religious traditions. Students will be presented with a snapshot of the basic tenants, rituals, values and experiences that define a sampling of the major religious traditions of our world.

This class focuses on the earliest religious traditions, followed by the religions that spring from India, followed by an introduction of the

major monotheisms (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam) with particular interest in the significance of the rise of Islam the Near East. Students will explore religions from both an external and internal perspective. An “external” perspective reflects those elements of a particular religious tradition that can be interpreted from the outside (historical figures, social changes, and political affinities). An “internal” perspective seeks to explore the ways in which adherents derive meaning from their particular religious tradition, or how their religious tradition answers the big questions of life: Why I am here? What is the good life? What is expected of me? What does the afterlife look like?

WORLD RELIGIONS II

No prerequisite. Open to students in grades 9 through 12.

This semester-long course functions as part of a non-sequential, two-part offering intended address greater breadth of topics across more varied religious traditions. Students will be presented a snapshot of the basic tenants, rituals, values, and experiences which define a sampling of the major religious traditions of our world.

This class begins with an introduction (or re-introduction) to major monotheisms with increased emphasis upon Judaism and Christianity while maintaining at least a sufficient introduction to Islam. Students will then dive into Asian religions (Taoism, Chinese Buddhism, Japanese Buddhism, Confucianism, Folk Religion and Shintoism). The course continues with the study of religious traditions linked with the earth and localized spirits (Shamanism, Animism and indigenous American Religion). As the semester marches on, 19th-century adaptations of major monotheisms (e.g., Christianity and Islam) are explored (i.e., Mormonism, Jehovah’s Witnesses, Baha’i Faith), followed by an exploration of 20th-century movements (i.e., Hare Krishna, Unification Church, Scientology). The final unit will explore the misuse of social power and its relation to personality cults (Jonestown, Heaven’s Gate, etc.).

