
# Course Catalog 2025-2026

Updated 4/7/25

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# Academic Objectives

## Dare to Ascend

Founded on a Western ranch at the base of the Rocky Mountains, Fountain Valley School values hard work and fortitude as we empower students to stamp their own brand and write their own stories. We nurture curiosity while cultivating lifelong learners. We promote asking big questions and embracing analytical and creative thinking. We empower students to assume responsibility for their learning while finding purpose and joy in their accomplishments. These objectives join our college-preparatory goal of educating students to acquire the skills and knowledge needed to be successful in future academic and lifetime pursuits.

# Introduction

Dear Danes,

This catalog includes the most up-to-date courses Fountain Valley will offer in the 2025-2026 school year. As you review the available options, consult with your advisor, teachers, and parents / guardians to select a course load that provides a balance between rigor and performance.

One of our goals is to teach you how to think instead of what to think; therefore, our courses are designed to build a strong foundation in critical analysis and academic skills to prepare you for future success in college and beyond. Your FVS educators will continue to offer courses to deepen your knowledge in traditional subjects as well as some new courses in almost every discipline.

As you rise to the next level, you may explore elective courses in practical or advanced mathematics, coding, the performing and visual arts, environmental, forensic, nuclear, or bio sciences as well as a rich variety of options in the Humanities. My hope is that you will take advantage of these opportunities in order to challenge yourself and expand your academic curiosity by diving into the subjects offered at Fountain Valley School.

Please remember that your teachers, advisors, and I look forward to guiding you in creating a balanced course schedule for the 2025-2026 school year.

Sincerely,

Dorothy Strehl
Dean of Academics

# Program of Study by Year

**Grade 9**

Five courses — one from: English, math, history, science, and world languages
FVS Chapter One: A Foundation of Mission, Mindsets, and Skills — fall semester
Visual or Performing Art — fall or spring semester

**Grade 10**

Five courses — one from: English, math, history, science, and world languages
Additional fine arts course(s) as necessary or desired
Chapter Two: Sophomore Seminar — spring quarter

**Grade 11**

Five courses — one from: English, math, history, science, and world languages
Additional fine arts course(s) as necessary or desired
Junior College Workshop — fall and spring semester

**Grade 12**

A minimum of five classes that include at least four core* classes — fall semester
Additional fine arts course(s) as necessary or desired
Senior College Workshop — fall semester

A minimum of five classes that include at least three core* classes, not including Senior Capstone Project — spring semester, *but may include Global Scholar Diploma — fall and spring semesters*
Senior Capstone — spring semester
Additional fine arts course(s) as necessary or desired

**English, mathematics, history, science, and world languages*

# Graduation Requirements by Department

## Credits

**22 credits**, garnered among the School's departments, are required to graduate. A yearlong class is one credit, and a semester class is one-half credit.

### English

**4 credits** in English.

### Fine Arts

2026 graduates: **1.5 credits** of art distributed across both the visual and performing arts.
2027+ graduates: **1.5 credits** of art in any visual or performing art are required. Students are required to take a semester of art in the 9th grade.

### History and Social Science

**3 credits** including ninth-grade history / The American West, world history in 10th grade, United States History in 11th grade, and a history elective to be fulfilled in 11th or 12th grade.

### Mathematics

**3 credits** of secondary school math courses including the successful completion through Algebra II; however, the vast majority of colleges and universities require 4 years of math.

### Science

2026 graduates: **3 credits** in science, one of which must be in life science and one of which must be a physical science.
2027+ graduates: **3 credits** of science including ecology / life science in 9th grade, and then any physical science course in subsequent years.

### World Languages

The successful completion of the third level of one world language.

### *Additional Graduation Programming*

Successful completion of **Chapter One** (or **Chapter One *Abridged*** for students enrolled after their 9th grade year), **Chapter Two**, and one **Senior Capstone Experience** (Capstone, Honors Capstone / Global Scholar Diploma), and completion of **Interim** each year a student is enrolled at FVS.

# College Counseling

When choosing courses, it may be helpful to have an awareness of the recommendations of colleges and universities. If students have ambitions to athletically compete at the D1 or D2 level should plan with NCAA eligibility requirements in mind. If students plan on applying to the University of California system or California State system, please be mindful of the "A-G course" requirements. If students are interested in pursuing pre-health or engineering in competitive applicant pools, students should seek physics and calculus or, at minimum, precalculus courses. In the FVS College Counseling Office, we are happy to have conversations with students at any point to weigh course options in context of the college admission process.

Following are some general guidelines:

| **Subject** | *FVS Graduation Requirements | State University such as CU Boulder[1] | Highly selective college[2] and university[3] recommendations |
|---|---|---|---|
| **English** | 4 credits | 4 years | 4 years |
| **Math** | 3 credits | 4 years | 4 years preferably calculus |
| **History and Social Science** | 3 credits | 3 years | 3-4 years |
| **Science** | 3 credits | 3 years (including 2-3 years of lab science depending on area of study) | 3-4 years of lab science preferably physics, chemistry, ecology or biology |
| **World Languages** | Successful completion of the third level of one language | 2-3 years (depending on area of study) | 3-4 years or more of one language |

[1] https://catalog.colorado.edu/undergraduate/admissions/minimum-academic-preparation-standards/ These are fairly typical public university requirements, but students should check the admissions requirements at public universities of interest

[2] https://www.davidson.edu/admission-and-financial-aid/how-to-apply/admission-policies/application-requirements The recommendations here for highly selective colleges are typical–at least three years of the same language, math at least through calculus, additional rigorous courses in science and history

[3] https://admissions.yale.edu/advice-selecting-high-school-courses Wise advice here–colleges are looking for rigor, dedication and intellectual curiosity, but there is room for specialization and personalization.

# English Department

The English curriculum is based upon seminar-style classes and emphasizes reading, writing, analysis, and critical-thinking skills. The program balances studies in world, British, American, and Western literature and relies upon representative genres to establish a foundation for further literary study, understanding, and appreciation. The writing process is emphasized at all levels of instruction and includes organization, effective argument, diction, and mechanics. Vocabulary study utilizes words within the context of readings, a study of Greek roots, and standardized test preparation. Advanced courses allow students to take AP exams. 12th graders may take two electives one semester and then take none the other semester. Each fall semester senior elective will cover a unit on the college essay.

## Grade 9

### English I: A Literary Exploration of the West

FALL SEMESTER AND SPRING SEMESTER

In English I, students will experience an introduction to literature focused on Western America. Students will learn to read and question critically, think and write analytically, and discuss texts and themes communally as well as study formal elements of grammar and syntax, while beginning to understand and utilize more sophisticated vocabulary. This course functions on an interdisciplinary level with Grade 9 History to form a First Year Humanities curriculum that seeks to make explicit links between Western American cultures and literature. Readings will invite students to investigate communities in and around the American West, including native inhabitants, immigrants, and those drawn by the lure of potential fame and fortune. Through discussions about our texts and themes, students should come to a deeper understanding of the environment that surrounds them and the deep history that is connected to the land.

## Grade 10

### English II: Place and Perspective

FALL SEMESTER AND SPRING SEMESTER

While reading classic and modern texts, students will question and discuss how geography and natural settings help establish a sense of place. As students examine the ways FVS and the western setting help create perspective, students will also expand outward to consider what it means to have a global sense of place. In examining the importance of nature and setting, students will build on the critical thinking skills they learned in their 9th grade year by continuing to analytically read, write, and discuss various novels, short stories, poems, and essays. Students will also sharpen their vocabulary and grammar skills.

### Honors English II: Place and Perspective

FALL SEMESTER AND SPRING SEMESTER

Please note that students in this honors course will read more texts and write more papers than in English II. While reading classic and modern texts, students will question and discuss how geography and natural settings help establish a sense of place. As students examine the ways FVS and the western setting help create perspective, students will also expand outward to consider what it means to have a global sense of place. In examining the importance of nature and setting, students will build on the critical thinking skills they learned in their 9th grade year by continuing to analytically read, write, and discuss various novels, short stories, poems, and essays. Students will also sharpen their vocabulary and grammar skills.
*Prerequisites: Demonstration of mastery in previous course, excellent effort, and teacher recommendation.*

## Grade 11

### English III: American & British Literature
FALL SEMESTER AND SPRING SEMESTER

English III offers students a survey of contemporary and historical literature from America and the British isles, exploring the concept of the English-speaking literary canon, from Shakespeare to Scott Fitzgerald to modern writers such as Toni Morrison, Ralph Ellison, and Jaqueline Woodson. What makes a work a Classic? How does reading older books lead us to appreciate and understand the new? Is it truly possible to de-center British and early American works in a current-day study of American literature? Why might it be important to try? Students will engage in comparative analysis of the two countries' literary styles in order to extract cultural meaning and build an understanding of how the two literary traditions relate to one another. Students will also examine the texts through the lens of colonial and post-colonial frameworks while examining themes that resonate in our personal lives, including love, loss, leadership, power, and oppression. This course simultaneously offers a skills-focused approach to writing instruction where students will demonstrate their understanding through essay composition, dramatic performance, student-centric discussions, quizzes, and tests.

### English III: Advanced English Language & Composition
FALL SEMESTER AND SPRING SEMESTER

The objective of this writing-based course is to meet the goals established by the College Board course "AP English Language and Composition," a course that mirrors first-year writing classes at the college level. To meet these goals, students will read and write various types of essays: personal pieces, argumentative writings about contemporary socio-political issues, essays in response to literary works, and also a contemporary issues research paper. Many of our writings will involve learning how to properly incorporate outside sources and, to prepare for the AP Exam, will be in-class, timed pieces. To coincide with FVS's Grade 11 study of American History and Literature, nearly all of our readings will come from American authors, and argumentative writings will be focused on contemporary American social issues, policy debates, and politics. *What differentiates this course from the Grade 12 advanced literature course is the emphasis on writing, particularly on reading and writing argumentative, nonfiction essays. Students enrolled in this course have the option of taking the corresponding AP exam in May.*
*Prerequisites: Demonstration of mastery in English II, demonstrated aptitude for writing and comfortable writing under time pressure, and teacher recommendation.*

## Grade 12
## Advanced and Elective Courses

### English IV: Adv English Literature & Composition
FALL SEMESTER AND SPRING SEMESTER

Advanced English Literature is a college-level seminar course that encourages highly motivated readers and writers to explore challenging and diverse literary offerings, while preparing for the AP exam. The course begins with a review of the summer reading texts, then focuses on important authors and poets from around the world. Works are complemented and contextualized by historical study and referencing literary theory. Readings and discussions are organized around each author's contribution to the course's essential question(s): what does it mean to tell a story – to tell our own story – and how does the manner in which stories are told indicate their content? In-class essays complement formal out-of-class essays and are a significant part of students' work. Students present as leaders in the classroom through presentations and Socratic Seminars. *Prerequisites: Mastery in Adv English Lang & Comp, demonstrated aptitude for reading, analyzing, and discussing prose, and ability to write under time pressure, and teacher recommendation.*

### English IV: Creative Writing
SPRING SEMESTER

What does a student have to say as a twelfth grader full of opinions, beliefs, and reflections? What will be their voice? This class will explore various voices and modes of writing, from nonfiction to humor to haiku to poetry. Students will read diverse books such as *The Practice of Creative Writing*, *Ant Farm (Simon Rich)* and *On Writing* by Stephen King while writing in different styles. The focus, in the end, will be on writing and discovering their own voice.

### English IV: Exploring Happiness in Literature
SPRING SEMESTER, EVEN GRADUATION YEARS

Happiness is widely considered to be a chief aim of human life. But what is happiness? And how can it be attained, and then sustained? Is happiness enough to satisfy a person? How should one pursue it? A wide range of writers and philosophers have explored happiness through imaginative literature, thought-provoking theories, and moving works of art. This course will explore this theme in poetry, short stories, novels, philosophical texts, and artwork.

**English IV: Dramatic Literature—**
**Page, Stage, and Film**
FALL SEMESTER, EVEN GRADUATION YEARS

Students will read and discuss plays as literature intended for theatrical performance, often considering the translation of the written page onto the stage and film. The plays will be examined from the angles of history, cultural context, structure, genre, and form as various viewpoints from which playwrights write and scholars criticize and interpret. In this course, students will read, analyze, and act out plays. Readings: In addition to reading plays that are being currently staged in Colorado Springs and Denver, students are likely to read the following plays: Robert Icke's adaptation of Aeschylus' *The Oresteia*; Carol Churchhill's *A Number*; August Wilson's *Fences; Uncle Vanya*, Anton Chekov; *Eurydice*, by Sara Ruhl and others

**English IV: Mainstream U.S.A—**
**Media, Culture, and You**
FALL SEMESTER

Is the Internet a success story? Must the personal always be political? Where, oh where, did our attention spans go? And what, exactly, does "the mainstream" even mean? In this course, students will study literature, media, pop culture, and digital communication of the recent past, primarily from the 1990s to today. Students will develop interdisciplinary literacy skills by reading/watching and discussing fiction, movies, television, music, social media, and more. The summer reading, John Green's *The Anthropocene Reviewed*, will kick off our study of both contemporary American culture and the personal essay, opening a gateway for students to research and reckon with why we all might be living the way that we live today.

**English IV: Writing From Within**
FALL SEMESTER

This course focuses on crafting the college essay and other types of nonfiction writing. Many classes follow a writing workshop pattern. Students will read various modes and styles—from the profile to the argumentative, from the investigative to the memoir. Students often write short pieces and read from the works of John McPhee, David Foster Wallace, Diane Ackerman, E.B. White, and Simon Rich, among others.

**English IV: Gods, Ghosts, and Monsters**
SPRING SEMESTER

In this course, students will explore a survey of things that we cannot see, that will not die, that we do not understand. What makes a monster? What makes a god? Why are we afraid of ghosts? And why is society so obsessed with vampires and zombies? Students will compare classical gods and modern-day god complexes, metaphors for oppression and oppression itself. Through Greek and global mythology, various Classical, Early Modern, and Gothic literature and plays, modern and contemporary fiction and essays, movies, students will confront human fears and the fictional world that reflects them.

## Courses Not Offered in 2025-2026

**English IV: Into the Unknown—**
**Literature of Climbing and Mountaineering**
FALL SEMESTER, ODD GRADUATION YEARS

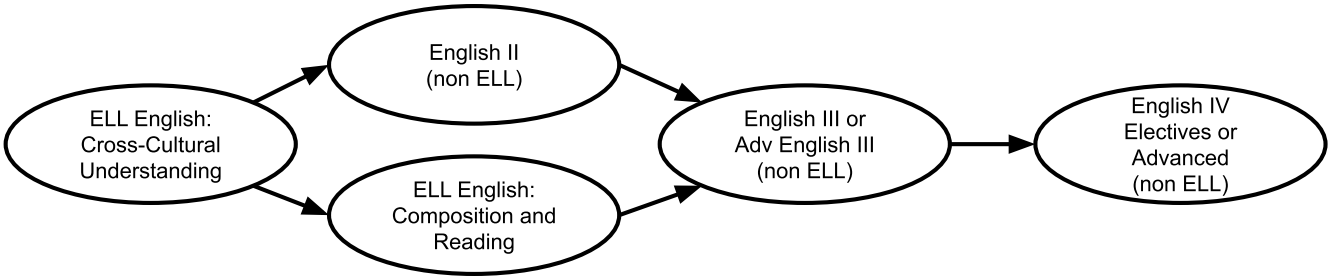
Adventurers have long asked the question: Why do we climb mountains? Their answers have been as widely varied as the routes they climb. This class will focus on the literature of mountains, climbing, and pushing our limits. Students will read accounts of adventure, stories of those who call the mountains home, and tales of Colorado's own 10th Mountain Division. Students will consider ethical dilemmas, potential risks and rewards, and the challenges that must be overcome to achieve greatness. Ultimately, the course will strive to answer the question: "Why do humans seek out wild places above the clouds?"

**English IV: Jazz Poetry to Confessionalists—**
**A Survey of Postmodern Poetry**
SPRING SEMESTER, ODD GRADUATION YEARS

During the middle of the 20th century poets challenged prevalent assumptions and styles and began experimenting with poetry that was intended to be subjective, sometimes deeply personal, and unconventional in form and content. In this course, students will trace the outlines of postmodern poetry by sampling a wide variety of work and focusing on a few specific movements and groups of poets: jazz poetry, the Black Mountain Poets, and confessionalism. In addition to enjoying and interpreting the poems, students will attempt to extract a deeper understanding of the societal forces that shaped the movement.

# English Language Learners (ELL) Program

The goal of the English Language Learners Program is to teach and support the academic and social language proficiency skills students need to be successful in mainstream FVS courses. While English language learners must meet Fountain Valley's academic requirements for graduation, the sequencing of courses is adjusted to accommodate individual preparation levels. The ELL Program maintains a flexible approach in adjusting to the needs of the students in the program.



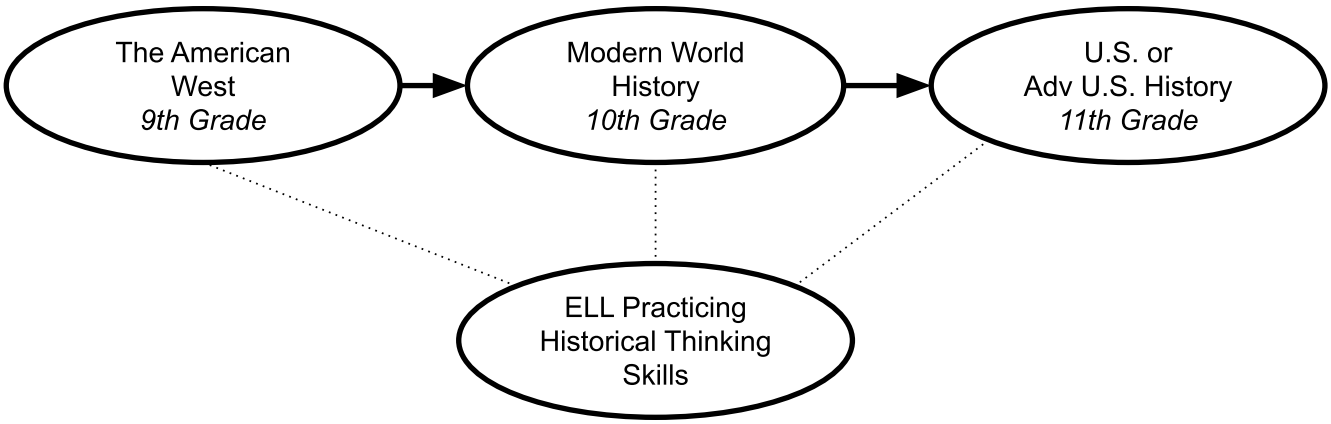

## English Courses

**ELL English: Cross-Cultural Understanding**
FALL SEMESTER AND SPRING SEMESTER

This one-credit course prepares the intermediate English language learner to successfully analyze written material and compose analytical and descriptive essays. This course meets every day, with every other class session serving as required instructional support. The student reads several short novels and selected short stories each semester, develops writing skills from the cohesive paragraph to the complete composition, and continuously increases vocabulary. The course has a balanced emphasis between expressive and receptive language. Speaking and listening skills are honed while investigating cultural similarities and differences between the United States and the student's own country.

**ELL English: Composition and Reading**
FALL SEMESTER AND SPRING SEMESTER

This one-credit course prepares advanced English language learners to participate in mainstream English courses. Students refine their English writing skills by practicing narrative, descriptive, and expository writing. Students will also expand their English vocabulary through verbal and written responses, and by reading and discussing works of fiction, nonfiction, and poetry. Works studied are chosen with a view toward engaging student interest, as well as in alignment with mainstream sophomore and junior English course content in order to prepare students to fully participate in mainstream English after they successfully complete this course's requirements.




## History Course

**ELL History: Practicing Historical Thinking**
FALL SEMESTER AND SPRING SEMESTER

This course prepares and supports English language learners as they further develop their historical thinking skills in order to accelerate the option of taking advanced history classes sooner. This class works in tandem with the student's current history class, and this course serves to deepen and reinforce ELL students' understanding of the historical events they are learning in their other courses. Students further refine their analytical writing skills and close reading skills of scholarly texts and primary sources in English.

**This history course is not for credit, and therefore not on official college transcripts. This course pairs with the ELL student's yearlong history course, and is required for students who are currently enrolled in ELL English courses.*

# Fine Arts Department

Learning opportunities extend to all levels of experience in the fine arts, jewelry / metalsmithing, acting, photography, filmmaking, choral, and instrumental music. Introductory level courses provide a foundation for subsequent focused study in specific disciplines. Three annual theater productions, student art exhibits, and choral and instrumental performances are among the many opportunities for students to showcase their work. 9th graders are required to take a semester of fine arts during their first year.

To learn by doing is the basic approach of the fine arts department. The focus is on developing both aesthetic literacy and technical skills that are the cornerstone of artistic work. The program strives to build confidence and exposure to various artistic skills and mediums in order to develop a sense of personal creativity.

## Performing Arts

### *Instrumental*

**Jazz & Rock Ensemble**
FALL SEMESTER and/or SPRING SEMESTER

In this course, students form a band and explore many different jazz and rock genres. Independent musicianship is developed through engaging deeply with musical improvisation. Musical elements of balance, texture, phrase, color, rhythmic clarity, and groove will be explored in depth through the learning of familiar and unfamiliar songs from the jazz and rock genres. Students are given the opportunity to write music for their group. Daily practice and public performance is a requirement of this course.
*Prerequisites: At least three years of private instruction or self study, previous band experience, and/or approval from the teacher. Admittance in this course includes an audition for new students during the first week of class.*

**Select Ensemble**
SPRING SEMESTER

This course gives the highly committed instrumental music student the opportunity to learn and perform concert music spanning a wide range of styles and historical periods from the beginning of time to present day contemporary compositions by living composers. The Fountain Valley Orchestra includes winds, brass, strings, and percussion. If a student wishes to pursue making music in a collegiate orchestra or chamber music setting, this course will help pave the way.
*Prerequisites: At least three years of direct instruction, previous band and/or orchestral experience and/or approval from the director. Admittance in this course includes an audition for new students during the first week of class.*

### *Music Production*

**Music Production Introduction**
FALL SEMESTER

In this course, we will explore the basic elements of sound recording & miking techniques for acoustic & amplified/electronic instruments as well as found sound, basic mixing and mastering/editing, basic sound design, and compositional techniques using a standard digital audio workspace (Logic, Garageband), and creating music/soundscapes for film. This class will also have a very robust entry level musicianship/ear training component.

**Music Theory and Composition I**
FALL SEMESTER

This course fosters personal creative freedom and deepens understanding of the elements of the fundamentals of music theory and music composition. The course covers concepts and theories related to aspects of sound, rhythm, harmony, melody, musical syntax, and part writing as well as musicianship skills and improvisation. This course prepares students for Music Theory and Composition II.
*Prerequisite: Must be able to read music or have teacher approval. Basic keyboard skills are beneficial.*

## *Theater*

**Theater I**
FALL SEMESTER or SPRING SEMESTER

The Theater I technique class will have an in depth study of mental acting practices with brief chapters in vocal and physical theater practices. Students will perform monologues and duets while confronting human thought process and switching tactics. They will discover their most engaging physical stage presence and vocal techniques. Between monologue and duet performances, they will explore stage combat, Suzuki theater, Improvisational acting and several other practices.

**Theater III** and **Theater IV+**
FALL SEMESTER or SPRING SEMESTER

Theater III and beyond is a joint advanced class that is run similar to a college scene study course. Students interested in our afterschool program should stay enrolled in theater for these advanced courses to expand their character range, hone their mental, vocal and physical skills, and to become the most empathetic and engaging actors as possible. Students will delve into modern theater and the latest Pulitzer Prize-winning plays to choose the scene selections that will evoke the most educational class discussions on human thought process. Summative grades consist of duet and monologue performances, while daily grades are made up with homework assignments, memorization and in class participation.
*Prerequisite: Successful completion of Theater I and II and teacher approval.*

## *Vocal*

**Concert Choir**
FALL SEMESTER or SPRING SEMESTER

This performing ensemble focuses on the enjoyment of choral singing with an emphasis on vocal technique, basic music theory skills, and style interpretation. Students rehearse and perform music from a variety of different genres, focusing on performance practice and

**Music Theory and Composition II**
SPRING SEMESTER

The purpose of this course is to foster personal creative freedom and to gain new skills, curiosities about, and understanding of the elements of music composition regardless of a student's preferred styles or genres. While this course will be one in which music theory knowledge will continue to grow, the main component of this course is music composition. A wide range of musical genres will be explored in order to widen and enrich the student's contextual perspectives in order to give more to draw from while composing their own work. Improvisation on a primary instrument or voice will be a core learning activity in this course for the development of the independent creative musicianship that is integral for music composition. Music history, aural skills, and score analysis will also be explored.
*Prerequisites: Successful completion of Music Theory & Composition I or a passed aural skills & theory entrance exam to be given during the first two weeks of class.*

**Theater II**
FALL SEMESTER or SPRING SEMESTER

Theater II is for the student who wishes to go further with their studies from Theater I and is highly recommended for those students wishing to pursue larger roles in the after school theater program. Theater II is often where the actor truly blossoms into lead role material. While Theater I is about learning the skills themselves, Theater II is about honing those skills and becoming able to execute them with ease onstage. Summative grades consist of duet and monologue performances, while daily grades are made up with homework assignments, memorization and in class participation.
*Prerequisite: Successful completion of Theater I.*

**Choir I**
SPRING SEMESTER

This non-auditioned choir is open to all levels of interest, experience, and ability. This course invites students to find their voice, collaborate with others, and deepen their love for vocal music. In addition to learning to sing as an ensemble, students will grow in their skills in music

note reading. The overall emphasis is on improved singing qualities and advancement of individual skills in the ensemble setting. Public performance is required.

### Advanced Vocal Technique
FALL SEMESTER

This course is designed for students who are committed to developing their solo vocal technique and repertoire in preparation for college-level vocal studies. Coursework includes selecting and preparing appropriate solo repertoire, developing auditioning skills, building your audition book, filming audition submissions, and recording demos. Weekly masterclass performances create frequent opportunities to present new repertoire and receive valuable feedback from both your peers and your instructor.

## Visual Arts

### *2D Art*

### Studio Art I
*Formerly titled **Introduction to 2D Techniques***
FALL SEMESTER or SPRING SEMESTER

Studio Art I is an introduction to a variety of studio media. The course covers the foundations of observational drawing, color theory and composition. Units are broken down by processes such as drawing (pencil, charcoal, pastels, ink), painting (watercolor, acrylic), and printmaking (linocuts). All students must participate in peer critiques and participate in the final art show at the end of the semester.

### Studio Art II
FALL SEMESTER or SPRING SEMESTER

Each successive semester offers the student the opportunity to work in an increasingly independent fashion and in more advanced techniques. Students have the choice of working with the full range of available 2-D studio media with varying technical instruction in painting, drawing, printmaking, mixed-media, digital, and other art media. All students must participate in peer critiques and participate in the final art show at the end of the semester.
*Prerequisite: Successful completion of Studio Art I or 2D Techniques Introduction or teacher recommendation.*

### Studio Art IV: Art for Exhibition
FALL SEMESTER

Students will have the opportunity to create a cohesive body of work centered around a common theme. The first half of the course will be brainstorming ideas, conceptualizing an exhibition, and creating a body of work in any medium (5-7 pieces). A portion of the class theory and vocal technique allowing them to reach new heights as vocal performers. Music theory skills include: sight reading, aural skills—interval memory—score analysis, and basic piano technique. Vocal technique skills include: efficient use of breath, postural coordination, pitch matching, distinct vocal tone—head voice, mix, belt—and navigating passaggio. Putting it all together, we will perform repertoire that is meaningful to the students bringing a strong message of inspiration and hope for our audiences. Daily practice, memorization, and live performance are all requirements of this course.

### Inspired by Nature
SPRING SEMESTER

Inspired by Nature is an experimental 2D class with multimedia projects included. Processes include, but are not limited to printmaking, drawing, paper making, creating and working with natural dyes and materials such as willow. The class will utilize the natural resources from FVS's prairie. Students will learn through investigation, experimentation and observation. FVS's natural surroundings will become a second classroom and the main focus of inspiration.

### Studio Art III
FALL SEMESTER or SPRING SEMESTER

The Studio 3 art course is designed for students seriously interested in continuing in studio art. Students work more independently and explore more advanced techniques while also focusing on idea generation. Students have the choice of working with the full range of available 2-D studio media with varying technical instruction in painting, drawing, printmaking, mixed-media, digital and other art media. All students participate in peer critiques and participate in the final art show at the end of the semester.
*Prerequisite: Successful completion of Studio Art II or teacher recommendation.*

will be learning about gallery work, curating artwork, and actually installing the exhibit. Students will get to experience freelance art making as well real life museum work experience. Students will visit Colorado College Fine Arts Center, University of Colorado, Colorado Springs Ent Center for the Arts, and other local galleries as part of their experience learning about galleries and how they function. Assessment will be an end-of-semester exhibit fully executed by students.
*Prerequisite: Successful completion of Studio Art III or teacher recommendation.*

## *3D Art*

### Pottery
FALL SEMESTER

Pottery I will cover beginning and intermediate techniques in wheel throwing. Students will learn to create functional ware while working on the potter's wheel. Pottery one students start by learning to throw basic cylinders and then expand from there. Additional Pottery I projects include bowls, pitchers, vases, plates and basic glazing techniques.

### Sculpture
SPRING SEMESTER

Sculpture explores the endless possibilities of working with and creating three-dimensional work. Students learn the basic language and techniques associated with sculpture to create work that addresses scale, context, figurative, and material language. Mixed media, found objects, metal, wood, plaster, and clay are some of the materials the class works with. Clay modeling, welding, assemblage, installation, public / outdoor sculpture are some of the techniques and themes that may be covered in the class with individual and group projects. The elements of art and principles of design are used to help students gain a better understanding of design concepts and to help them self critique.

### Metalsmithing I
FALL SEMESTER or SPRING SEMESTER

Metalsmithing I is available to beginning students who wish to explore a variety of traditional and contemporary forming and finishing techniques associated with jewelry design and metal fabrication. Using silver, copper, nickel silver, and brass as the primary materials, students learn soldering, overlay, enameling, casting, stone setting, and cold fabrication techniques that are used in the design of original works of art.

### Metalsmithing II
FALL SEMESTER or SPRING SEMESTER

Metalsmithing II is available to those students who have completed Metalsmithing I and desire a more intensive and independent opportunity to explore jewelry design and metal fabrication. Students are introduced to hinge-making, forging, lapidary, etching, casting, hollow construction, and sculptural construction. Metals III students continue to develop the skills needed to pursue a wide-range of metal forming and finishing techniques, but the primary area of focus will be on the development of a body of work that explores a particular area of interest and concept.
*Prerequisite: Successful completion of Metalsmithing I.*

## *Photography & Videography*

### Alternative Photography
FALL SEMESTER

Students in Alternative Photography will be guided through a collection of non-normative photographic practices. Pinhole camera production and use,

### Darkroom Photography
FALL SEMESTER or SPRING SEMESTER

This course serves as an introduction to photography with the primary emphasis placed on the effective use of film cameras and darkroom techniques. Students learn to use film cameras, develop film, and print images in the

cyanotypes, multiple exposure photography, and Digital Manipulation are just a few of the many methods we will explore, challenging them to consider what the true nature of photography really is. Get back to the roots of photography where science meets magic in this exciting exploration of processes.

### Digital Photography
FALL SEMESTER or SPRING SEMESTER

This course serves as an introduction to digital photography with the primary emphasis placed on the effective use of digital cameras and learning appropriate digital darkroom techniques. Some of the photographic concepts that are explored include color theory, flash vs. natural light, and documentary photography. Emphasis is placed on the expressive and creative qualities of digital photography as an art form.

### Video Introduction
FALL SEMESTER

Introduction to Video is a course designed to give students a survey of the range of different applications of the moving image as well as production techniques. Throughout the term, students will work with cell phones and camcorders to produce projects ranging from advertisements and music videos to documentary and art film. They will also be introduced to editing techniques using Adobe's Premiere Pro. The culmination of the course will be a self-defined project utilizing the concepts and techniques studied throughout the term.

darkroom. Some of the photographic concepts that are explored include depth of field, composition, and portraits. Emphasis is placed on the expressive and creative qualities of photography as a communicative art form.

### Photography Workshop
SPRING SEMESTER

Photography Workshop builds off of the conceptual work students begin exploring in the darkroom and digital photography courses. Each student will be challenged to complete an exploratory photographic experiment in a higher level process of their choosing, giving them an opportunity to delve into uncharted territory. The culmination of the course is a 10-15 image series built off of a conversation of the student's choosing. The course allows students a window into the working process of a fine art photographer, and is an excellent opportunity for building college level portfolio work.
*Prerequisite: Darkroom Photography or Alternative Process and Digital Photography.*

### Narrative Filmmaking
SPRING SEMESTER

Narrative Filmmaking is a course designed to give students a crash course in the process of visual storytelling through film. Each student will build their filmic toolkit through a variety of production driven assignments including a chase scene, a western inspired standoff, and an interrogation. Students will also learn to edit their own video using Adobe's Premiere Pro. The culmination of the course will be a collaboratively produced short film, and each student will be challenged to edit their own final cut. Come make a movie.
*Prerequisite: Successful completion of Introduction to Video.*

## Courses Not Offered in 2025-2026

### Art in The American West
SPRING SEMESTER

Art in The American West is an art history survey for First Year Students on how art has not only been practiced in the American West, but how The West has been portrayed and romanticized throughout history. Students will explore indigenous styles and practices, how dominant cultures have explored and portrayed the peoples and landscape, as well as how the narratives of western expansion have played a role in painting a picture of what the west is and has become.

### Multi-Medium Introduction
SPRING SEMESTER

In this class, students will explore a variety of mediums, techniques and concepts ranging from printing methods, fiber work, installations, use of found objects, light and paint. Students will examine the various techniques unique to a particular media while also exploring the opportunities to play with and produce mixed-medium artworks that play with ideas of form and content.

# History and Social Science Department

Fountain Valley School treats history in the broadest possible sense as the study of all aspects of peoples through the past, both distant and recent. The program aims to instill in students an understanding of the rich variety of the human experience regionally, nationally, and internationally. The department is committed to historical accuracy, which recognizes the importance of the variety of experiences and perspectives that exist in human history and that the present is the result of historical processes and events.

The history program is committed to an extensive and varied writing experience. Historical writing takes many forms, from argumentative and analytical to expository and creative. Assessment is not limited to formal essays, but also includes project- and problem-based units, collaboration and reflection, classroom engagement and dialogue, and other formats that capture students' imaginations, challenge simplified historical narratives, and breathe life into the past. Through all classes, historical and critical thinking skills are emphasized, alongside skeptical analysis of primary and secondary sources, journalism, and multimedia.

## Grade 9

### The American West
FALL SEMESTER AND SPRING SEMESTER

This course embarks on a thematic study of the history and development of the American West through varied lenses and perspectives - from the impact of westward expansion on Indigenous peoples to examining the federal laws that still shape the West today. Through the emphasis on academic skills and historical thinking, students will deepen their "sense of place" at Fountain Valley, uniquely located where the prairie meets the mountains. Throughout the year, students develop and hone their critical thinking, research and writing skills, as they collaborate with their peers during class discussions and activities. This class will culminate with a student-directed investigative and multifaceted project in May.

## Grade 10

### Modern World History
FALL SEMESTER AND SPRING SEMESTER

Modern World History focuses on the cultural, technological, social and political growth of human civilizations from their rise in ancient river valleys through events in the twentieth century. The objective of this class is to help students understand how the peoples, cultures, religions, political systems, regional interactions and trade networks in the world came to be. Students are asked to evaluate historical materials, weigh evidence, and develop critical thinking skills. Throughout, students are encouraged to ask probing questions and make connections to the modern world. How are situations and regions today reflections of the past? Students use a wide range of both primary and secondary sources in their studies from multimedia

### Advanced Modern World History
FALL SEMESTER AND SPRING SEMESTER

Advanced World History is designed to help students develop a greater understanding of the evolution of global processes and the interactions between people in different types of human societies. Students gain understanding of world history through learning knowledge and using analytical skills to examine varying types of historical evidence from multiple perspectives. Focusing on the past 1,000 years of global experience, the course builds on an understanding of cultural, institutional, and technological precedents that serve as the foundation of the modern world. Continuities and changes over time and place, comparisons of societies and situations, and document-based evaluations of issues are all heavily emphasized. Students are expected

and journal articles to first-hand accounts and period artwork. In addition to traditional tests and quizzes, presentations, debate, writing and discussion are all emphasized methods of assessment.

to fully participate in class dialogues, complete collaborative projects, and create multimedia presentations in addition to critical writing and content assessments.
*Prerequisites: Demonstration of mastery in previous history course and teacher recommendation.*

## Grade 11

### United States History
FALL SEMESTER AND SPRING SEMESTER

This course integrates interdisciplinary study with a thematic approach to the history of the United States from pre-contact Indigenous societies to the present day. Students examine how history and culture reflect the evolution of America as it wrestles with its identity, race relations, religious and ethnic diversity, gender studies, the successes and failures of democratic capitalism, fights for civil rights and the rise of the U.S. as a world superpower. With an interpretive and analytical perspective, the class explores primary and secondary sources and multimedia, conducts research, and reads, writes, debates and produces a wide range of materials related to important and topical issues that characterize American history from a variety of perspectives.

### Advanced United States History
FALL SEMESTER AND SPRING SEMESTER

Taking a chronological survey approach, Advanced United States History surveys American history from the time of the first significant European contact with Indigenous Peoples to the present. Students read a demanding college-level text, write interpretive essays, work with primary documents and work to produce an independent research paper on a topic of their choice. Students will cultivate their understanding of U.S. history through analyzing historical sources and learning to make connections and craft historical arguments. Students will explore the concepts of American identity, politics and power, America's relations with the world, and changing social structures.
*Prerequisites: Demonstration of mastery in previous history course and teacher recommendation.*

## Grades 11 and 12

### Advanced, Honors, and Elective Courses

### Advanced Microeconomics
FALL SEMESTER

This course will introduce students to the fundamental concepts of microeconomics, the history of economic thought underlying those concepts, and their application to current issues as they apply to individual decision-makers such as households and firms. Topics covered will include supply and demand, market structures, and behavioral economics. Students will also explore current events and recent research in economics and will apply their knowledge in a series of debates and response papers throughout the term.
*Prerequisite: Teacher recommendation.*

### From Malthus to 8 Billion— A Global Demographic History
FALL SEMESTER

This course aims to provide students with a deeper understanding of the forces shaping our world and the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead in the face of a growing global population. This course will explore the fascinating and complex history of global population growth. We will examine the work of Thomas Malthus, who in the late 18th century predicted dire consequences from unchecked population growth. We will then analyze the trajectory of the global population over the centuries,

### Advanced Comparative Government
SPRING SEMESTER

Reading today's headlines can often be confusing—How are Xi Jinping and Vladimir Putin still in power? Why were there so many British prime ministers? What even is a prime minister? This class will help students examine these questions, and many more, as they learn about the structures of democratic and authoritarian governments around the world. Throughout the course, students will utilize case studies of the United Kingdom, Nigeria, Iran, Russia, China, and Mexico to further understand how different countries function and what makes them unique. Ultimately, the course will ask, and answer, the question of whether authoritarianism is on the rise, studying current events to assist in their evaluations.

### Advanced Macroeconomics
SPRING SEMESTER

This course will introduce students to the fundamental concepts of macroeconomics, the history of economic thought underlying those concepts, and their application to current issues. Topics covered will include economic growth, fiscal and monetary policies, and international trade. Students will also explore current events and recent research in economics and will undertake their own economic research throughout the term.
*Prerequisite: Teacher recommendation.*

analyzing key theories, factors, and paradigms that have influenced its dramatic rise to today's 8+ billion total. Students will engage in field trips with the Global Affairs Council, Colorado College lectures (partner with Global Scholar Diploma candidates), Population Reference Bureau webinars and podcasts.
*Prerequisite: Successful completion of U.S. History.*

**Graphic Narratives and Historical Memory—Analyzing Comic Books as Cultural and Political Discourse**
FALL SEMESTER

In this course, students will be able to answer and analyze questions regarding the use of comic books as a depiction of history and current events. Students will start with gaining an understanding of the foundation of comic books: their origins, what makes a superhero, and what makes a supervillain. By reading and discussing examples like Captain America, Green Lantern, Black Panther, and many more students will analyze the stories of characters as they run parallel with human history across three major categories: propaganda, resistance, and modern storytelling. Skill development in this course will include historical analysis in writing, public speaking, and discourse. By the end of the course, students will write an analytical essay on a comic book topic of students choice, engage in debates, give a formal speech, and tell their own family histories in the form of a comic book.
*Prerequisite: Successful completion of U.S. History.*

**Honors Freedom & Authority**
FALL SEMESTER

Through careful reading of both classic and modern philosophical texts and explorations of the human condition from around the world and a variety of perspectives, this course will focus on the tension between individual freedom and authority of the state. Through reading assignments, analytical essays and rigorous Socratic seminars, students will examine the concepts of justice, private property, legitimate political power, human nature and political structures. Major theories will be placed in historical and cultural context. This course places heavy emphasis on engaged class participation and requires students to complete challenging close readings of primary and secondary sources and to lead a forty-minute seminar on a reading of their choosing.
*Prerequisite: Teacher recommendation.*

**Ancient Worlds, New Understandings—Rethinking Human History**
SPRING SEMESTER

This course delves into ancient human history and the building blocks of civilizations, examining cutting-edge research and recent discoveries that are revolutionizing our understanding of the past. Students will analyze the trajectory of human development from early settlements to the rise of complex societies, including global migration patterns. This course will investigate ancient mysteries, explore controversies surrounding archaeological findings and artifacts, and trace the development of key innovations such as writing systems, currency, technology, and infrastructure. The course culminates in a hands-on learning experience: a camping trip to Mesa Verde National Park and the Crow Canyon Archaeological Center in southwestern Colorado, where students will engage with the study of pre-contact cultures and archaeological methods.

## Courses Not Offered in 2025-2026

### Decision 2024

FALL SEMESTER, U.S. PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION YEARS

This 11th and 12th grade course will immerse students in the essential elements of electoral politics leading into the 2024 presidential election. In addition to diving into the hot topics most on voters' minds (nationally and regionally), students will examine the factors leading to America's current hyperpartisanship and the outsized role of media and money. Students will not only examine the 2024 election; students will dive into the historic role of presidential elections and politics in American culture through film studies, the production and critique of political advertising, and the creation of original student editorials, speeches, and multimedia artwork reflective of the 2024 election.

### Honors History of the Modern Middle East

FALL SEMESTER

This course examines the emergence of the Modern Middle East from the Ottoman Era to the present. We will begin by examining nineteenth century institutions and considering Middle Eastern political innovations during the late 19th century, especially those rooted in the emergence of nationalism and transforming expectations for the relationship between governments and the people. By focusing upon these two transformations and tracing them through the twentieth century, this course will examine the impact of colonization, World War I, Palestinian and Israeli nationalism, secular ideologies such as Arab nationalism and socialism, Nasserism, Islamism, and political revolutions in the region. Students will explore a wide array of source material including articles, literature, film, music, and digital archives.
*Prerequisite: Teacher recommendation.*

### Advanced United States Government and Politics

SPRING SEMESTER

Because this is a fall elective and the AP exam is in May, students will need to complete work independently and outside of class to be successful on the AP exam.
This advanced-level semester course provides students with the knowledge of government and politics necessary to participate meaningfully in discussion, analysis, and exploration of the contemporary American political climate. Polarization, money, recent presidential elections and the pendulum swings in Congress and the Supreme Court provide plenty of drama for students to engage with! Acting like political scientists, students will employ healthy skepticism and inquiry by framing their studies around enduring values and big questions about American government and politics, such as, 'what is freedom?' 'Is the Constitution still relevant in today's world?' And, 'how does the government really work, and for whom and what interests?' Media studies and current events will play a central role in this course; students are expected to keep up with political developments and major news stories and be ready to engage with such material daily.
*Prerequisite: Teacher recommendation. Students have the option of taking the corresponding AP exam in May.*

### Sports and Society

SPRING SEMESTER

This course explores and examines how sport at all levels both reflects and resists societal structures and pressures. We will explore the intersection of sport with race, gender, class, and national identity and examine the role of politics, economics, and media in shaping sport. We will be considering the experiences of both those who play sport and those who consume it. Students will interact with a variety of sources and methods including documentaries, media and journalism studies, oral history, and traditional research. Topics studied include the Negro Leagues, 1968 Olympics, Title IX and the links between sports and the military. While the focus of the course is on the role of sport in the United States from the late 19th century to the present, we will spend some time considering the impact of sport globally as well.

# Mathematics Department

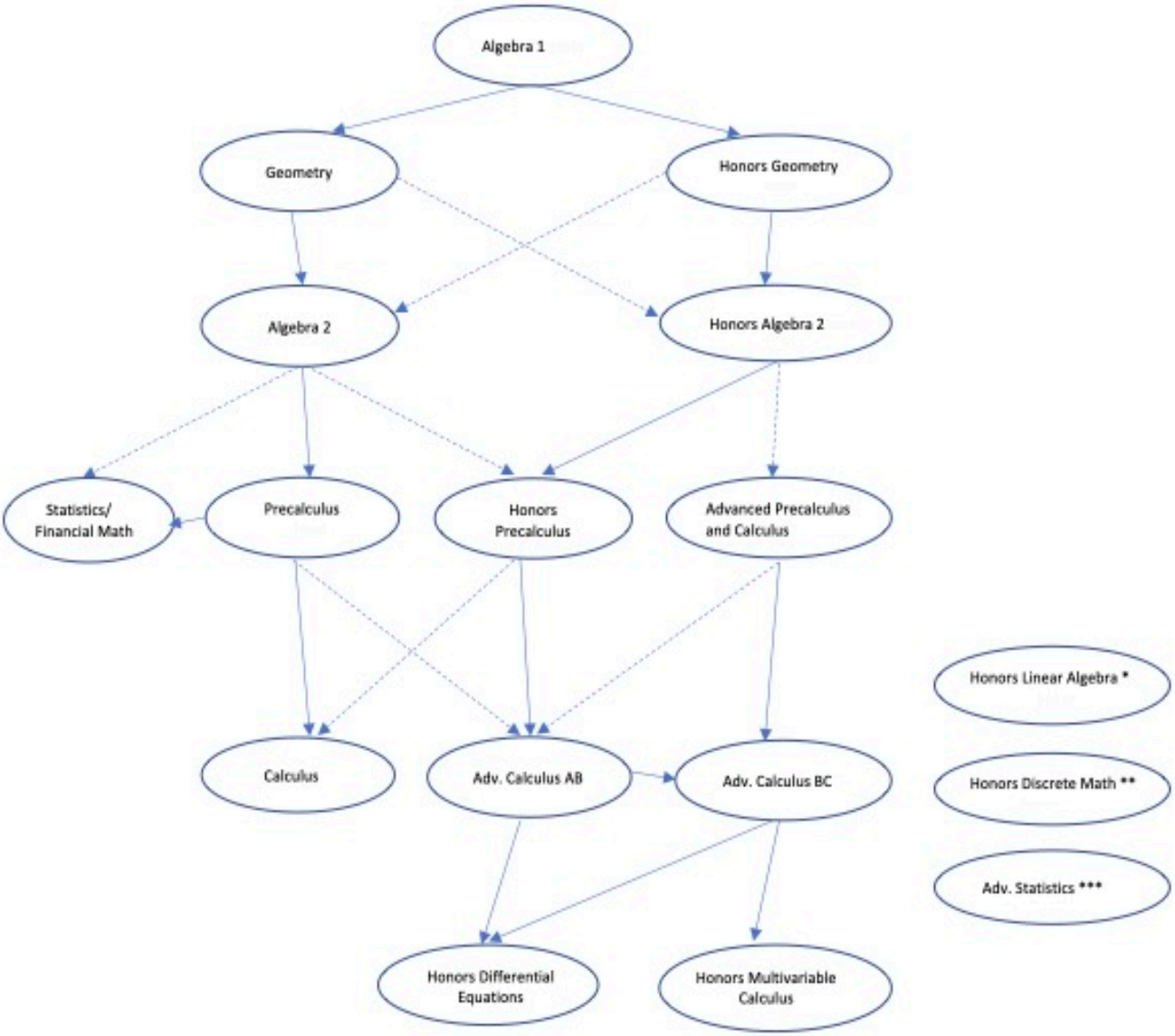
Math is at the foundation of our everyday lives. It is an important tool in understanding and addressing the issues of our day and provides the language and the tools used throughout the sciences and humanities. Math is crucial to fields such as physics, chemistry, computer science, medicine, economics, business, statistics, architecture, engineering, and environmental science, to name just a few.

The goal of the Fountain Valley School Mathematics department is to develop mathematically literate students—strong analytical thinkers who can apply their critical thinking skills to the complex challenges facing our world. We train our students to use logical reasoning to solve problems and find solutions. Our courses develop better problem-solving, mathematical modeling, data analysis, quantitative and spatial reasoning, and critical thinking.

The development of mathematical skills and the understanding of the mathematical concepts, and how they relate to real-life situations, are key components in our math curriculum. The math program at Fountain Valley School is designed for a variety of student interests and aptitudes. Our courses range from algebra, general statistics, and financial math to college level classes such as BC Calculus and Advanced Statistics, as well as advanced courses such as Differential Equations and Multivariable Calculus.

Honors and Advanced courses are available for students who seek the strongest possible preparation in mathematics—these classes consist of students who have been recommended by department members based on their demonstrated ability and interest in mathematics. Students in these courses are expected to maintain a B- or higher average grade. Students with averages below this may be moved to the non-Honors / Advanced section. A grade of an A and the support of the teacher will be expected for any student who wishes to move from a non-Honors section to an Honors or Advanced section. Any student earning a D grade may need to complete summer math work to advance to the next level.

In the following chart, the typical flow for a student in mathematics is represented with a solid arrow (the dashed arrows represent the exceptions).




A solid line indicates a typical trajectory, a dotted line indicates a less frequent trajectory.

* Honors Linear Algebra may be taken any time after Honors Precalculus. It requires a teacher recommendation.

** Honors Discrete math may be taken any time after Advanced Precalculus and Calculus, or Calculus AB. It requires a teacher recommendation.

*** Advanced Statistics requires strong English writing skills. It can be taken any time after regular Algebra II. It requires a teacher recommendation.

## Algebra I
FALL SEMESTER AND SPRING SEMESTER

The nature of real numbers is explored through the study of postulates, the solving of equations and inequalities, an extensive study of lines and systems of equations, and then a progression to exponents, radicals, and finally factoring. If you have not yet completed Algebra I before arriving at FVS or have just taken a pre-algebra class, this mathematics course is designed for your level.

## Geometry
FALL SEMESTER AND SPRING SEMESTER

The visual and practical nature of geometry enables students to develop the tools of logic. These skills will then be used in the more abstract study of analytical geometry and beyond. Students taking this course study points, lines and planes, and they discover relationships between geometric shapes, such as congruence and similarity. Additionally, proofs are used to establish properties of different types of quadrilaterals.

## Honors Geometry
FALL SEMESTER AND SPRING SEMESTER

The visual and practical nature of geometry enables students to develop the tools of logic. These skills will then be used in the more abstract study of analytical geometry and beyond. Students taking this course study points, lines and planes, and they discover relationships between geometric shapes, such as congruence and similarity. Additionally, proofs are used to establish properties of different types of quadrilaterals. This honors class will cover additional topics with more depth and at a faster pace than the traditional Geometry class.
*Prerequisite: Demonstration of mastery in previous math course and teacher recommendation.*

## Algebra II
FALL SEMESTER AND SPRING SEMESTER

A solid understanding of algebra is key for success in future math courses. This class will build upon the algebra that students have already learned with the goal of delving deeper into many algebraic concepts. Topics covered include solving equations, transformations of graphs, lines, systems of equations, exponents, factoring, and an extensive study of quadratics.
*Prerequisite: Successful completion of Algebra I.*

## Honors Algebra II
FALL SEMESTER AND SPRING SEMESTER

A solid understanding of algebra is key for success in future math courses. This class will build upon the algebra that students have already learned with the goal of delving deeper into many algebraic concepts. Topics covered include solving equations, transformations of graphs, lines, systems of equations, probability, logarithms, exponents, factoring, and an extensive study of quadratics. This Honors class will cover additional topics with more depth and at a faster pace than the traditional Algebra II class.
*Prerequisite: Demonstration of mastery in previous math course and teacher recommendation. Some students may need to take an algebra placement test.*

## Precalculus
FALL SEMESTER AND SPRING SEMESTER

This class is designed to give students a greater understanding of topics that are important prerequisites for college math classes. Topics covered include transformations, logarithms, statistics, regression curves, sequences, sequences and series, rational functions, trigonometry, and sinusoids. An emphasis will be placed on the use of these skills and their practical applications.
*Prerequisite: Successful completion of Algebra II.*

## Honors Precalculus
FALL SEMESTER AND SPRING SEMESTER

Numerous topics that the students have been exposed to are covered in more depth to prepare the students for the study of higher-level mathematics. Review topics include the shapes and transformations of graphs, polynomials, and exponential and logarithmic functions. An extensive study of trigonometry with its applications is included as well as an introduction to probability, statistics, matrices, sequences, series, vectors, and conic sections.
*Prerequisites: Demonstration of mastery in previous math course and teacher recommendation.*

## Calculus
FALL SEMESTER AND SPRING SEMESTER

This class provides an introduction to the three big ideas in first year calculus, limits, derivatives and integrals. The format of the class allows for exposure to these topics with connections to real life applications and without a focus on AP exam preparation.
*Prerequisite: Demonstration of understanding of precalculus topics.*

## Advanced Precalculus and Calculus
FALL SEMESTER AND SPRING SEMESTER

Honors Precalculus is designed for the strong math student while Advanced Precalculus and Calculus is designed for the exceptional math student. Numerous topics that the students have been exposed to are covered in more depth to prepare the students for the study of higher-level mathematics. Review topics include the shapes and transformations of graphs, polynomials, rational, exponential and logarithmic functions. An extensive study of trigonometry with its applications is included as well as study of limits and the derivative. This class moves at a much faster pace than the honors precalculus course. It includes precalculus topics in the fall and calculus in the spring, in order for students to be eligible to enroll in Advanced Calculus BC the following year. Because this course covers two years worth of material in one year, it is very fast paced, and summer work is required.
*Prerequisite: Demonstration of mastery in previous math course and teacher recommendation.*

## Advanced Calculus AB
FALL SEMESTER AND SPRING SEMESTER

This class explores differential and integral calculus. The theory behind the derivative and the integral, as well as applications of each, is covered in depth. This AP level class is designed so that a student will be prepared to take the AP Calculus AB exam.
*Prerequisites: Demonstration of mastery in previous math course and teacher recommendation.*

## Advanced Calculus BC
FALL SEMESTER AND SPRING SEMESTER

This class will have a summer assignment and will begin with a very quick review of the calculus topics covered in Honors Precalculus. The new topics that will be covered include more involved techniques of integration, differential equations, infinite series, and calculus for polar and parametric curves. This AP level class is designed so that a student will be prepared to take the AP Calculus BC exam.
*Prerequisites: Demonstration of mastery in previous math course and teacher recommendation.*

## Advanced Statistics
FALL SEMESTER AND SPRING SEMESTER

Statistics is the art and science of collecting, organizing, analyzing, and drawing conclusions from data. In Advanced Statistics, the focus will be on four major themes: exploratory data analysis, designing studies, probability models and simulation, and statistical inference. Advanced Statistics is designed to be at least as comprehensive as any one-semester, college introductory statistics course. This advanced level class is designed so that a student who completes additional work outside of class will be prepared to take the AP Statistics exam.
*Prerequisites: Demonstration of mastery in previous math course, teacher recommendation, and strong English writing skills.*

## Elective Courses

### Statistics
FALL SEMESTER

This course presents statistics as a key tool for understanding the world through data. The three major themes of the course are: 1) analyzing data, 2) understanding chance behavior (probability), and 3) drawing conclusions and making predictions from data. The course emphasizes conceptual understanding, clear communication and critical thinking over calculations and algorithms. The statistical concepts and techniques students acquire will prove invaluable in higher-level studies in the natural sciences, social sciences, health sciences and business. It will also serve as a preparation for college level statistics. Overall, the study of statistics will help students to become a more effective consumer of information.
*Prerequisite: Successful completion of Algebra II.*

### Financial Math
SPRING SEMESTER

Math skills are necessary in many life situations. This course provides practical knowledge and skills in managing personal finances. Students will learn about financial topics such as budgeting, student loans, credit cards, car payments, mortgages, taxes, retirement planning, and the stock market. By the end of this course, students will be equipped to make informed financial decisions.

### Honors Differential Equations
FALL SEMESTER, EVEN GRADUATION YEARS

Differential Equations is a branch of mathematics that studies how a function is related to its derivative. This class will explore the theory of differential equations along with methods of analytical solution and numerical analysis, and uses coding in Python to graph slope fields, families of solutions, and employ methods of numerical approximation. Having a computer capable of installing Anaconda and running Jupyter Notebooks in the browser is required.
*Prerequisites: Demonstration of mastery in AB Calculus and teacher recommendation.*
*Coding prerequisites: Highly recommended: Python 2 or familiarity with coding and successful completion of a summer Intro to Python course.*

### Honors Multivariable Calculus
SPRING SEMESTER, EVEN GRADUATION YEARS

Multivariable Calculus extends the calculus of a single variable to calculus of several variables. This class will explore three dimensional space, vectors in three dimensions, vector-valued functions, partial derivatives, and multiple integrals.
*Prerequisites: Demonstration of mastery in BC Calculus and teacher recommendation.*

## Courses Not Offered in 2025-2026

### Linear Algebra for Data Science
FALL SEMESTER, ODD GRADUATION YEARS
Linear Algebra is a study of systems of linear equations. Students will learn to represent data as vectors and matrices, and identify their properties using concepts of singularity, rank, and linear independence. Students will be able to express matrix operations as linear transformations, perform common vector and matrix algebra operations like dot product, inverse, and determinants, and apply concepts of eigenvalues and eigenvectors to machine learning problems. While primarily a math class, students will also learn to represent and manipulate matrices using the numeric library for Python, Numpy. *Math Prerequisites: Honors Algebra II and teacher recommendation.*
*Coding prerequisites: Highly recommended: Python 2 or familiarity with coding and successful completion of a summer Intro to Python course.*

### Honors Discrete Mathematics
SPRING SEMESTER, ODD GRADUATION YEARS

This class deals with inner product spaces, set theory, number theory, mathematical modeling, and mathematical induction.
*Prerequisite: Advanced Precalculus and Calculus, and teacher recommendation.*

# Computer Science

**Comp Sci: Python 203**
FALL SEMESTER, EVEN GRADUATION YEARS

This course continues the in-depth journey with coding in Python from CS202. During the course, students will master fundamental coding concepts such as file systems, information storage and retrieval, and error handling. Students will also gain proficiency with advanced topics including user-defined modules, data as values, data as references, and graphical user interfaces. In addition, students will learn the product development cycle of user testing, iteration, and automated testing that is ubiquitous in the software industry. Throughout the course, students will continuously demonstrate their knowledge through both traditional assessments and real-world coding projects.
*Prerequisite: Successful completion of CS 202 Python or instructor approval.*
*Course Credit: This course does not satisfy a mathematics or science credit.*

**Comp Sci: Python 204**
SPRING SEMESTER, EVEN GRADUATION YEARS

This course continues the in-depth journey with coding in Python from CS203. Students will explore topics in data science and artificial intelligence. Throughout the course, students will continuously demonstrate their knowledge through both traditional assessments and real-world coding projects. Students will complete an Internet of Things (IOT) project by programming a Raspberry Pi microcontroller to interact with the world around it by recording and displaying data. Students purchase their own Raspberry Pi and sensor kit and take their project with them.
*Additional lab purchase: Raspberry Pi kit.*
*Prerequisite: Successful completion of CS 203 Python.*
*Course Credit: This course does not satisfy a mathematics or science credit.*

## Courses Not Offered 2025-2026

**Comp Sci: Python 201**
FALL SEMESTER, ODD GRADUATION YEARS

This course provides an introduction to coding in Python. Students master basic coding concepts common to all programming languages, such as statements, conditionals, and loops, and are additionally introduced to: libraries, sprite-based graphics, and complex input. Students develop coding-related skills such as decomposition of large programs, debugging, and analyzing code written by others. Students will be able to create games, animations, and other interactive programs in Python upon completion of the course.
*Credit notice: This course does not satisfy a mathematics or science credit.*

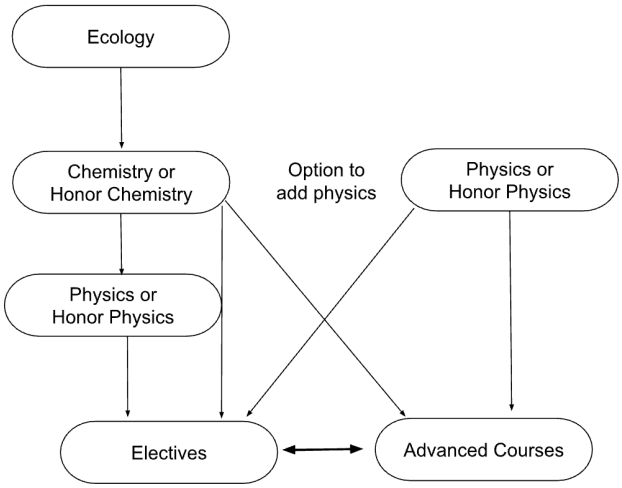
**Comp Sci: Python 202**
SPRING SEMESTER, ODD GRADUATION YEARS

This course continues the in-depth introduction to coding in Python from CS201. Students master basic coding concepts common to all programming languages, such as statements, conditionals, and loops, and are additionally introduced to libraries, sprite-based graphics, and complex input. Students develop coding-related skills such as decomposition of large programs, debugging, and analyzing code written by others. Students will be able to create games, animations, and other interactive programs in Python upon completion of the course. After completing this course, students will be prepared to test for PCEP – Certified Entry-Level Python Programmer certification.
*Prerequisite: Successful completion of CS Python 201.*
*Credit Notice: This course does not satisfy a mathematics or science credit.*

# Science Department

Revolutionary advances in science and technology are making their marks on society in a myriad of ways, from genetic engineering to advancements in sustainable energy sources. The science department's goal is to develop scientifically literate students who can understand the basis for and the societal implications of scientific applications. Through a carefully designed network of academically challenging courses, the program strives to strengthen students' understanding of the workings of their own bodies, the intricacies of the physical and biological world, the universe around them, and their place as stewards within it. Our program encourages open-ended problem solving through the development of a mental toolbox of knowledge and skills that enable students to put scientific information to practical use. In this way, students see themselves as an active part of the scientific inquiry process.

Our setting along Colorado's Front Range provides spectacular opportunities for teaching and learning science. Whether it is getting outside on our 1,100-acre natural classroom, the breathtaking geology of the area, interacting with the national Space Symposium, visiting local horticultural businesses, or the many biotechnology and premier biomedical research institutes in our vicinity, the science department faculty take full advantage of the ability to expose our students to cutting edge 21st century science. Through core and elective course offerings, students may explore the diverse ecosystems and geology of Colorado, environmental issues specific to the West and their global implications, principles of robotics and engineering, and how science and medicine converge while developing individual and collaborative problem-solving skills. By taking ecology in their 9th grade year, students are exposed to and inspired by a wide breadth of scientific ideas, many seen first-hand on our prairie, and thinking that becomes more quantified as they move into chemistry and / or physics in their 10th grade year. Forming these scientific foundations in their first two years gives students the opportunity to take advanced level and / or science elective courses in their 11th and 12th grade years that allow them to explore their personal interests in a more in-depth fashion. FVS students will graduate from the science program having built a strong scientific foundation and had the opportunity to explore their own interests and curiosities while gaining the confidence and skills to think and apply their scientific knowledge toward society's present and future challenges.



## Ecology
FALL SEMESTER AND SPRING SEMESTER

Ecology is the study of how living things interact with each other and their environment. This includes living things (biotic factors) and non-living things (abiotic factors). In order to understand the environmental factors influencing ecosystems in the west, ninth grade students will utilize our 1,100-acre campus affectionately known as “the prairie” to conduct long and short-term field experiments. This course will highlight local issues related to Colorado’s unique struggles due to the climate crisis such as water use and scarcity, habitat fragmentation, overpopulation, and soil loss through industrial agriculture. In addition to gaining relevant content knowledge, the goal is to develop the skills essential for success in future FVS science courses as well as those in college. These (skills) include a solid understanding of experimental design, data collection and analysis, graph development and interpretation, and synthesizing content to create viable and testable hypotheses for future research. Students will understand what it means to be a steward of our environment and the importance of doing so in the face of the climate crisis we are experiencing.

## Chemistry
FALL SEMESTER AND SPRING SEMESTER

Chemistry is the study of matter and energy and the interactions between them. This course covers not only the basic curriculum of chemistry, such as atomic structure, the periodic table, nomenclature, stoichiometry, chemical reactions, and gasses. The course uses lab experiments and project-based activities to connect the concepts learned with real world situations. This course is more qualitative than Honors Chemistry and does not go in as much depth to the mathematical problem solving skills. This course will prepare students for electives in the science department, but not necessarily the Advanced Science courses (see Honors Chemistry).

## Conceptual Physics
FALL SEMESTER AND SPRING SEMESTER

Conceptual Physics introduces students to the fundamental concepts in physics such as forces, ideas of motion, momentum, energy, rotational motion, waves, optics, electricity, and magnetism. (Actual topics covered will depend on student interest and instructor preference.) Students improve their data interpretation and problem solving skills through hands-on activities, labs, and real world applications. This is an Algebra 1 based class and will be more conceptual than the Honors Physics course. This course will use exams, lab reports, problem sets, projects, and field trips to assess student learning. Note: Honors physics may be taken after the completion of this course if a student is interested in continuing with physics.
*Prerequisite: Successful completion of Algebra I.*

## Honors Chemistry
FALL SEMESTER AND SPRING SEMESTER

Chemistry is the study of matter and energy and the interactions between them. This course covers not only the basic curriculum of chemistry, such as atomic structure, the periodic table, nomenclature, stoichiometry, chemical reactions, and gasses, but also allows for increased depth on each unit, more challenging laboratory exercises, and the application of what we learn. Moreover, this course is specifically designed to properly prepare students for the higher standards and increased content of all advanced science courses and is a prerequisite for Advanced Chemistry.
*Prerequisites: Demonstration of mastery in previous science course and teacher recommendation. Some students may need to take an algebra placement test.*

## Honors Physics
FALL SEMESTER AND SPRING SEMESTER

Physics is one of the cornerstones of scientific study and the foundation of engineering disciplines.This laboratory and algebra based course focuses on mechanics with two-dimensional motion and vectors being covered extensively. This course utilizes graphical analysis and mathematical equations along with hands-on labs, projects, and activities with consistent practice in problem solving. Honors Physics is structured to be a foundational class for Advanced Physics. This course is open to sophomores, juniors, and seniors. This course will use exams, lab reports, problem sets, projects, and field trips to assess student learning. Note: This course can serve (but is not required) as a foundation for later

## Advanced Biology

FALL SEMESTER AND SPRING SEMESTER

This course is a rigorous, college-level survey of major biological concepts including biochemistry, cell structure and function, genetics, evolution, ecology, kingdoms of organisms, and plant and animal physiology. The course is designed to meet many of the requirements of the AP curriculum as defined by the College Board, and goes beyond the standard AP curriculum in many areas, however students that wish to perform successfully on the AP Biology exam may need to cover some topics independently and do some additional work outside of class. Students should expect extensive reading, field and lab work and independent and group projects.
*Prerequisites: Demonstration of mastery in previous Ecology or Biology and Chemistry courses, and department recommendation. Advanced courses are primarily for juniors and seniors; under exceptional circumstances sophomores may be eligible and would need to appeal for consideration.*

## Advanced Environmental Science

FALL SEMESTER AND SPRING SEMESTER

This course aims to develop citizens who can make informed, knowledgeable decisions concerning environmental issues. By nature, environmental science is interdisciplinary and includes topics in ecology, population dynamics, atmospheric science, environmental quality, resource allocation, and the economic and ethical impacts of environmental issues. Hands-on activities include field investigations of local ecosystems as well as traditional labs and independent projects. In addition, we will take field trips to explore local resources. This is an advanced level, rigorous class and will cover many of the topics on the AP Environmental Science exam. However, the goal of the course is not to prepare students for the AP test and as such, additional work outside of class would be required in order to perform successfully on the AP Environmental Science exam.
*Prerequisites: Demonstration of mastery in previous Ecology or Biology and Chemistry courses, and department recommendation. Advanced courses are primarily for juniors and seniors; under exceptional circumstances sophomores may be eligible and would need to appeal for consideration.*

exploration of physics in Advanced Physics.
*Prerequisites: Concurrent enrollment in Algebra II and teacher approval.*

## Advanced Chemistry

FALL SEMESTER AND SPRING SEMESTER

Advanced Chemistry is a college level chemistry course designed to meet most of the requirements of the Advanced Placement curriculum as defined by the College Board. The course seeks to meet these curriculum requirements within a laboratory framework. Emphasis will be placed on developing experimental techniques and real world applications of chemistry. This college level course focuses on topics such as: thermochemistry, chemical equilibrium, acid-base equilibria, and kinetics. Challenging, regular laboratory exercises, requiring quantitative, rather than merely qualitative analysis, will be emphasized in this course. Students that wish to take the AP exam will need to cover Electrochemistry, Quantum Mechanics, and Bonding Theories independently.
*Prerequisites: Demonstration of mastery in previous Ecology or Biology and Chemistry courses, and department recommendation. Advanced courses are primarily for juniors and seniors; under exceptional circumstances sophomores may be eligible and would need to appeal for consideration.*

## Advanced Physics C: Mechanics

FALL SEMESTER AND SPRING SEMESTER

This course provides an intensive investigation of the main principles of mechanics and is representative of an introductory college course typically required for engineering and physical science majors. This course covers: kinematics, Newton's laws of motion, work and energy, momentum, rotation, oscillations, and gravity and orbits. The course utilizes guided inquiry and student-centered learning to foster the development of critical thinking and problem solving skills and uses introductory differential and integral calculus throughout the course.
*Prerequisites: Demonstration of mastery in previous Chemistry or Physics course, with concurrent enrollment in Advanced Calculus AB or above, and teacher recommendation. Advanced courses are primarily for juniors and seniors; under exceptional circumstances sophomores may be eligible and would need to appeal for consideration.*

## Elective Courses

### Anatomy and Physiology Introduction
FALL SEMESTER

In a world in which rising healthcare costs and increasing disease states are prevalent, understanding the details of one's own physiology is crucial. In order to make students more educated about future personal, political, and medical issues, this course explores the human body systems in depth and gives students an idea of what "normal" physiology looks like. This allows students to better understand how a divergence from this homeostatic norm can lead to disease. The tools this course will utilize include class lectures, textbooks, supplemental scientific research papers, case studies, hands-on laboratory activities, field trips, and interactions with scientists and medical professionals. Laboratory work parallels lecture topics, and includes microscopy, study of human anatomical models, dissection, and physiological experimentation.
*Prerequisites: Successful completion of Biology or Ecology and Chemistry.*

### Forensics
FALL SEMESTER or SPRING SEMESTER

Forensic Science is the application of science (chemistry, physics, and biology) to the criminal and civil laws that are enforced by police agencies in a criminal justice system. This course provides an introduction to the world of forensic science and its crucial role in criminal investigations. Students will explore key topics such as fingerprinting, fiber analysis, ballistics, trace evidence analysis, poisons, drugs, blood spatters, and blood samples. Emphasis is placed on the proper collection, preservation, and laboratory analysis of various samples. Through hands-on activities, case studies, and scientific inquiry, students will learn how forensic professionals use scientific techniques to solve crimes. The course emphasizes critical thinking, teamwork, and ethical considerations in the field of forensics. Major possible themes would include crime scene investigation, forensic biology, forensic pathology and toxicology, trace evidence, criminal profiling, and legal ethical considerations.
*Prerequisites*: Ecology/Biology and Chemistry

### Nuclear Chemistry
FALL SEMESTER, EVEN GRADUATION YEARS

Nuclear Chemistry is designed to be taken only after the successful completion of a first course in high school chemistry. Topics studied include alpha, beta, gamma radiation, fission, fusion, nuclear reactors, radioactive isotopes including radon, medical uses for radiation, and everyday exposure to radiation and how to limit this. Problem solving is an integral part of the course; students will be expected to work independently and in group laboratory situations.
*Prerequisite: Successful completion of Chemistry*

### Climate Science and You: A Sustainable World
SPRING SEMESTER

This elective course explores the science behind climate change and its far-reaching effects on ecosystems, societies, and the future of our planet. Students will investigate the mechanisms driving climate change, including greenhouse gases, feedback loops, and human activities, and examine its impacts, such as biodiversity loss, extreme weather events, sea level rise, and threats to global health. Students will consider the ethical, political, and economic dimensions of climate change, preparing them to become informed and active participants in addressing this critical global issue. This course is ideal for students passionate about environmental science or interested in understanding and shaping a sustainable future.
*Prerequisites: Successful completion of Biology or Ecology and Chemistry.*

### Exercise Physiology
SPRING SEMESTER

The purpose of this course is to increase the student's knowledge and understanding about human physiology and the adaptations that occur during exercise. Emphasis is placed on bioenergetics as well as circulatory, respiratory and neuromuscular responses to the physical stress of exercise. Also discussed are the effects of environmental factors and ergogenic aids on athletic performance. The tools this course will utilize include class lectures, textbooks, supplemental scientific research papers, case studies, hands-on laboratory activities, field trips, and interactions with exercise science professionals. The objective of this course is for the student to gain an understanding and working knowledge of how the body responds to exercise so that they may apply this knowledge to their personal wellness as well as future studies.
*Prerequisites: Successful completion of Biology or Ecology and Chemistry.*

### Mysteries of the Human Brain—Neuroscience Introduction
SPRING SEMESTER

Neuroscience has been identified as the 21st century's scientific frontier and Mysteries of the Human Brain is a one semester journey delving into how this amazing network of cells achieves the seemingly infinite tasks it accomplishes to out-function even the most complex supercomputer on the planet. This class will explore the many astonishing feats of the brain's structure and function by gaining an intimate understanding of the workings of individual brain cells, their means of communication, and how they work together to form

**Sustainable Science**
FALL SEMESTER

In a purely human sense, to sustain literally means to keep one's self functioning or enduring at a certain level. In our world today, this word has taken on a wide array of social and environmental implications, with dynamics such as climate change, fossil fuel extraction, and food production practices impacting our world. This class will start from a premise that we all sustain ourselves through a variety of practices, beliefs, and interactions, both with our physical surroundings and with the events of daily life that surround us. In class, we will explore the following dynamics that affect sustainability: the science of cooking and eating, ecosystem awareness and appreciation, making good nutritional choices and understanding where our food is sourced, and mindful consumption (becoming self-reliant by understanding & producing the products that we use daily). The majority of what we study and learn will stem from making products in a hands-on fashion and understanding the associated scientific processes involved.

neuronal networks and circuits that control all the varied functions we perform and establish the workings of our mind and emotions. In order to establish our understanding we will draw on the fields of chemistry, biology, physics, physiology, psychology, and computer science. As our knowledge base is built we will explore the means of neurological diseases and injury, how the brain accomplishes the tasks of learning and memory, the effects of drugs and pharmaceuticals on brain function, and current topics and careers in the neuroscience field.
*Prerequisites: Successful completion of Biology or Ecology and Chemistry.*

## Courses Not Offered 2025-2026

**Astronomy: Planets and Solar Systems***
FALL SEMESTER, ODD GRADUATION YEARS
This course is an introduction to the science of astronomy. The course begins with the historical development of astronomy and our understanding of the night sky, then covers the structure and content of the solar system, and telescopic and space exploration used to study the solar system and extrasolar planets. Emphasis will be on developing a big-picture view of the solar system as a context for understanding the place of our Earth in the cosmos. Observational labs, a field trip to the planetarium at the Air Force Academy, and night sky observations will be included.
**This one-semester course may be taken alone or in addition to Astronomy: Stars and Galaxies. The courses may be taken in any order.*
*Prerequisites: Algebra II or concurrent enrollment and a level of comfort using math.*

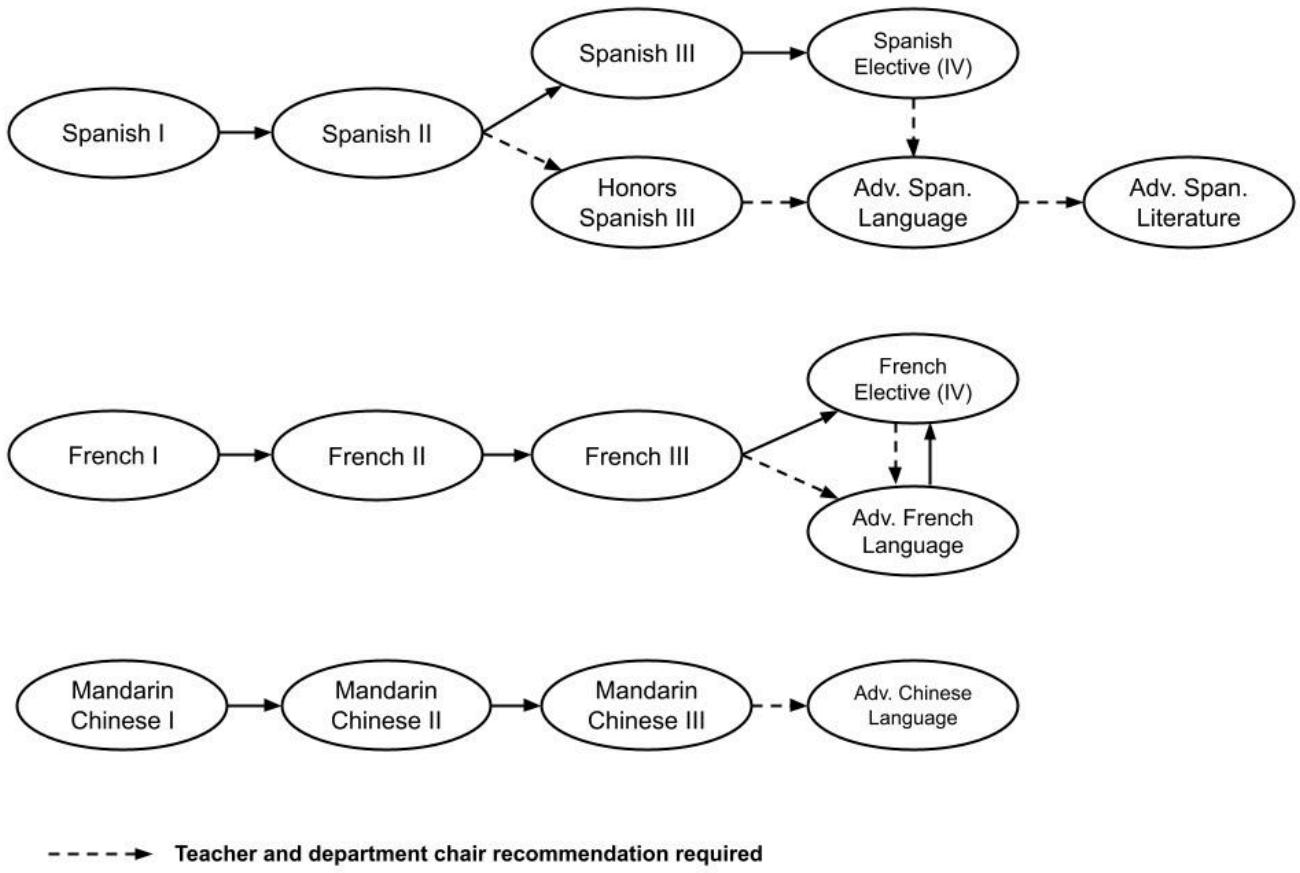
**Geology**
FALL SEMESTER, ODD GRADUATION YEARS
Colorado Springs is located in one of the best regions of the world to study geology—the structure of the Earth and its associated processes. We have at our back door approximately two billion years of geology deposited in the rock record. This field-based course utilizes field trips focusing on the geologic history of Colorado and the Western United States. Students will learn what is literally under their feet as they compile their own extensive rock and mineral collection from field trips and develop a field journal. The class also explores traditional aspects of geology such as plate tectonics theory, rock and mineral identification and glaciation. Since humans have occupied the planet for a scant 4 million of the 4.8 billion years since its creation, studying geology affords a unique combination of learning a science and also gaining perspective on our origins within the physical world.

**Astronomy: Stars and Galaxies***
SPRING SEMESTER, ODD GRADUATION YEARS
This course introduces our current understanding of the universe. Focusing on stars and galaxies, it is designed to be thought provoking: What are stars and how do they form? How did the universe form and how will it end? What are the most distant objects in the universe and how do we know their distances and properties? Topics include electromagnetic radiation, stellar evolution, interstellar medium, galaxies, cosmology, the scientific method, and critical thinking.
**This one-semester course may be taken alone or in addition to Astronomy: Planets and Solar Systems. The courses may be taken in any order.*
*Prerequisites: Algebra II or concurrent enrollment and a level of comfort using math.*

**Principles of Engineering**
FALL SEMESTER, ODD GRADUATION YEARS
This course will discuss engineering in general, the Engineering Design Process, what engineers do in their jobs and the various types of engineering. Student interest in particular types of engineering will guide which sections are covered, but in the past have included Architectural Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Electrical Engineering, and Robotics. In conjunction with the classwork, students will also design a new product in a semester long Engineering project
**Students may enroll in BOTH semesters, with the second semester focusing on different aspects and principles of engineering design. Fall semester is NOT a prerequisite for the spring semester.*

# World Languages Department

The world languages department prepares students to effectively communicate in another language through classroom immersion and Interim expeditions. In French, Mandarin Chinese, and Spanish, students will develop communicative competence as they acquire appropriate grammar and vocabulary. Taught primarily in the target language, our world language courses take a multi-sensory approach to language acquisition and foster mastery of all four language skills: speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Through the use of audio-visual and internet-based resources, students will be exposed to a variety of authentic linguistic and cultural settings and are prepared to function in real-life situations. We believe that language study increases enjoyment of words and their use, expands awareness of how culture and environment interact, and demonstrates how language reflects culture. Students must complete three consecutive years of one language*. Four full years of language study are strongly recommended.



## French I
FALL SEMESTER

This course is designed to be paired with Introduction to Francophone Cultures and French and allow students to continue their studies of French. This accelerated course will expand on the fundamental language skills first established in the previous course, as well as prepare students to successfully begin French II. The ability to express simple ideas in the present, past, and future tenses is the benchmark for students' success at the conclusion of this course. Various projects and hands-on activities will allow students to explore French language and culture while building their linguistic skills. This semester class is meant to pique students' interests in the cultures of the French-speaking world and the fundamentals of French language. This class counts toward a language credit and allows students to continue with their French learning by pairing this course with the *Accelerated French I* course in the spring. This introductory class exposes students to French language and Francophone cultures with an emphasis on producing meaningful, authentic communication. Students begin developing all four language-learning skills (listening, reading, writing, and speaking) while exploring cultural practices, products, and perspectives. Students will discover differences and similarities between their own language and culture and others in a non-judgmental way.

## French II
FALL SEMESTER AND SPRING SEMESTER

This course strengthens the grammar and vocabulary foundations of French I and continues to enrich the students' knowledge of culture of the French-speaking world. Students expand their abilities to express their own thoughts and concerns on a more complex level. The class begins to move from the primitive paragraph level to more cohesive and organized writing. More complex tenses are also introduced. Various projects and hands-on activities will allow students to explore French language and culture while building their linguistic skills.
*Prerequisite: Successful completion of French I.*

## French III
FALL SEMESTER AND SPRING SEMESTER

In this class, students are challenged by more complex grammatical structures and more detailed vocabulary. Students learn about the French-speaking world through short stories, songs and films. Role plays, interviews and oral presentations about various aspects of French culture enable students to improve their speaking skills, while creative writing assignments, such as fictional stories, poems and postcards help them perfect their language proficiency. All the tenses have been studied by the end of this course. Various projects and hands-on activities will allow students to explore French language and culture while honing their linguistic skills.
*Prerequisite: Successful completion of French II.*

## French IV: Culture Through Song
FALL SEMESTER

This course is offered in the fall as a level-IV, semester-long elective where students are immersed in the French language and explore cultural themes through song lyrics. Such themes may include education, social injustice, family and identity, as well as Parisian life and challenges of French-speaking Africa. Each song will be complemented by articles and short texts, as well as interviews and other types of audio-visual material. Students in this class will be able to considerably increase their knowledge of French vocabulary and review advanced grammatical concepts while strengthening their speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. This is an advanced French course and therefore requires prior completion of French III. Students wishing to take Advanced French Language and Culture the following year must take both a fall elective and a spring elective in French. A placement in Advanced French Language and Culture following two semesters of French electives will also require approval from the teacher and the Languages Department Chair.
*Prerequisite: Successful completion of French III.*

## French IV: Culture Through Film
SPRING SEMESTER

This course is offered in the spring as a level IV, semester-long elective where students are immersed in the French language and explore cultural themes through film or television series. Such themes may include education, social injustice, family and identity, as well as French regions and contemporary life in Quebec. Each film will be complemented by articles and short texts, as well as interviews and other types of audio-visual material. Students in this class will be able to considerably increase their knowledge of French vocabulary and review advanced grammatical concepts while strengthening their speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. This is an advanced French course and therefore requires prior completion of French III. Students wishing to take Advanced French Language and Culture the following year must take both a fall elective and a spring elective in French. A placement in Advanced French Language and Culture following two semesters of French electives will also require approval from the teacher and the Languages Department Chair.
*Prerequisite: Successful completion of French III.*

## Mandarin Chinese I

FALL SEMESTER AND SPRING SEMESTER

This course is designed to be paired with Intro to Chinese Culture and allow students to continue their studies of Mandarin Chinese. This accelerated course will expand on the fundamental language skills first established in the previous course, as well as prepare students to successfully begin Mandarin Chinese II. Students will be expected to actively communicate about familiar topics, focusing on themselves, their families, school and friends, their interests and hobbies in order to develop proficiency in listening, speaking, reading and writing; guest speakers will contribute to students' learning. Various projects and hands-on activities will allow students to explore Chinese language and culture while practicing their language skills. This semester class is meant to pique students' interests in Chinese culture and the fundamentals of Mandarin Chinese. This class counts toward a language credit and allows students to continue with their Mandarin Chinese learning by pairing this course with the Accelerated Man I course in the spring. In this introductory class, students will have the chance to explore the unique and fascinating aspects of both traditional and modern Chinese culture. From traditional instruments and clothing to modern music, songs, and dance, students will learn about a wide range of cultural expressions. Additionally, students will get to taste a variety of Chinese foods, make Chinese handicrafts, and learn basic Mandarin speaking and typing skills. This cultural and linguistic exploration will guide students to discover differences and similarities between their own language and culture and others in a non-judgmental way.

## Mandarin Chinese II

FALL SEMESTER AND SPRING SEMESTER

This course continues to develop language skills by providing students with opportunities to produce meaningful, authentic communication while further developing students' cultural understanding. To increase proficiency in listening, speaking, reading and writing, students actively communicate about a variety of topics pertaining to the real world. In addition to learning more complex grammar and sentence patterns, topics will include a review of Mandarin Chinese I, how to make phone calls, participate in job interviews, make appointments, understand Chinese customs and transportation and more. After successfully completing this course, students will reach an intermediate level of Chinese listening, speaking, reading and writing, which will allow them to communicate when traveling to China. In this class, students may also learn to make traditional Chinese food and celebrate traditional Chinese holidays. The class will include Chinese culture introduced by guest speakers. Various projects and hands-on activities will allow students to explore Chinese language and culture while practicing their language skills.
*Prerequisite: Successful completion of Mandarin I.*

## Mandarin Chinese III

FALL SEMESTER AND SPRING SEMESTER

Chinese III continues to strengthen the students' speaking, writing, listening and reading skills through various authentic texts, media, culture and language contexts. In this course, students learn advanced Chinese sentence structures and grammar. Chinese is used the majority of time in class, including communicating with the teacher and in instructions. Chinese III is designed to improve the students' abilities to communicate effectively and appropriately in real-life contexts. In addition, students develop an understanding of the relationship between the products and perspectives of Chinese society by participating in holidays, festivals and other cultural activities. By comparing them with their own, students recognize distinctive viewpoints about the different Chinese cultures and develop respect for other cultures in the world community. Various projects and hands-on activities will allow students to explore Chinese language and culture while practicing their language skills.
*Prerequisite: Successful completion of Mandarin II.*

## Advanced Mandarin

FALL SEMESTER AND SPRING SEMESTER

This advanced Chinese course is intended to develop students' language skills in three communicative modes (interpersonal, interpretive, and presentational), while deepening students' insight into the various aspects of the cultures of China and other Chinese-speaking communities. Throughout the year, students will learn about various aspects of contemporary Chinese society including significant persons, products, and historical themes. Students will also develop an awareness of China's role in global issues, such as energy and the environment, economics, and politics. Much of the coursework (including homework) in this class is project-based. *This advanced level class is designed to be helpful for students desiring to take the AP Chinese Language and Culture exam, however additional independent study and practice will be necessary for full exam preparation. Students who do decide to take the AP Chinese Language and Culture exam will not be required to take a final exam in the course.*
*Prerequisite: Successful completion of Mandarin III.*

## Spanish I

FALL SEMESTER AND SPRING SEMESTER

In this course, students will be introduced to basic vocabulary, pronunciation and grammar of Spanish using the four language acquisition skills (listening, reading, writing and speaking). Students will begin to explore Hispanic culture through guided readings, songs, games, skits, discussions and paragraph writing. Along the way, this class will give rich insight into Spanish speaking cultures with an emphasis on art, music, and social customs from a variety of countries. No prior knowledge of the Spanish language is needed or expected for this class. Students will leave the course with a developed vocabulary and confident command of the present and future tenses. Although an entry level course, this class is primarily taught in Spanish.

## Spanish II

FALL SEMESTER AND SPRING SEMESTER

In this course, students continue to build on the structural foundations acquired in Spanish I, greatly expanding their vocabulary and cultural awareness. Students grow immensely from Spanish I to II by gaining oral competence through active participation in class discussions, skits, and presentations conducted exclusively in Spanish. Spanish II students will become more and more comfortable expressing themselves in multiple tenses with an emphasis on the past and future tenses. Throughout the school year, students will read a short novel and follow a video series to further connect their classroom instruction to authentic material. Depending on the student's performance and motivation at the end of this course, as well as the completion of summer work, it may be recommended by the Spanish II teacher and by the chair of the department that the student continue with Honors Spanish III the following year.
*Prerequisite: Successful completion of Spanish I.*

## Spanish III

FALL SEMESTER AND SPRING SEMESTER

This course emphasizes communicating in Spanish with grammatical and cross-cultural accuracy. Vocabulary and structures center on contemporary issues: personal relations, hobbies, daily life, health and well-being, travel, nature, science and technology, economy and occupations, popular culture and communication, and literature and art. Written and oral mastery through building appropriate vocabulary and linguistic structures is actively pursued by writing and sharing short essays, literary pieces, dialogues and monologues. Additionally, students will discover appropriate music, film, and video clips for auditory mastery and cultural enrichment.
*Prerequisite: Successful completion of Spanish II.*

## Honors Spanish III

FALL SEMESTER AND SPRING SEMESTER

Similar to Spanish III, this course also offers students a deeper understanding of the relationships between the U.S. and the Spanish-speaking world (Hispanic America, Spain). Students work at an accelerated pace in a setting of higher expectations. Students discuss various subjects and express their ideas at an abstract level. Students prepare formal written and oral reports on human rights, biographies of prominent Hispanic figures, and points of interest in the Spanish-speaking world. Each unit includes a short film by a contemporary filmmaker from a Spanish-speaking country as well as the analysis of a literary text. Students read and analyze in depth works by authors such as Cervantes, Borges, Garcia Marquez, Benedetti Quiroga, Neruda, Allende, and Denevi. This course offers multiple opportunities for students to voice their opinions and to engage in serious discussions in Spanish. The workload for this course is rigorous. Students develop and refine both oral and written skills, working on fluency, accuracy, and self-confidence in Spanish. Building on grammatical and vocabulary foundations learned in previous levels, students work especially on the following grammatical points: preterit vs. imperfect, personal pronouns, the subjunctive both in the present and past, the future and conditional tenses, and "if" clauses. This course is conducted entirely in Spanish.
*Prerequisites: Grade of A- or higher in Spanish II, teacher recommendation, and support of World Languages Department Chair.*

### Spanish IV: Culture Through Song
FALL SEMESTER

This course is offered in the fall as a level IV, semester-long elective where students are immersed in the Spanish language and explore cultural themes through song lyrics. Such themes may include education, social injustice, family and identity, as well as contemporary life in the Spanish-speaking world. Music explored will be complemented by articles and short texts, as well as interviews and other types of audio-visual material. Students in this class will be able to considerably increase their knowledge of Spanish vocabulary and review advanced grammatical concepts while strengthening their speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. This is an advanced Spanish course and therefore requires prior completion of Spanish III. Students wishing to take Advanced Spanish Language and Culture the following year must take both a fall elective and a spring elective in Spanish. A placement in Advanced Spanish Language and Culture following two semesters of Spanish electives will also require approval from the teacher and the World Languages Department Chair.
*Prerequisite: Successful completion of Spanish III.*

### Advanced Spanish
FALL SEMESTER AND SPRING SEMESTER

Advanced Spanish is a rigorous college-level course engaging students to improve their proficiency across the three modes of communication: interpretive, interpersonal, and presentational. With the goal of providing a rich, diverse learning experience, this course focuses on the integration of authentic resources including online print, audio, and audiovisual resources as well as traditional print resources that include literature, essays, and magazine and newspaper articles. Students communicate using advanced vocabulary and linguistic structures as they build proficiency in all modes of communication. The course is divided into thematic units that are further based on recommended contexts and guided by essential questions. Corresponding cultural elements are integrated into the study of the units, and activities are directed with cultural connections in mind. Discussions entirely in the Spanish language is a requirement for this course. It is assumed that students have previously been exposed to advanced language structures in the courses leading up to Advanced Spanish; however, a review of the mechanics is done within the contextual framework of each unit as needed. Students in this course will be prepared to take the AP Spanish Language and Culture exam in May if they choose to do so.
*Prerequisites: Demonstration of mastery of content from previous course and department recommendation in Honors Spanish III or both Spanish IV semester classes, teacher recommendation and support of World Languages Department Chair.*

### Spanish IV: Culture Through Film
SPRING SEMESTER

This course is offered in the spring as a level IV, semester-long elective where students are immersed in the Spanish language and explore cultural themes through film or television series. Such themes may include education, social injustice, family and identity, as well as contemporary life in the Spanish-speaking world. Each film will be complemented by articles and short texts, as well as interviews and other types of audio-visual material. Students in this class will be able to considerably increase their knowledge of Spanish vocabulary and review advanced grammatical concepts while strengthening their speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. This is an advanced Spanish course and therefore requires prior completion of Spanish III. Students wishing to take Advanced Spanish Language and Culture the following year must take both a fall elective and a spring elective in Spanish. A placement in Advanced Spanish Language and Culture following two semesters of Spanish electives will also require approval from the teacher and the Languages Department Chair.
*Prerequisite: Successful completion of Spanish III.*

## Courses Not Offered 2025-2026

### Advanced French
FALL SEMESTER AND SPRING SEMESTER

This course offers students the opportunity to pursue their study of the French language at the most advanced level available at FVS, with an emphasis on cultural awareness and communication. In this yearlong course, students discuss a variety of concepts through authentic materials from a variety of sources, including newspaper articles, TV and radio newscasts, short films, short stories and literary extracts. Engaging activities are based on a thematic structure aimed at strengthening all language learning skills while enabling students to express themselves about real-world issues in the target language and learn about the diversity of the French-speaking world. The themes explored in this course include global issues, science and technology, beauty and aesthetics, contemporary life, family and community, as well as personal identity. *This advanced level class is designed to be helpful for students desiring to take the AP French Language and Culture exam, however additional independent study and practice will be necessary for full exam preparation. Students who elect to take the AP French Language and Culture exam will not be required to take a final exam in the course.*
*Prerequisites: Demonstration of mastery of content from previous course and department recommendation.in French III or both French IV semester classes, teacher recommendation, and support of World Languages Department Chair.*

# Year-Specific Required Courses

## Grade 9

**FVS Chapter One**
FALL SEMESTER

As **9th graders**, students will be a part of this comprehensive orientation to all things FVS. Students will gain the skills students need to make the most of life at Fountain Valley, cultivate a class culture of belonging and compassion, and work with supportive faculty to ensure success within and outside the classroom. Students will learn how to engage in self-reflection and develop skills for self-advocacy, time management, and coping with stress. Students will also cultivate tools for navigating the many relationships that define life at FVS: relationships with friends, with roommates, with trusted adults, and with themselves. Throughout this course, students will identify and discuss students personal strengths, challenges, and concerns as students embark on living and learning in our unique community. Finally, students will look outward toward developing empathy for others, celebrating diversity, and making change in student communities - at FVS and beyond. This required pass/fail course combines large-group meetings, small-group discussions, structured study halls, and scheduled free time to practice time management skills.

## Grade 10

**FVS Chapter Two**
SPRING SEMESTER

As **10th graders**, students will meet once a week throughout the second semester to address topics on leadership and the value of self-reflection. This pass/fail course will emphasize the importance of goal-setting and aligning one's intentions with an established path forward. Students will also reflect upon effective leadership and what makes a good leader. Students will also further establish effective communication skills, develop ways to model peer-leading, and how to find and establish their purpose in a community. This pass/fail course is meant to prepare 10th graders for the various leadership opportunities they will encounter in their upper-class years.

## Grade 11

**Junior College Workshop**
FALL SEMESTER AND SPRING SEMESTER

As **11th graders**, students will meet at various times throughout the school year, starting in the second quarter, to prepare for the college search and application process. Jr. College Workshop covers a broad range of topics, including: researching and creating the college list, understanding the selective admission process, standardized testing, the college essay, letters of recommendation, and financial aid.

## New 10th, 11th, and 12th Graders

**FVS Chapter One: Abridged**
FALL SEMESTER, FIRST SIX WEEKS

If students are **new 10th, 11th, or 12th graders**, this course serves as an abridged orientation to FVS. Once or twice a week in the first six weeks of the school year, students will review the skills students need to make the most of students academics at Fountain Valley and will address some of the following topics and skill sets: self-advocacy, time-management, communicating effectively with teachers, understanding expectations, and how to maintain students course load in order to balance rigor and performance as well as understanding FVS culture and leadership opportunities.

## Grade 12

### The Capstone Experience

At Fountain Valley School, we know that students want to be leaders in our world who embody courage, compassion, curiosity, open-mindedness, and self-reliance. In order to do that, students need unique learning experiences that take them beyond the classroom, be engaged in the community, and be prepared and connected with the working world. That's why we offer Capstone and Global Scholar Diploma / Honors Capstone options.

We believe an educational experience should be fulfilling, gratifying, and transforming. We understand that in this instant-gratification driven era, it is a challenge to dive deeply into a quest of heart and intellect through inquiry, research, experiment, application and reflection. This is why, based on nearly 200 years of experiment lead by John Dewey and publicized by David Kolb, the Capstone Experience provides a unique experience that integrates coursework, knowledge and skills through the experiential learning model to enable students to demonstrate a broad mastery of learning across the curriculum for personal growth, further career advancement, and real-world applications. Here is how we do it.

## Senior Capstone

### Senior Capstone Project
SPRING SEMESTER

Students are a perfect fit for this course if they have not applied for Honors Capstone or Global Scholar Diploma. During the spring semester of their 12th grade year, students will work on and complete projects with the guidance of a designated faculty member in scheduled class times. To start the brainstorming process, share initial ideas, and submit project proposals for students Senior Capstone Project, students will meet with the Director of Capstone Experience twice during students 11th grade year and then two to three times during the fall semester of students 12th grade year. The Senior Capstone Project will culminate with a presentation to the community in mid- to late-April of a student's 12th grade year.

## Global Scholar Diploma (GSD) / Honors Capstone

The pinnacle experience of the FVS Global Education curriculum is the Global Scholar Diploma program. This specific tract will challenge students to develop an international perspective by refining a particular set of knowledge, skills, and attitudes to grasp the nature of global interdependence. Depending on a GSD candidate's chosen direction, Global Scholar Diploma projects may focus on the humanities, the sciences, engineering, the arts, and truly anything in between. A GSD final project may also culminate in a variety of mediums such as formal research papers, podcasts, documentaries or hands-on projects. The GSD project that candidates create should have a strong foundation in rigorous research and scholarship at the college level.

*Grade 11: Spring Semester Application*
*Grade 12: Fall and Spring Semester Courses*

*Prerequisites: If students possess the following qualities, we encourage students to apply for to attain a Global Scholar Diploma: students thrive academically in challenging classes, have the ability to work independently, reliably meet deadlines, effectively communicate, both orally and through students writing, are leaders and role models in the FVS community, and have served this community through students activism and participation in campus culture and life. To be considered as a GSD candidate, please consult with the GSD director about the application and interview process, and then complete the steps indicated.*

### Honors Research Methodologies & Globalization
FALL SEMESTER

In the fall semester, time will be dedicated to college-level research and project development, global event attendance, and leadership and service to FVS. Students will learn and discuss globalization theory, citizenship, and contemporary applications of their research to the ever-connected world, and will refine their project direction by attending two research sessions at the University of Colorado, Colorado Springs (UCCS), where students will work with university librarians. As the semester progresses, students will create students annotated bibliography and refine students analytical thinking, writing, and verbal processing skills as students

### Global Scholar Diploma Project
SPRING SEMESTER

Students will build on the research conducted in the Fall, present their projects before a faculty panel and audience in early February, and defend their theses in April. Part of this project will be seeking an expert in their field of study to conduct a formal, recorded interview. During this semester, students will be engaged in rounds of speed dates that probe and clarify students research findings to ensure a profound understanding of their project and a clear direction forward. Soon after, students will present an informal Capstone Talkback about a specific element of their project in the community. At the conclusion of this course, students

work towards specific parameters for students final project. Students will create a 5-minute GSD Podcast that summarizes students research and analyzes students next step as well as writing formal reflections about students research and the global events students attend.
Course Credit: *0.5 academically graded credit.*

project will include the following: an annotated bibliography investigating a global issue (30-source minimum); leading a Unity Day and/or Earth Day workshop; the creation of a GSD portfolio website including reflections, interview transcript, annotated bibliography, and final project; students GSD Project (i.e., 20-page minimum paper, 30-minute minimum formal presentation, 30-minute minimum podcast episode, documentary film, or other project idea per faculty approval); a final presentation and defense of students project before a faculty panel and audience.
Course Credit: *0.5 academically graded credit.*

# Additional Course Offering

**Directed Study**
FALL SEMESTER or SPRING SEMESTER

If students wish to undertake serious study in an area not covered by the School's curriculum, students may propose a directed study. In order to be considered for such a study, students must exhaust all standard course offerings in the area of study, and must then complete a directed study proposal to show the design, documentation, and features of students' proposed project. Directed studies must be academic in character, must be undertaken under the auspices of an academic department, and must be sponsored and supervised by a faculty member. The directed study will be worth one-quarter credit (0.25), run for one semester in length, and may not count toward any graduation requirement or one of students five classes. Directed studies are graded as pass/fail.