



Curriculum Guide 2026-2027



VISTAMAR
SCHOOL

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Welcome

Dear Students and Families:

At Vistamar, we're committed to academic excellence, learning through discovery, and a community where every student feels known and valued. We hope you pursue classes that challenge you and provide balance. In this important time before college, you have the opportunity to explore new interests and discover more about yourself as a learner.

Together with your teachers' recommendations and the guidance of your Life Planner, use this curriculum guide to inform your choices for next year's schedule. As you plan, keep in mind Vistamar's aim for your high school experience - that you leave here with developed habits of mind and heart so that you can flourish in life. What are you curious about? What will you learn in your journey toward a fulfilling life as a globally-conscious, creative, independent thinker? Your classes will play a significant role in your development in the following attributes of a Vistamar Student:

Vistamar students will...
• Defend their thinking with evidence and clarity
• Connect with others through questioning and listening and sharing.
• Embrace multiple perspectives and act with just purpose.
• Create and contribute with their unique voice
• Take ownership of their learning by inviting and integrating feedback.
• Grapple with complexity.
• Apply their skills and knowledge to authentic contexts
So that they will uplift their communities with confidence, generosity, and compassion

Excited to be here to support your learning journey!

Your Vistamar Staffulty

Course Registration Process

January/February - Current 11th Grade Students:

Course Selection Presentation with Department Chairs during the school day
Course forms distributed; The Scheduler will email an electronic version to students and parents
Teachers will discuss options in class and make course recommendations for students
Life Planners will schedule and start advising conversations by the end of January
11th Grade students complete course requests (forms and online) by the end of February

March - Current 9th and 10th Grade Students:

Course Selection Presentation with Department Chairs during the school day
Course forms distributed; The Scheduler will email an electronic version to students and parents
Teachers will discuss options in class and make course recommendations for students
Life Planners will schedule and start advising conversations by the beginning of March
9th and 10th Grade Students complete course requests (forms and online) by the end of March

Course Recommendation Process

Teachers make course recommendations based on student performance in classes this year. These recommendations are based on content and skill mastery and work habits in class, in addition to the overall grade. Know that these recommendations come with a great deal of thought and care for students and their learning. As you consider the courses you would like to take and receive your course recommendations, be sure to consider the requirements for Honors and Advanced Placement Classes (see more information on page 7).

Life Planners receive teacher recommendations and work with students to develop an appropriately rigorous, yet balanced, course schedule. Their advice will also be influenced by a student's overall load of activities and community involvement.

Should students wish to take a class that hasn't been recommended for them, students and families must sign *Non-Recommended Course Request Acknowledgement Form*, which will be made available via myVistamar. The purpose of this acknowledgement is to recognize teacher concerns, course expectations, and enrollment priority for recommended students.

Fall Course Changes: Add/Drop Period

If a student wants to change their schedule once classes have begun in the fall, they must first email their Life Planner (9th graders should contact the respective Department Chair). **All course changes must be finalized by the end of the 4th week of school.** Students will be expected to complete all missing major assignments as determined by the new course instructor. We will do our best to accommodate requests, but all changes are contingent upon course recommendations, enrollment, and scheduling factors. Students who choose to drop a class after the deadline, will have that class reflected on their Official Transcript.

*Change requests initiated after the add/drop period, will be made at the discretion of the administration.

External/Summer Course Policy

External courses are considered supplementary to the offerings at Vistamar School and do not replace our existing curriculum nor impact course placement, which is carefully designed to provide a comprehensive education. If students choose to take enrichment courses outside of Vistamar, these courses will not appear on the Vistamar transcript, nor will their grades be included in the GPA. Our academic records reflect only the courses completed within Vistamar's curriculum. In some cases, students may need to take an external course for remediation or due to rare, extenuating circumstances. Pre-approval is required for these situations and students may remediate no more than two courses for credit recovery. Families should contact the student's Life-planner, the relevant Department Chair, and the Head of School to get prior approval for any external courses.

Graduation Requirements

SUBJECT	VISTAMAR DIPLOMA REQUIRED CREDITS	UC MINIMUM REQUIRED CREDITS	NOTES
History/Social Studies	3	2	Including 1 year of US History and 1 year of Global Studies
English	4	4	Not including journalism or student publications
Mathematics	3	3	Through Algebra II (Math 3) at minimum; 4 years recommended
Laboratory Science	3	2	Including grade 9 Physical Science
Language other than English	3	2	In a single language (including heritage language study for non-native English speakers)
Visual or Performing Arts	2*	1	
College Preparatory Electives	1	1	Can be any approved course from groups A through F on the UC approved list
Other Electives	1*	NA	Any combination of courses
Exploratory	1 (credit over 4 years)	NA	Meets weekly
Totals	21	15	

Students must meet the following additional requirements to qualify for the Vistamar diploma:

- Maintain a healthy level of physical activity by playing on a Vistamar sports team, participating in an approved off-campus fitness activity, or successfully completing an on-campus fitness course 9 out of 12 trimesters.
- Complete a Senior Project that meets established standards.
- Complete all registered courses in the senior year with a passing grade and receive passing grades in all classes for the final trimester in the senior year.
- Maintain a record of good conduct and citizenship throughout the term of enrollment at Vistamar
- *Beginning for the graduating Class of 2027, all students must take a minimum of 2 years of VPA classes
- Students must have 5 classes each trimester they are enrolled.
- While earning a D in a course qualifies students for course credit, only grades of C and above qualify for advancement to the next course.

Keep the following in mind when creating your schedule:

- All grades listed on a student's transcript are final course grades; only grades received at Vistamar are included in GPA calculation; one point is added to the cumulative weighted GPA for each AP and Honors course; GPAs are NOT recalculated midyear
- Independent Study coursework receives Credit/No Credit
- Prospective collegiate athletes should keep the NCAA Eligibility Standards in mind when creating their course schedule; see your Life Planner for more information.

Sample Student Schedule by Grade

9th Grade	10th Grade	11th Grade	12th Grade
English 9: Contemporary World Literature	English 10: World Philosophy and Literature	American Literature AP Language	AP Literature Writers Workshop
History 9: History Thinking and the Modern World	History 10: World Art and the Humanities AP Human Geography	US History AP US History	
Math 1 Math 2	Math 2 Math 3 Honors Math 3	Math 3 Honors Math 3 Math 4 Honors Math 4	Math 4 Honors Math 4 AP Calculus AB AP Calculus BC AP Statistics Advanced Topics
Physical Science	Life Science	<i>Lab Science Elective - Choose 1</i> AP Chemistry AP Environmental Science AP Biology Marine Science	<i>Electives - Choose 3</i> Visual - Performing Art* 2nd VPA* AP Chemistry AP Environmental Science AP Biology Anatomy & Physiology AP Physics C AP Physics E&M Inventions & Engineering Computer Science Robotics AP Gov Psychology (H) 2nd Humanities Elective World Language** 2nd World Language** 2nd Math <i>Free Block</i>
World Language**	World Language**	World Language**	
<i>Elective - Choose 1</i> Visual - Performing Art* Computer Science Robotics	<i>Elective - Choose 1</i> Visual - Performing Art* Computer Science Robotics 2nd World Language	<i>Elective - Choose 1</i> Visual - Performing Art* Computer Science Robotics 2nd Science Elective Psychology (H) 2nd World Language <i>Free Block</i>	
Exploratories Health & Community Wellness (Tri 1)	Exploratories	Exploratories Life Planning (Tri 3)	Exploratories Life Planning (Tri 1)

Notes:

*2 years of Visual - Performing Art required, beginning for class of 2027; see Options & Prerequisites in Curriculum Guide

**3 years of World Language required; see Options & Prerequisites in curriculum guide

4 years of Math is recommended, 3 are required

2 Exploratories are required per trimester - options include some required courses noted above, electives, fitness, sport practice, student leadership, Soulful prep, school musical, etc

Vistamar offers elective Advanced Placement (AP) courses for students who are prepared for and who embrace rigorous college-level work, thinking, and assessments. An AP class is designed to be an intensive study of a specific discipline (e.g., math, science, English, arts, world language, etc.) and will challenge the most curious, self-motivated, and skilled students. Vistamar teachers instruct AP courses in accordance with the requirements and standards set by the College Board, the organization that runs the AP program and examination worldwide. When a student passes a standardized AP exam at the conclusion of the course, a college may--at their discretion--grant credit to the student.

Readiness and success in AP courses depend on the student's ability to meet the typical demands of a college-level course:

- A fast-paced workload, much of which is completed independently during non-class hours, including holidays, extended breaks, and "no homework" weekends.
- Extra studying and practice beyond the assigned work.
- Discipline-specific texts and materials that require high reading skills.
- Challenging college-level and AP-style assessments (timed and untimed) and projects that test the student's knowledge, disciplinary skill, and critical/creative thinking.
- Rigorous grading/feedback based on college-level standards and AP rubrics.

In meeting the demands of AP, students are committing to the best habits of academic success, such as:

- Completing all assignments and assessments on-time with integrity, skill, and thought.
- Attending class regularly and attentively.
- Independently managing their learning, responsibilities, time, and self-care in and outside of school (e.g., taking initiative to check their own understanding or skill, making up work/exams without prompting, staying on top of work along with extracurriculars, etc.).
- Serious and sincere engagement in the work and class activities.
- Responsiveness and civility with their teacher and classmates.
- Determination and resiliency when facing adversity.

AP Test Policy

Taking the AP exam is a requirement for each AP course. It is not a student decision at the end of the year. This upholds the integrity of our transcript. When our students apply to college, they are claiming that they are taking our most rigorous curriculum. The colleges are assuming that they go through the experience of a high stakes cumulative exam, which is a preparatory experience that will likely occur again in college finals.

AP Contract

Students who enroll in AP courses will need to sign AP Contracts along with their families. This contract will be made available through myVistamar. The purpose of the contract is to ensure that students and families fully understand the expectations of taking an AP course.

Can I take the AP exam for Psych or Econ?

If a student wants to take an exam for a course we do not offer, they will need to demonstrate that they are ready to pass the exam by completing and passing an outside course that prepares them for the exam. Life Planners can help students find a course. All AP exams are ordered by October 1 of each school year.

Senior Project

The Senior Project is a graduation requirement for all Vistamar students. It is an opportunity for Vistamar students to continue their learning in a career or service setting by developing a curiosity-driven question into a meaningful project. Vistamar believes that students should seek “purposeful engagement beyond our walls.” The senior project should push students to extend their learning into the community to gain awareness, empathy, and/or career insights.

The goal of the senior project is for students to connect their interests and curiosities with real-world career or non-profit experience. Each senior will develop their interest into an essential question to frame their experience. They will contact industry and non-profit partners and secure an opportunity to shadow a professional in a field or area related to their question. During the winter and spring of the senior year, students will spend at least 40 hours shadowing their industry partner. They will observe meetings and processes; interview key leaders; and complete a project for the partner organization.

Each project must involve students getting real-world experience in an industry or non-profit that fulfills the attributes of our Portrait of a Vistamar Student:

- Defend your thinking with evidence and clarity
 - Self-reflection paper synthesizes what you learn from your experience; Presentation includes ample evidence from your experience
- Connect with others through questioning and listening and sharing.
 - Communicate effectively with community partner & advisor, formulate a driving project question, research, conduct an interview, and observe with curiosity
- Embrace multiple perspectives and act with just purpose.
 - Keep an open mind, seek to learn from the experience
- Create and contribute with their unique voice
 - Leave a positive impact on the organization; paper and presentation is a reflection of you
- Take Ownership of their learning by inviting and integrating feedback.
 - Project Management, self-management, organization, flexibility, seek help
- Grapple with complexity.
 - Deal with setbacks, take initiative, solve problems as they arise
- Apply your skills and knowledge to authentic contexts.
 - Get out of your comfort zone, seek mentorship, apply Vistamar learnings in the “real world”

Project Elements

- Fieldwork (Shadow, Interning, or Volunteer component): Seniors will spend at least 40 hours shadowing with one community partner (a company or service organization) throughout the winter and spring of their senior year. Students may not be paid for their fieldwork experience.
- Students will learn by observing meetings and processes and interviewing key leaders
- Students can complete a small project for the partner organization during the fieldwork hours (examples: tutoring, database maintenance, social media campaigns, event planning, lab assistance, art and design, etc).
- Students will write a written reflection of the experience.
- Students will create and deliver a presentation of their learning experience at Senior Project Community Presentation Day in May.

Humanities

English 9: Contemporary World Literature

Grade Level: 9 // Prerequisite: None

This course invites students to engage with contemporary literature in the form of poetry, short stories, and novels that reflect diverse global voices. Through reading, discussion, and creative projects, students will explore themes such as identity, culture, and resilience as expressed by authors worldwide. By examining these works, students will deepen their understanding of global perspectives and their connections to today's complex world. These narratives allow students to understand the larger social conditions that shape individuals' choices and experiences. Projects and writing assignments prepare students to analyze authors' literary strategies and learn to apply literary techniques in their own personal narratives.

Expected Workload: 20-30 min./night HW; 4-5 major writing assignments, (2-3 pgs each), presentations or projects; Students read 2-3 major literary works & a rich selection of short fiction and poetry.

History 9: Historical Thinking & the Modern World

Grade Level: 9 // Prerequisite: None

This course focuses on developing historical thinking and literacy skills through the study of world history. Students will analyze primary and secondary sources, evaluate diverse interpretations, and construct evidence-based arguments about key themes such as power, culture, and social change. By honing their ability to think critically about the past, students will gain the tools to understand better and engage with the complexities of the modern world. Research projects and writing assignments teach students how to analyze information to develop and demonstrate historical thinking skills.

Expected Workload: 20-30 min./night HW; 4-5 major writing assignments (2-3 pgs each), presentations or projects; Students read 2-3 major works of fiction or nonfiction and a rich selection of primary and secondary sources.

English as a Second Language 9: Sheltered Immersion

Grade Level: 9 // Prerequisite: International Student English Language Learners

Minimum TOEFL score: 60 (Duolingo equivalent: 100) - The overall proficiency level is intermediate low.

Using the thematic focus of Vistamar School's 9th grade English Literature and History programs, the ESL 9 sheltered immersion space offers English Language Learners (ELLs) the opportunity to hone reading comprehension skills, as well as speaking, writing, and listening skills for academic success in their Humanities classes. As academic content is scaffolded, the ESL course trains students with limited English proficiency (LEP) to determine meaning from written text, identify word forms and variation in meaning, idioms, context clues, as well as differentiate fact from opinion. The writing process is reinforced by revising language structure, fluency and style. In a safe space, ELLs actively listen and ask or answer questions about what was covered in the mainstream classroom, learn how to offer opinions and negotiate with or persuade others, and exchange information and ideas via oral communication and conversations. The course helps ELLs build on existing background knowledge about the subjects being taught. Students are shadowed by the ESL instructor in their Literature and History classes.

English 10: World Philosophy & Literature

Grade Level: 10 // Prerequisite: 9th grade Literature or equivalent

Students investigate how humans negotiate our identities, relationships and behavior based on understandings of truth and reality throughout human history. Students encounter works by ancient and contemporary philosophers and authors to discover the ways our notions of truth, justice, leadership and personal fulfillment continue to change with time. Students are challenged to consider how ancient philosophy echoes in our world today. Similarly, students are encouraged to identify how modern ideas, arguments and opinions have emerged and evolved throughout history. Students practice rhetorical analysis, defensible academic discourse, skillful annotation and become more informed readers of literary archetypes and philosophical traditions.

Expected Workload: 30 min./night HW; 5-6 major presentations, projects or essays (3-5 pg each); Students read 4-5 major works of philosophy and literature, complemented by film and short essays.

History 10: World Art & the Humanities

Grade Level: 10 // Prerequisite: 9th grade History or equivalent

Students will examine art and cultural history through a global lens, focusing on the physical artifacts humans create, including art, architecture, and civil design. They will analyze these works in their historical and cultural contexts, exploring their significance and the stories they tell about the societies that produced them. By engaging with primary sources, scholarly interpretations, and interdisciplinary projects, students will investigate themes such as identity, power, and cultural exchange, gaining a deeper understanding of how human creativity simultaneously shapes and reflects the world over time. This course does not fulfil a Vistamar Art requirement.

Expected Workload: 30 min./night HW; 5-6 major assessments, presentations, projects or essays (3-5 pg each); Students read course text and materials.

AP Human Geography

Grade Level: 10 // Pre-req: History 9 or equivalent and Department Recommendation.

Human Geography studies where people are, how they got there, and the impact that they have. The AP course is equivalent to an introductory college-level course in human geography. The course introduces students to the systematic study of patterns and processes that have shaped human understanding, use, and alteration of Earth's surface. Through the use of case studies and the development of a broad geography lexicon students will develop a facility in finding and analyzing economic, social, political, and environmental global relationships. They also learn about the methods and tools geographers use in their research and applications. Selected materials include: AP Human Geography textbook - Human Geography: A Spatial Perspective - National Geographic AP Edition.

Expected Workload: Regular 30 min/night textbook reading HW; Frequent multiple choice and "free response" assessments that mirror the AP exam. Year-long, individual, country study project.

English as a Second Language 10: Sheltered Immersion

Grade Level: 10 // Prerequisite: International Student English Language Learners

Minimum TOEFL score: 72 (Duolingo equivalent: 105) - The overall proficiency level is intermediate.

Using the thematic focus of Vistamar School's 10th grade English Literature and History programs, the ESL 10 sheltered immersion space offers English Language Learners (ELLs) the opportunity to continue to hone reading comprehension skills, as well as cultivating a more sophisticated vocabulary in speaking, writing, and listening skills for academic success in their Humanities classes. As academic content is scaffolded, the ESL course trains students with limited English proficiency (LEP) to be able to establish a text's genre by skimming, which helps readers grasp key points, and identify what is most relevant in a given text. The writing process is reinforced by revising language structure, fluency and style. In a safe space, ELLs listen actively and ask or answer questions about what was covered in the mainstream classroom, offer opinions and practice negotiating with or persuading others, and exchange information and ideas via conversations. The course helps ELLs build on existing background knowledge about the subjects being taught. ELLs are shadowed by the ESL instructor in their Literature 10 class.

English 11: American Literature

Grade Level: 11 // Prerequisite: 10th grade Literature or equivalent

American Literature courses will be an opportunity to explore American literature through a variety of thematic lenses, time periods, and genres. This year-long course starts with the indigenous and ends with current literature using an interdisciplinary approach to further develop students' critical and reflective thinking about how the American spirit has been captured and crafted through our national literature. Writing assignments will continue to engage students in the art of academic writing through literary analysis, while also cultivating other modes of writing such as personal narratives and argumentation. An emphasis will be placed on the writing process, allowing students to develop their ideas and construct essays over time and in collaboration with peers and with their teacher.

Expected Workload: 20-30 min./night HW; 5-6 major projects or essays (3-5 pg each); 4 major literary works & a rich selection of short works and poetry

AP English Language & Composition: Courageous and Contagious Conversations

Grade Level: 11 // Prerequisite: 10th grade English or equivalent and Department Recommendation

AP English Language and Composition is the equivalent of a college freshman reading and composition course, designed to give students extensive practice in critical reading, rhetorical analysis, and effective written argumentation. Students will seek a better understanding of how identities have been constructed and represented, participate in ongoing conversations about culture, politics, and society, while exploring issues that are immediately relevant to our nation's history such as race, class, gender, civil disobedience, media & technology, and environmental issues. Students will read from a variety of literary genres with special attention placed on works of nonfiction, essays, speeches, letters, and journalism.

Expected Workload: 35-45 min./ night HW; 6-8 major essays ranging from 4-10 pages each; 6-7 major works of nonfiction or thematic texts sets; frequently timed, AP style in-class essays.

History 11: United States History (Honors Option)

Grade Level: 11 // Prerequisite: AP Human Geography, 10th grade History, or equivalent

U.S. History is an examination of key historical eras from pre-European contact to the early 21st century. Through a focus on historical thinking skills and argumentation, students understand not just "who, what, where, and why," but also the "so what?" of U.S. history. We approach history as a study of people's choices--choices guided by emotion, dilemmas, experience, and conflict. Comprehending primary sources written in the past are essential windows into how people felt and what they were thinking in a given time, place, and situation. We evaluate primary sources and secondary sources with rigorous annotation models that pull out key information, biases, and pertinent analysis.

Expected Workload: 20 min/night HW; weekly short writing assignments (1-2 pages) and/or brief presentations of learning; 1-2 major projects and/or essays (3-5 pages) per trimester; 1 final project (instead of final exam). HONORS OPTION: Honors writing and projects will be more detailed and require more independent research. There will also be a Honors debate for a project grade

AP US History

Grade Level: 11 // Prerequisite: 10th grade History or AP HUG and Department Recommendation

This is a college-level course examining key eras of US history in chronological fashion from diverse Natives societies pre-1492 all the way through the 2016 presidential election. This course introduces students to the complex and contested unfolding of our nation's social, cultural, political, and economic history. Students are encouraged to create their own historical conclusions based on complex combinations of evidence, sources, data, beliefs, and nuanced reasoning. This course places a strong emphasis on students ability to read, dissect, and draw connections from independent work then discuss their takeaways in class and through assignments. The class will feature frequent test prep, essay writing, and reading quizzes to reflect the nature and rigor of the AP examination.

Expected Workload: Multiple weekly readings (chapters) and assignments; weekly reading quizzes and short writing assignments (1-2 pages) and/or brief presentations of learning; 1-2 major projects and/or essays (3-6 pages) per trimester; a cumulative research-based final project in addition to the AP Exam.

Applied Economics (Honors Option)

Grade Level: 11 or 12

In this course, students seek to understand how foundational economic principles shape business, human behavior, and international and national politics. Each unit of study introduces specific concepts (for example, we might explore supply, demand, inflation, scarcity and factors of production). After mastering each concept, students will explore the practical impact of general economic principles through real life case studies or hands-on projects. Students will gain financial literacy and develop a plan for their own financial independence in the final trimester.

Expected Workload: 20 min/night HW; weekly reading and short written responses; at least 6 major projects, papers or presentations (1 per unit). HONORS OPTION: frequent additional readings, AND an additional assignment to extend the scope and rigor of each unit's culminating project.

English 12: Writer's Workshop

Grade Level: 11 or 12 // Prerequisite: American Literature or AP Language and Composition or equivalent*

In this course, students will cultivate their identity and confidence as writers by reading great writing, developing their own writing projects, and publishing their work. Student voice and imagination is at the heart of this class. We will embrace a workshop model of guided exploration into the craft of writing. We will study and write across a variety of genres, including poetry and fiction, as well as nonfiction genres: personal narrative, culture & arts writing, critical reviews, and more. Course reading will include writing advice from expert authors and teachers. Selected "mentor texts" will represent diverse cultural and social perspectives.

*This course can be taken to fulfill English 12 requirement or taken as an elective for juniors

Expected Workload: 20-30 min./ night HW; 5-6 major writing assignments (5-20 pg each); a rich selection of short "mentor texts" of various genres.

English 12: Speech & Rhetoric

Grade Level: 12 // Prerequisite: American Literature or AP Language and Composition or equivalent

This is a course focused on developing students' ability to communicate clearly, confidently, and persuasively in both written and spoken forms. Students will strengthen effective and persuasive writing skills through structured practice, revision, and analysis of audience, purpose, and tone. The course emphasizes reading and analyzing a variety of texts, including speeches, essays, articles, and literary works, to examine rhetorical strategies and support students' own writing and speaking. Through discussion, writing assignments, and presentations, students will learn to craft well supported arguments, evaluate sources, and use language thoughtfully and ethically in academic and authentic contexts.

Expected Workload: 20-30 min./ night HW; 4-5 major writing assignments (4-10 each); reading a rich selection of short "mentor texts."

AP English Literature & Composition: Morality and Ethics in Storytelling

Grade Level: 12 // Prerequisite: AP Language & Composition or 11th grade American Literature or equivalent.

AP Literature is the equivalent of an introductory college-level course in literature, the sort of class in which prospective English majors might enroll before launching into more focused studies of specific eras, genres, or theoretical constructs. The course is designed as a survey of English literature from the 16th to the 21st century, sampling a variety of literary movements and genres. The specific texts selected will be focused around humanity's grappling with how to build a moral and just society. In general, students can expect to read 6 major works (novels and drama) complemented by focused units of selected poetry and short fiction.

Compositional work will seek mastery of formal expectations of literary essays and hone the finer points of sophisticated verbal expression. Students can expect 5-6 essays, in which they develop an interpretation of a literary work. In addition, students will have ample practice writing effective literary analysis under time constraints.

Expected Workload: 35-45 min/night HW; 6 major essays; 6-7 major works and multiple shorter works or selected poetry; several timed "mock" AP essays and multiple choice readings.

AP US Government & Politics: Balancing Liberty and Order

Grade Level: 11 or 12 // Pre-req: U.S. History or AP Human Geography

This is a college-level introductory course examining the United States Constitution, the structures and functioning of government, and realities of American political life. Students will learn the intentional design of the American government and how it spreads power across various groups of people and institutions. Students will also learn about civil rights and liberties and what limits exist on people's freedoms. Lastly, students will learn political ideologies and the art of elections. Students will prepare to complete the AP exam and learn skills to apply their knowledge of government and politics to real world scenarios.

Expected Workload: frequent textbook reading HW; frequent assessments with multiple choice questions and free response questions

Psychology (Honors option)

Grade Level: 11 or 12

Psychology is the study of why we do what we do and why we think what we think. This hands-on course will provide students with an overview of the methods of the science of psychology and its current body of knowledge. Topics will include in-depth explorations of cognition, learning, human development, neuroscience, personality, psychological disorders, therapy, social behavior, and behavioral change. The course will open with an exploration of the intellectual tradition that forms the basis for modern psychology and then continue by examining the views of the diverse schools of thought. Across topics, the current state of the science will inform our investigation and provide a venue for critical thinking about the topic as a whole and scientific inquiry in general. Also, we will use our own lives as lenses through which we can deepen understanding, raise awareness, and develop further questions to consider.

Expected Workload: 20 min/night HW. Weekly reviews of college level articles; 6 self-directed mini-research projects for the year, each of which includes a 4-5 page written or presentation component. HONORS OPTION: 30 min/night HW. Weekly reviews of college level articles; 6 self-directed major research projects for the year, each of which includes a 4-5 page written and a 20 min. presentation component (at least one trimester project will be presented to an authentic audience beyond the classroom).

Contemporary World Issues (Honors Option)

Grade Level: 11 or 12

Contemporary World Issues explore the interrelatedness of nations, peoples, economies and the environment. Each unit investigates the historical context of a particular contemporary issue. We then examine case studies in order to understand the real life impact of global networks.

Students will be equipped to analyze, understand and take informed positions on pressing global issues. Topics may include the invention and promotion of human rights, the role of intergovernmental organizations and NGO's, and international engagement with the environment and global health.

Expected Workload: 30 min/night HW; weekly reading and short written responses; at least 6 major projects, papers or presentations (1 per unit). HONORS OPTION: additional weekly reading, AND an additional assignment to extend the scope and rigor of each unit's culminating project.

*Not offered every year; dependent on enrollment

Math

Math 1

Prerequisite: Pre-Algebra or Math 8

This first course in mathematics connects the study of patterns and relationships to algebraic expressions. Students will represent and analyze mathematical situations and structures using algebraic symbols, utilize mathematical models to understand quantitative relationships, and analyze changes in various contexts. Key topics include properties of inverse operations, lines, inequalities, and parabolas, explored through verbal, numerical, algebraic, and graphical approaches.

Expected Workload: Students should expect about 30 minutes of daily practice with 4–6 problems, a weekly hand-in assignment taking 20–60 minutes, and weekly assessments. The course also includes daily group collaboration and regular problem presentations.

Math 2

Prerequisite: Math 1 or Algebra 1

This problem-based, integrated course extends the study of algebra and introduces planar geometry topics such as properties of lines, angles, triangles, and quadrilaterals. Adapted from the Phillips Exeter Academy curriculum, the course emphasizes investigation and developing mathematical reasoning through meaningful contexts. Classes are seminar-style, requiring active participation in discussions, with a focus on verbal and written communication, multiple representations, and appropriate use of technology.

Expected Workload: About 30 minutes of daily practice, along with weekly hand-in assignments and quizzes requiring additional study time.

Math 3

Prerequisite: Math 2 or Geometry

This third course in mathematics deepens connections between algebraic and geometric representations. Students explore lines and figures in three dimensions, use parametric equations and vectors to prove properties of shapes, and investigate trigonometric functions to describe circular motion. Additional topics include similarity, surface area, and volume.

Expected Workload: About 30 minutes of daily practice, with weekly hand-in assignments and quizzes requiring additional study time.

Honors Math 3

Pre-req: Math 2 or Geometry and Department Recommendation

This course builds on Math 3 with an accelerated pace and additional topics, including matrices and advanced circular function properties from the Math 4 curriculum. Students explore algebraic and geometric connections in three dimensions, parametric equations, vectors, trigonometric functions, and more.

Expected Workload: 30–45 minutes of daily practice, with weekly hand-in assignments and quizzes requiring additional study time.

Math 4

Pre-req: Math 3 or Algebra II

This pre-calculus course broadens students' understanding of algebra and geometry to include nonlinear motion and functions.

Topics include circular motion, ellipses, hyperbolas, exponential and logarithmic functions, rational functions, inverse functions, and function composition. Additional subjects include combinatorics, sequences, series, and limits. Emphasis is placed on connecting algebraic and graphical representations of functions.

Expected Workload: About 30 minutes of daily practice, with weekly hand-in assignments and quizzes requiring additional study time.

Honors Math 4

Prerequisite: Math 3, Honors Math 3, or Algebra II and Department Recommendation

This course covers the same core topics as Math 4 but at an accelerated pace, with additional subjects including matrices, complex numbers, tangent lines, and limits. Exams may include challenging problems connecting topics not yet explicitly covered in class.

Expected Workload: 30–45 minutes of daily practice, with weekly hand-in assignments and quizzes requiring additional study time.

Advanced Topics in Mathematics (Honors Option)

Pre-req: Any senior may take ATM

This course explores real-world applications of mathematics through examples and projects. In the fall and winter, students study discrete mathematics topics such as election theory, fair division, matrices, graph theory, and probability using Discrete Mathematics through Applications by Nancy Crisler. The spring focuses on personal finance, including savings, loans, mortgages, and credit cards.

Expected Workload: A combination of textbook-based problems and real-world projects. Students should expect regular homework assignments and collaborative projects.

AP Calculus AB

Pre-req: Math 4 or Honors Math 4 or Pre-Calc and Department Recommendation

Advanced Placement Calculus AB follows the curriculum outlined by The College Board, providing an in-depth study of the four major concepts of calculus: limits and continuity, derivatives and their applications, definite integrals, and indefinite integrals and their applications. All students in this course are required to prepare for and take the AP examination.

Expected Workload: This course introduces many new topics each week, with daily practice problems, multiple hand-in assignments, and mastery checks through AP Classroom. Success in this course often requires significant additional ungraded practice and study time. On average, students report spending 7–10 hours per week on work outside of class.

AP Calculus BC

Pre-req: Honors Math 4 or Pre-Calc and Department Recommendation

This course follows the guidelines of the AP program for AP Calculus BC, which is designed to mimic a typical first-year college course in calculus. It covers the three main topics: limits and the derivative, definite and indefinite integrals, and the calculus of functions defined by power series. This course moves at an increased pace compared to AP Calculus AB, and covers additional material. All students enrolled in the course are required to prepare for and take the AP examination.

Expected Workload: This class has daily practice problems and multiple hand-ins each week. Most students find that they need to do significant amounts of ungraded additional practice and studying each week to be successful. On average, students say that this course requires 7-10 hours of work outside of class each week.

AP Statistics

Pre-req: Math 4 or Honors Math 4 or Concurrent enrollment with Math 4 or Honors Math 4 and Department Recommendation

This course introduces students to data collection, analysis, prediction, and inference through real-world projects. Key themes include exploring data, planning studies, describing patterns (probability), and statistical inference. Technology is used to manage large datasets and simplify calculations. All students must take the AP exam.

Expected Workload: This course requires regular daily practice outside of class and includes three major tests each trimester. Students are expected to complete assignments when assigned and report spending an average of 2 hours on work outside of class each week.

Honors Multi-Variable Calc

Pre-req: AP Calculus BC or equivalent

This course revisits the foundational ideas of differentiation and integration in the context of functions of several variables and extends calculus for students who have completed AP Calculus BC before their senior year. Students explore partial derivatives, level curves, and gradient vectors, and develop a moving frame description of space curves. The course covers critical point analysis, Lagrange multipliers, and integration in multiple dimensions—including double and triple integrals in Cartesian, cylindrical, and spherical coordinates. Additional topics include Jacobian matrices, classical quadric surfaces, line integrals, and fundamental concepts from vector analysis.

Expected Workload: 30–45 minutes of daily practice, with weekly hand-in assignments and quizzes requiring additional study time.

Computer Science & Robotics

Introduction to Computer Science*

Pre-req: None

Introduction to Computer Science Programming introduces students to the fundamentals of computer programming, with an emphasis on helping students develop logical thinking and problem-solving skills. Students begin by learning to design, code, and test their programs while applying mathematical concepts. Students then move to more advanced programming concepts and learn to create more powerful programs using functions, strings, data structures, and file i/o operations.

Expected Workload: Intro CS is a homework-light class with few formal assessments (tests or exams.) Students will be evaluated primarily on three axes - participation, projects, and presentation. Computing, in higher education and in the workplace, is frequently a collaborative effort, so students should be prepared to work in pairs or groups. Although Intro CS is not designed to be lecture-heavy, many key ideas will be introduced in a traditional (but brief) lecture format, so good note-taking skills will be beneficial.

*Not offered every year; dependent on enrollment

AP Computer Science

Grade Level: 11 or 12 (or permission from instructor) // Pre-req: concurrent enrollment in Honors Math 3 or higher or completion of Math 3.

This course is designed to prepare students for the AP CS A exam, as well as provide them with the tools to be successful Computer Science students at the college level. Class activities will include interactive lectures, individual coding exercises, pair or group activities, and long-term projects and labs. Prior experience with coding is welcome, but not expected or required. All students with a solid mathematics background who enjoy problem-solving, tinkering, learning from mistakes, and hands-on learning are encouraged to consider AP Computer Science.

Expected Workload: 2-4 hours a week outside of class completing ungraded coding practice activities, watching videos, working on labs, or completing AP Classroom practice problems. Students should also expect to have a small amount of work (i.e., 1-2 nights of regular homework) over long school breaks to keep skills sharp. Students are expected to sincerely prepare for, take, and pass the AP Exam in May.

Robotics

Pre-req: None

The Robotics classes at Vistamar exist primarily in support of our two teams that compete annually in the First Tech Challenge robotics league. The first two trimesters are dedicated wholly to the competition season. We will work together to analyze the requirements of each year's ruleset, then design, build, and program robots using iterative engineering schedules to prepare in a timely fashion for each competition of the season. Additionally, students will participate in fundraising and outreach opportunities to support and grow the program. The third trimester is typically our post-season, where we reflect on what was successful and what needs improvement. We will also use this time to build a body of "institutional knowledge" to be passed on to next year's teams.

Expected Workload: Robotics is a homework-light class with few formal assessments (tests or exams.) Most importantly, it is not just for the technically minded - we always need eloquent speakers, driven leaders, and talented documentarians. Participation at competition is not required, but is strongly encouraged. Students in this class will be expected to attend at least one weekly meeting of the Robotics teams. Grading in this class is highly differentiated depending on a student's role - 3D modelers get grades based on their designs and printed parts, team communicators get graded on their outreach efforts, etc.

Science

Physical Science

Grade Level: 9 // Pre-req: None

This course addresses overarching ideas of two branches of science: chemistry and physics. Designed primarily for 9th graders, this is a year-long laboratory science based course. Students will begin the first two trimesters using scientific theories and laws that can predict, manipulate and explain macroscopic interactions. Students will understand Newton's laws that govern motion, energy transfers on earth through waves, electricity and magnetism and their work on the system. During the third trimester, students will dive into atomic interactions by focusing on the characteristics of their subatomic particles, periodic trends and chemical reactions. Students will use knowledge from physics and chemistry to apply crosscutting concepts of patterns, energy and matter, structure and function, and stability and change.

Expected Workload: 30 minutes -1.5 hours of outside preparation per week

Life Science

Grade Level: 10 // Pre-req: Physical Science

Life Science addresses two overarching ideas of two branches of Life Science: chemistry (1st trimester) and biology (2nd & 3rd trimesters). Designed primarily for 10th graders, this is a year-long laboratory science based course. Students will begin by reviewing chemistry they learned in Physical Science then delve into chemical topics they will need for studies of biology, such as types of reactions, stoichiometry, and acids and bases. After the first trimester, the balance of the year will survey foundational topics of biology, such as cellular interactions, inheritance, evolution, and ecosystems.

Expected Workload: 30 minutes -1.5 hours of outside preparation per week

Marine Science

Grade Level 11 or 12

The Marine Science course explores the chemical, physical & biological principles and processes governing ocean systems, marine life, and human interaction with the oceans. This course emphasizes the scientific study of marine environments, organisms, ecosystems, and the impacts of climate change, pollution and human activity on the oceans. Through laboratory experiments, field studies, and scientific inquiry, students will develop a deep understanding of the oceans and their global importance.

Expected Workload: Students can expect ~30 minutes - 1.5 hours of outside preparation per week to work on projects, presentations and research. Students will work both independently and collaboratively with classmates. Students will engage in hands-on labs and scientific research to reinforce understanding of specific class topics revolving around the different aspects of marine science.

Anatomy & Physiology

Grade Level: 12 // Pre-req: 3 years of science

Anatomy & Physiology is an advanced life science course. It is an extensive and detailed examination of the human body and the principles and concepts associated with its study. The two major unifying themes throughout the course are complementarities of structure and function, and homeostasis. After completing Anatomy & Physiology, the student will be able to: Demonstrate skills of experimental design, data analysis, and critical thinking; Describe and inter-relate structures and functions of the human body; Appreciate the roles of science, technology and society, and perceive science as an ongoing human enterprise; and Understand a broad scope of anatomy and physiology concepts.

Expected Workload: Students can expect 30 minutes -1.5 hours of outside preparation per week to memorize anatomical terms and basic functions, of the human body. Students will need to prepare independently for quizzes and tests.

AP Biology

Grade Level: 11 or 12 // Pre-req: Life Science, Math 2, and department recommendation.

Biology AP is a college level Biology course for able and motivated high school students. The course content follows the suggested outline for a "typical" college Biology class developed by the College Entrance Exam Board and covers the 4 Big Ideas in AP Biology: Evolution drives the diversity and unity of life; Biological systems grow, reproduce, and maintain dynamic homeostasis; Living systems store, retrieve, transmit, and respond to information essential to life processes; Biological systems interact and these systems and their interactions possess complex properties. This course provides students with the conceptual framework and analytical skills necessary to understand the rapidly growing science of Biology and learn how investigators collect, interpret, and organize information about the natural world. All students enrolled in the course are required to prepare for and take the AP examination.

Expected Workload: This course requires a high degree of independence and depth of thinking as a new topic is presented each class period and the reading is fairly complex. Students must also be able to write detailed responses to analyze and interpret scientific information to draw reasonable conclusions. Students will be expected to independently prepare outside of class for AP style quizzes and exams.

AP Chemistry

Grade Level: 11 or 12 // Pre-req: Life Science, Math 2, and department recommendation. Advanced Placement Chemistry covers the equivalent of one full year of college level General Chemistry. The four fundamental questions addressed in this course are (a) What is Matter? (Atomic, Molecular Structure), (b) How does Matter change? (Chemical Reactions), (c) Why does Matter change? (Thermodynamics), (d) How fast does Matter change? (Kinetics). The course has a strong laboratory component, and it requires a thorough mastery of algebra. It provides students with a thorough foundation in such fundamental concepts of chemistry as the nature of matter, gas laws, thermodynamics, stoichiometry, bonding, chemical kinetics, and chemical equilibrium.

Expected Workload: This course requires a high degree of independence and depth of thinking as a new topic is presented each class period and the reading is fairly complex. This course requires students to grapple with hard questions and go beyond the “what” and “how” of Chemistry to understand “why” and “how we know.” Outside of class, students are expected to review the concepts discussed in class, write lab reports for each lab activity, complete assignments that involve application of concepts in new contexts. Mastery is demonstrated on quizzes, tests, lab activities, and lab reports.

AP Environmental Science

Grade Level: 11 or 12 // Pre-req: Life Science, Math 2, and department recommendation.

The AP Environmental Science course is designed to be the equivalent of a one-semester, introductory college course in environmental science. Unlike most other introductory-level science courses, environmental science is offered from a wide variety of departments, including geology, biology, environmental studies, environmental science, chemistry, and geography. The goal of the AP Environmental Science course is to provide students with the scientific principles, concepts, and methodologies required to understand the interrelationships of the natural world, to identify and analyze environmental problems both natural and human-made, to evaluate the relative risks associated with these problems, and to examine alternative solutions for resolving and/or preventing them. All students enrolled in the course are required to prepare for and take the AP examination.

Expected Workload: This course requires a high degree of independence and depth of thinking as APES covers a wide range of topics quickly and the reading is fairly complex. Students must also be able to write detailed, logical responses and use a wide skill set including math, science (chemistry, biology, physics), writing, reading, geography, and history. Students will be expected to independently prepare outside of class for AP style quizzes and exams.

Inventions & Engineering*

Grade Level: 12 // Pre-req: 3 years of science

This course is designed to provide students with real-life applications of the Physical Sciences and Mathematics in a fun, exciting, and challenging way. The course begins with basic electrical circuitry and transits into programming and digital electronics, and ends with microcontroller programming and interfacing. The course introduces students to the principles behind Applied Physics/Mathematics through teamwork and problem-solving challenges to explore the iterative process of designing, testing, building, programming and predicting performance of various engineering systems. Projects range from technical drawing to designing electrical and mechatronic systems.

Expected Workload: Students can expect an in class lab with each unit. Students are expected to work outside of scheduled class time to work on engineering projects and prepare for quizzes and tests. The ability to work collaboratively on a team working is key for this course.

*Not offered every year; dependent on enrollment

AP Physics C – Mechanics

Grade Level: 11 or 12 // Pre-req: At least one AP Science course, AP Calculus AB or BC, and department recommendation.

AP Physics C is a calculus-based introductory college-level physics course that explores topics in each of the following six content areas: kinematics; Newton's laws of motion; work, energy and power; systems of particles and linear momentum; circular motion, simple harmonic motion, and rotation; and oscillations and gravitation. Through inquiry-based learning, students will develop scientific critical thinking and reasoning skills. This course requires that 20% of the instructional time will be spent in hands-on laboratory work, with an emphasis on inquiry-based investigations that provide students with opportunities to apply the science practices. AP Physics C should be taken by students who want to major in physics, engineering, or math.

Expected Workload: This course requires a high degree of independence and depth of thinking as students are expected to apply knowledge from class lectures to tackle novel problems. Students must also be able to decipher complex reading and write detailed responses to analyze and interpret scientific information to draw reasonable conclusions. Students will be expected to independently prepare outside of class for AP style quizzes and exams. This course also involves laboratory investigations as well as the design of experiments to explore and/or validate physical laws, theories, and theorems.

AP Physics C: Electricity and Magnetism*

Grade Level: 11 or 12 // Pre-req: At least one AP Science course, AP Calculus AB or BC, and department recommendation.

AP Physics C: Electricity and Magnetism is a college-level course that explores electric and magnetic forces, fields, and interactions using calculus. Students study topics such as electrostatics, circuits, magnetic fields, induction, and Maxwell's equations while applying mathematical methods to solve quantitative problems. The course emphasizes analytical thinking, experimental skills, and real-world applications of electromagnetic theory. It prepares students for further study in physics and engineering and culminates in the AP Exam. AP Physics C, Mechanics is a prerequisite for enrolling in this course.

Expected Workload: This course requires a high degree of independence and depth of thinking as students are expected to apply knowledge from class lectures to tackle novel problems. Students must also be able to decipher complex reading and write detailed responses to analyze and interpret scientific information to draw reasonable conclusions. Students will be expected to independently prepare outside of class for AP style quizzes and exams. This course also involves laboratory investigations as well as the design of experiments to explore and/or validate physical laws, theories, and theorems.

*Not offered every year; dependent on enrollment

Advanced Practicum in Lab Science

Grade Level: 12 // Pre-req: Application process; at least one AP Science course; should be considering pursuing a science related-field in college.

Advanced Practicum in Science, designed primarily for seniors, is a pass/no-pass, year-long, laboratory based position. Lab Assistants would work side-by-side with the science department faculty to organize and maintain lab spaces, assist students with techniques and safety during labs, and perform administrative tasks. Lab Assistants will learn the entire lab implementation process and gain insight into science education and the technical aspects of science-related fields.

Expected Workload: Duties of a Lab Assistant include but are not limited to: Inventory and organize lab materials organize lab spaces - setting up and cleaning up actively participate with students during class to assist with lab techniques and safety take photos and videos of lab experiences for social media make how-to videos for labs and/or lab techniques.

Visual & Performing Arts

Drawing, Painting & Mixed Media

Grade Level: all // Pre-req: none

This beginning course in 2D Art will introduce students to the fundamentals of drawing, painting and mixed media through visual problem solving. Students will be offered the tools and techniques to create, experience, express themselves, and respond to the arts to the best of his or her ability. The goal is to build and develop a foundation of basic technical skills and visual arts vocabulary, while nurturing individual creative impulse and personal expression. Together we will view art, talk about art, create art, and respond to art in order to gain a deeper understanding and appreciation of the importance of the arts.

Expected Workload: In class only, completing artwork and related projects.

Drawing, Painting & Mixed Media - Advanced

Grade Level: 10, 11, 12 unless approved by teacher // Pre-req: Drawing, Painting & Mixed Media

In this advanced course students will partner with the teacher and other students in an effort to increase their skills in drawing, painting, and mixed media. Students will develop and apply the necessary artistic tools, both mechanical and conceptual, in building on and expanding their experiences in the beginning 2D Art course. Complexity in ideas and themes will be explored as it pertains to the context of their artwork through visual problem solving. The students will also learn how to feel more successful in expressing themselves through their artworks with an increased aesthetic awareness and the use of the visual arts language and concepts.

Expected Workload: In class only, completing artwork and related projects.

Drawing, Painting & Mixed Media - Advanced 2

Grade Level: 10, 11, 12 unless approved by teacher // pre-req: Drawing, Painting & Mixed Media - Advanced

This course expands even further on creative problem solving and includes a more independent level of artistic exploration and application, designed for students who are seriously committed to continuing their study in Art and building their portfolio, possibly for the AP Studio Art course. Compositional themes and technical skills increase in difficulty, and students are given the opportunity to find and develop their own voices as artists through meaning, interpretation, and the choices that they make in their work.

Expected Workload: Occasionally some work outside of class. Keeping a sketchbook, artwork and related projects.

Honors Drawing, Painting & Mixed Media

Grade Level: 10, 11, 12 // Pre-req: Drawing, Painting & Mixed Media - Advanced & instructor recommendation, or equivalent.

This course is an intensive challenge to begin the process of building an art portfolio in preparation for AP Art and Design courses, or to provide a sound foundation for the aspiring professional artist. Students will develop skills using new and familiar media. Self expression, theme development and technical skills increase in difficulty, and students are given the opportunity to find and develop their own voices as artists through meaning, interpretation, and the choices that they make.

Expected Workload: Some work outside of class. Keeping a sketchbook, artwork and related projects.

3D Art

Grade Level: all // Pre-req: none

Grounded in an exploration of the fundamentals of sculpture, this course will give students the tools to translate their ideas from thoughts in their heads to forms in real space. The development of their ideas and their individual process will be the main focus, accompanied with group critiques where teacher and students will give feedback to each other's work. Construction techniques and different methods for building sculptures will be explored, as students will be introduced to a number of tools and a variety of materials throughout the course. Students will demonstrate these new skills creatively, while thinking and re-thinking through your relationship to materials and objects. Students will gain the skills to cut, sand, mold, morph, contort, distort, and gather. Students will gain experience working three-dimensionally and you will expand their own ideas of what a sculpture can be, materially as well as conceptually.

Expected Workload: All work is done in class, including sketching, completion of projects.

3D Art - Advanced

Grade Level: 10, 11, 12 unless approved by teacher // Pre-req: 3D Art

In this course, emphasis will be placed on informed critical thinking, compositional forms, elements and principles of 3-D Art and Design. Students will be given assignments that engage decision-making about how to use these elements and principles of art as they relate to the integration of depth, space, volume, and surface. Students will make individual artworks based on 3-D design elements and principles and respond conceptually to historical, philosophical and cultural prompts. With each assignment, a corresponding lecture of historical and contemporary artworks will be shown to the class. Students will create artwork using the techniques of clay, plaster, found-object sculpture, wire, and more. The goals of this course are for students to demonstrate an understanding of processes and techniques used in a sculptural art practice, build making skills, and create artwork that effectively shows individual creativity and problem-solving abilities. Participants will supplement their previous experiences with 3D art through greater hand-building design challenges, deeper exploration of the potter's wheel, more advanced glazing techniques and the introduction of mixed media. Expected Workload: All work is done in class, including sketching, completion of projects.

3D Art - Advanced 2

Grade Level: 11, 12 unless approved by teacher // Pre-req: 3D Art - Advanced

Participants further hone skills in 3D art through a series of challenging projects. Students will develop a theme and work to create a portfolio centered around their ideas. Formal properties of art will be researched, as well as professionals and their work, as students choose 3D media that challenges their aesthetic and reflect the larger theme exploration.

Expected Workload: Occasionally some work outside of class. Keeping a sketchbook, artwork and related projects.

Honors 3D Art

Grade Level: 10, 11, 12 // Pre-req: 3D Art - Advanced & instructor recommendation, or equivalent

This course is an intensive challenge to begin the process of building an art portfolio in preparation for AP Art and Design courses, or to provide a sound foundation for the aspiring professional artist. Students will develop skills using new and familiar media. Self expression, theme development, and technical skills increase in difficulty, and students are given the opportunity to find and develop their own voices as artists through meaning, interpretation, and the choices that they make.

Expected Workload: Some work outside of class. Keeping a sketchbook, artwork and related projects.

Photography

Grade Level: all // Pre-req: none

Students will explore Photography in depth, including technical mastery of the camera as a tool, further control of story and audience, conceptual connections between objects and ideas, and more advanced photographic techniques. Students will also work on developing their personal portfolio, completing series work, and exploring career opportunities in photography by learning advanced Photoshop techniques and training to pass the Adobe Certification exam for Photoshop CC.

Expected Workload: Considerable work outside of class. Taking pictures, maintaining portfolio

Photography- Advanced

Grade Level: 10, 11, 12 unless approved by teacher // Pre-req: Photography

This is an advanced course in photography. Students will explore technical, artistic, and commercial aspects of photography. The course will include on and off camera flash techniques, studio strobe usage, advanced digital camera operations and creative digital darkroom techniques with the use of Lightroom and Photoshop software. Class time will enable students to work on independent and cooperative explorations. Students will prepare a digital portfolio of their work in the form of a Google Site.

Expected Workload: Considerable work outside of class. Taking pictures, maintaining portfolio.

Photography - Advanced 2

Grade Level: 11, 12 unless approved by teacher // Pre-req: Photography - Advanced

Participants use the tools and skills they have gained in their two previous years of photography to hone an independent level of artistic exploration and application. This course is designed for students who are seriously committed to continuing their study in photography and building their portfolio, possibly for the AP Studio Art course the following year. Compositional themes and technical skills increase in difficulty, and students are given the opportunity to find and develop their own voices as artists through meaning, interpretation, and the choices that they make in their work.

Expected Workload: Considerable work outside of class. Taking pictures, maintaining portfolio.

Digital Media Art

Grade Level: all // Pre-req: none

Communicating visually, deconstructing images and history, building on critical awareness, and creative thinking are some of the fundamentals explored in this course. Experimenting with individual approaches to the design process and its application in the myriad of occupations and in culture are investigated. These skills are highlighted as participants learn the basic tools and functions of Adobe Photoshop and Adobe Illustrator, and Print Production. Participants learn about digital art in raster and vector environments through a series of design challenges which pave the way to applicable, cross-curricular knowledge.

Expected Workload: All work is done in class, including sketching, completion of projects.

Digital Media Art- Advanced

Grade Level: 10, 11, 12 unless approved by teacher // Pre-req: Digital Media Art

Further development of digital media skills through Photoshop and Illustrator is encouraged as well as introduction of other tools in the Adobe Creative Cloud suite, including InDesign. Digital Art and Design is explored as participants learn to work across programs to achieve project parameters. Students are introduced to design projects and encouraged to independently investigate critical thinking and creative problem solving to accomplish them. The course also brings attention to concepts and innovation in the arts through historical and cultural examples.

Expected Workload: All work is done in class, including sketching, completion of projects. Occasionally one-off freelance projects.

AP Art (2-D Art & Design, 3-D Art & Design, or Drawing)

Grade Level: 11,12 unless approved by teacher // Pre-req: 2+ years of Art; Instructor approval required.

The AP 2-D Art and Design, AP 3-D Art and Design, and AP Drawing courses are designed to be the equivalent of a one-semester, introductory college course in 2-D art and design, 3-D art and design, and drawing, respectively. Students create a portfolio of work to demonstrate inquiry through art and design and development of materials, processes, and ideas over the course of a year. Portfolios include works of art and design, process documentation, and written information about the work presented. In May, students submit portfolios for evaluation based on specific criteria, which include skillful synthesis of materials, processes, and ideas and sustained investigation through practice, experimentation, and revision, guided by questions.

Expected Workload: Moderate work outside of class. Work for the AP portfolio includes creating and maintaining a body of work and keeping a sketchbook. Complete, photograph, and write about artwork and related projects, upload to AP site.

Choir & Vocal Jazz Ensemble

Grade Level: all // Pre-req: none

Singing is fun! In this course we study vocal technique, ear-training, singing in harmonies, and related collaborative and musical elements pertaining to Choir, vocal jazz, and other genres. We will sing mostly a cappella (voices without instruments) and we will also have opportunities to collaborate with other instrumental ensembles. We perform at school concerts and events, and will also have additional after school rehearsals in proximity to productions.

Expected Workload: Rehearsals and individual practice outside of class.

Music Lab

Grade Level: 9, 10, 11, 12 // Pre-req: None

This year-long [Instrument Lab] course is designed for students to build foundational skills on a musical instrument of their choice. The course provides a comprehensive introduction to the techniques, practices, and dedication required to achieve proficiency on an instrument, preparing students for future participation in music ensembles and activities. Students will learn subjects including but not limited to rhythm, scales, chords, functional harmony, reading music, improvisation techniques, and historical context of music and musical instruments that we are studying. Additionally, the course welcomes students with prior instrumental experience interested in individual practice time, repertoire coaching, and ongoing musical guidance. The course is geared toward the following instruments: piano/keyboards, guitar, bass, drums, percussion, trumpet, saxophone, trombone. Other instruments may be considered with instructor approval.

Expected Workload: Regular practicing outside of class. Some rehearsal and setup outside of class. Projects as assigned. Possible public performances

Rock Ensemble

Grade Level: all // Pre-req: 2+ years instrumental and ensemble experience recommended.

This course is designed to explore and to learn about the rock idiom and related styles. Students will learn music theory (rhythm, chords, scales, functional harmony), improvisation techniques, reading music, songwriting techniques, and other subjects to facilitate a deeper understanding of the musical language. Students will also learn about effective ways of collaborating musically in an ensemble, and the importance of listening to oneself and to fellow musicians. There will also be opportunities to participate in performance projects inside and outside of class. The course is geared toward the following instruments: piano/keyboards, guitar, bass, drums, percussion. **Expected Workload:** Rehearsals and individual practice outside of class.

Jazz Band

Grade Level: 10,11,12 unless instructor approved // Pre-req: Audition required for instructor approval, 2+ years instrumental and ensemble experience recommended

This course is designed to explore and to learn about the jazz idiom and related styles. Students will learn music theory (rhythm, chords, scales, functional harmony), improvisation techniques, reading music, and other subjects to facilitate a deeper understanding of the musical language. Students will also learn about effective ways of collaborating musically in an ensemble, and the importance of listening to oneself and to fellow musicians. There will also be opportunities to participate in performance projects inside and outside of class. The course is geared toward the following instruments: piano/keyboards, guitar, bass, drums, percussion, trumpet, saxophone, trombone.

Expected Workload: Rehearsals and individual practice outside of class

Music Production

Grade Level: all // Pre-req: none

This course offers a creative and technical experience in digital music media. We will learn about in-studio editing, sound design, properties of electronic sound, and cabling and engineering for live recordings and performances. Additionally, we will learn about fundamental aspects of the musical language to facilitate song writing and composition in the digital music realm. We will work with synthesizers, looper stations, Ableton, and related software, equipment, and applications.

Expected Workload: Moderate work outside of class, creating musical compositions, cabling for sound and working with audio technology

Music Production - Advanced

Grade Level: 10,11,12 unless instructor approved // Pre-req: Music Production; Instructor Approval

A continuation of the work we do in Music Production, this course offers an advanced and in-depth experience in digital music media. We will learn about in-studio editing, sound design, properties of electronic sound, and cabling and engineering for live recordings and performances. Additionally, we will learn about fundamental aspects of the musical language to facilitate song writing and composition in the digital music realm. We will work with synthesizers, looper stations, Ableton, and related software, equipment and applications.

Expected Workload: Moderate work outside of class, creating musical compositions, cabling for sound and working with audio technology

Music Production - Advanced 2

Grade Level: 10,11,12 unless instructor approved // Pre-req: Music Production - Advanced; Instructor Approval

A continuation of the work we do in Advanced Music Production, this course offers an advanced and in-depth experience in digital music media. We will continue to learn about in-studio editing, sound design, properties of electronic sound, and cabling and engineering for live recordings and performances. Additionally, we will learn about fundamental aspects of the musical language to facilitate song writing and composition in the digital music realm. We will work with synthesizers, looper stations, Ableton, and related software, equipment and applications.

Expected Workload: Moderate work outside of class, creating musical compositions, cabling for sound and working with audio technology

AP Music Theory

Grade Level: 11,12 unless instructor approved // Pre-req: Instructor Approval; Other music courses recommended

This advanced course in music theory is designed to introduce students to the foundations of tonal harmony, musical form, voice-leading, and counterpoint. As well, fundamental aspects of the musical language will also be studied, including but not limited to scales, chords, rhythm, harmonic function, singing, ear training, and how to read and notate music. There will also be opportunities to participate in performance projects inside and outside of class.

Expected Workload: Homework and research outside of class

Acting for Stage & Screen

Grade Level: all // Pre-req: none

Theatre skills are life skills. In this beginning class, students will explore theatre and build their acting skills in a variety of styles such as: improvisation and theatre games, monologues, scene construction and character development. They will be taught theatrical terminology, be introduced to theatre history, Greek drama, playwriting, movement, Shakespeare, musical theatre, on-camera, and audition technique, while growing in their understanding of the collaborative nature of theatre and applying their new set of skills to real life.

Expected Workload: Occasionally some work outside of class- reading, practice of material.

Acting for Stage & Screen - Advanced

Grade Level: 10, 11, 12 // Pre-req: Acting for Stage and Screen or equivalent

Students will continue to develop in and focus on their acting skills through monologue work and scene study from contemporary plays. This course will focus on three acting teachers and their techniques; Anne Bogar, Sanford Meisner, and Michael Chekhov. Students will learn to bring their own authenticity to their work and will continue to develop their skills in critical thinking and script analysis.

Expected Workload: Occasionally some work outside of class- reading, practice of material.

Film Production*

Grade Level: all // Pre-req: none

This introductory course provides students with hands-on experience in the fundamentals of filmmaking. Through collaborative projects, students will explore the core elements of storytelling, cinematography, editing, and production management. Emphasis is placed on learning the creative and technical skills needed to bring ideas from script to screen. Students will gain practical experience using film equipment, working in teams to produce short projects, and critiquing their work to develop their artistic voice. This course focuses on cultivating a foundational understanding of the filmmaking process and the teamwork required in creating visual stories.

Expected Workload: Light to moderate work outside of class for planning, filming, and editing projects.

*Not offered every year; dependent on enrollment

Film Production - Advanced*

Grade Level: 10, 11, 12 // Pre-req: Film Production; Instructor Approval.

This is a full year course for students with a comprehensive knowledge of filmmaking who are interested in further developing their skills in the areas of writing, directing, cinematography, producing, or editing.

Expected Workload: Moderate work outside of class- writing, filming, set up and breakdown of equipment.

*Not offered every year; dependent on enrollment

Theatre Production

Grade Level: 10, 11, 12 // Pre-req: None

Students will learn specialized vocabulary and explore set design, lighting design, sound design, property design and costume design. Students will reflect on design elements found in school and outside productions with design analysis and critiques. Students will learn practical application by working on productions. Students will explore mood, color, application and perspective. Problem solving, leadership and working well under pressure are stressed.

Expected Workload: Occasionally some work outside of class. Building, decorating and maintaining sets, use of machinery, equipment and tools.

Theatre Production - Advanced

Grade Level: 11, 12 // Pre-req: Theater Production; Instructor Approval.

Students with a basic knowledge of the technical aspects of Theatre Production will continue to hone and craft their knowledge and abilities through a variety of leadership positions within the class (and potentially the Theatre program) that focus on set design, lighting design, sound design, property design, and costume design.

Expected Workload: Occasionally some work outside of class. Building, decorating and maintaining sets, use of machinery, equipment and tools.

World Languages

Spanish 1

Pre-req: None

This course introduces students to the language and cultures of Spanish-speaking countries and communities. Students learn vocabulary, expressions and structures to communicate effectively in order to achieve everyday tasks. They will be able to provide information about themselves and their immediate surroundings using words, phrases, and memorized expressions. They will hone their reading and listening comprehension skills as they learn to recognize, identify and interpret new vocabulary, cognates and simple sentences. They will be able to speak and write about familiar topics in three modes—interpersonal, interpretive and presentational. By the end of the course, they will be able to have simple conversations about their daily school experiences, family life, and what they enjoy doing in their free time. They will recognize and use basic verb structures in the present and will begin to express actions that happened in the past. They will be able to describe how people are feeling and what they are like, discuss and plan a vacation, negotiate purchases, and describe clothing. They will explore traditions and basic historical information of different Spanish-speaking cultures to be able to compare them with their own.

Expected Workload: Class fully taught in Spanish. Assignments consisting of reading (stories, information text), writing, listening, and speaking (both presentational and interpersonal) in Spanish. Assignments can either be on a project, quiz, test, or daily assignment. Summative assessments each trimester, and comprehensive final exam.

Spanish 2

Pre-req: Spanish 1 with at least a C mastery of Vistamar Standards for Spanish 1

This course builds on basic communication skills mastered in Spanish 1 or equivalent. Students will be able to exchange information on familiar tasks, topics, and activities as well as handle short social interactions using phrases and simple sentences. They will use a variety of authentic materials to learn a broad vocabulary and grammar constructions including: past tense verbs, direct and indirect object, possessive pronouns, and commands. Students are expected to use these skills in a variety of situations and contexts in all three modes of communication: interpersonal, interpretive, and presentational. In addition, students will learn about aspects of Hispanic culture and history through a variety of media and community activities.

Expected Workload: Daily homework (including weekends at times), cumulative speaking tests (tests on material studied throughout the year), summer homework, a lot of new material taught at a fast pace, recommended for students that not only have a strong foundation, but also are highly motivated to learn Spanish, class taught at a native pace all in Spanish, read novel in Spanish, expectation to always speak and write in Spanish.

Honors Spanish 2

Pre-req: Spanish 1 with at least a A or strong mastery of Vistamar Standards for Spanish 1; Department Recommendation

This course is for students with strong beginning skills and proven work habits who want to challenge themselves and pursue an accelerated learning pathway. By the end of the course, students will be able to carry on a conversation on a limited number of familiar topics. They will be able to ask and answer simple questions, and exchange information in familiar situations using phrases and a series of sentences. They will be able to write on familiar topics and experiences using a series of connected sentences with some detail.

Students in this fast-track course are expected to continue their Spanish study in Honors Spanish 3 and culminate in AP Spanish Language and either Honors Topics in Adv. Spanish-Lit./Film or AP Spanish Literature/Culture. **Expected Workload:** Daily homework (including weekends at times), cumulative speaking tests (tests on material studied throughout the year), summer homework, a lot of new material taught at a fast pace, recommended for students that not only have a strong foundation, but also are highly motivated to learn Spanish, class taught at nearly native pace all in Spanish, read novel in Spanish, expectation to always try speaking in Spanish.

Spanish 3

Pre-req: Spanish 2 / Honors Spanish 2 with at least a C or mastery of Vistamar Standards for Spanish 2 or Honors Spanish 2

This course reviews the fundamentals of language learned in previous years and introduces more complex structures to provide students with elements to speak fluently and create in Spanish. The course offers the opportunity for more advanced speaking, listening, reading and writing. Students are exposed to the culture of the Spanish-speaking world and current events through the analysis of magazine articles and a variety of media resources. Students will practice and develop the skills for appropriate proficiency levels for this stage in their learning of the Spanish language. They will engage in different situations and activities in which emphasis is placed on listening and speaking skills. At the same time they will read, analyze and write about a variety of topics.

Expected Workload: Class fully taught in Spanish. Assignments consisting of reading (stories, information text), writing, listening, and speaking (both presentational and interpersonal) in Spanish. Assignments can either be on a project, quiz, test, or daily assignment. Summative assessments each trimester, and comprehensive final exam.

Honors Spanish 3

Pre-req: Spanish 2 with at least an A or Honors Spanish 2 with at least a B; Department Recommendation

The goal of Spanish 3 Honors is for students to develop a deep level of proficiency and sophistication with their Spanish language skills. They will hone their reading and listening comprehension while they broaden and sharpen their speaking and writing. Students will be able to communicate about familiar and some unfamiliar topics in three modes—interpersonal, interpretive and presentational. Students will be able to describe experiences, give opinions, and narrate a story. They will also be able to state and support their views and be able to compare and contrast different Spanish-speaking cultures with their own. Furthermore, they will connect sentences with many details and develop cohesive ideas through extended discourse in Spanish. Because this course has honor status, the workload is rigorous and the expectations for students are high. Spanish III Honors is an accelerated learning option for those students who are interested in taking an AP course earlier than the regular pathway.

Expected Workload: Daily homework (including weekends at times), cumulative speaking tests (tests on material studied throughout the year), summer homework, a lot of new material taught at a fast pace, recommended for students that not only have a strong foundation, but also are highly motivated to learn Spanish, class taught at a native pace all in Spanish, read novel in Spanish, expectation to always speak and write in Spanish.

Honors Spanish 3 (Heritage)

Pre-req: Qualify as a "heritage Spanish speaker" (based on language background, assessment, and interview in Spanish) and approval of Heritage Spanish teacher.

Honors Spanish 3 (Heritage) es un curso riguroso diseñado para estudiantes que hablan español en el hogar activa o frecuentemente y poseen un nivel educativo básico o medio en las cuatro competencias lingüísticas (expresión oral y escrita, comprensión auditiva y lectora). El curso se imparte exclusivamente en español y se basa en proyectos académicos con tres principios fundamentales: a) desarrollar los conocimientos y competencias en el idioma, b) proporcionar oportunidades para la exploración de la identidad bilingüe, multicultural y creativa de sus participantes, y c) fomentar hábitos de pensamiento crítico y abstracto en el contexto global. Con el propósito de facilitar el máximo desarrollo intelectual del estudiante, el curso se ha estructurado en cuatro secciones: Competencia Lingüística (sección introductoria), Historia e Identidad, Artes (Cine, Música, Bellas Artes), y Literatura Hispanoamericana. El estudiante adquirirá un conjunto amplio y elevado de destrezas que abarcan desde la gramática avanzada, ortografía y el aprendizaje de vocabulario especializado hasta la interpretación crítica y el análisis de temas lingüísticos, histórico-culturales y literarios. Además, cada estudiante deberá producir y presentar trabajos escritos y orales en diversos formatos y géneros (ensayos analíticos y persuasivos, cuentos, poesía y trabajos investigativos así como obras de teatro, guiones de cortometrajes y otros tipos de producciones creativas).

Expected Workload: Daily homework (including weekends at times), cumulative speaking/reading/writing tests (tests on material studied throughout the year), homework during breaks, a lot of new material taught at a fast pace, class taught at nearly native pace all in Spanish, read novels and poems in Spanish, expectation to always speak and write in Spanish.

Spanish 4

Pre-req: Spanish 3 / Honors Spanish 3 with at least a C or mastery of Vistamar Standards for Spanish 3.

Spanish 4 reviews and builds on language fundamentals learned in previous years and introduces more complex grammar structures. The course is designed to develop strong communications skills and a cultural understanding of the Spanish-speaking world. Students will be able to state and support many of their views and take an active part in discussions. They will also be able to handle some complicated situations on familiar topics and write communications, narratives, descriptions, explanations, and short essays (250 words) on familiar topics using connected, detailed paragraphs. Students will also be introduced to literature by reading some prose and poetry as well as learning some literary devices.

Expected Workload: Class fully taught in Spanish. Assignments consisting of reading (stories, information text), writing, listening, and speaking (both presentational and interpersonal) in Spanish. Assignments can either be on a project, quiz, test, or daily assignment. Summative assessments each trimester, and comprehensive final exam.

AP Spanish Language (Heritage)

Pre-req: Honors Spanish 3 (Heritage) with at least a C plus Heritage Spanish teacher's recommendation.

AP Spanish Language is a demanding course conducted entirely in Spanish similar to other classes however at a native pace due to it being a heritage speaker class. Students communicate in clear, effective, linguistically correct manners, both formally and informally, in a variety of settings. Students must be able to understand and accurately use a wide range of vocabulary pertinent to topics such as: technology, global social conditions, relationships and entertainment. When using Spanish students demonstrate awareness of the cultural diversity and language variance in the Spanish-speaking world. Language examples are drawn from a variety of mediums including music, television, magazines, newspapers, essays and emails.

Students develop key language skills such as being able to identify and summarize main points, important details, make inferences, and predict outcomes both in oral and written form. During the course students write a variety of essays, including analytical, comparative and persuasive. These are the skills and forms necessary for success on the AP Spanish Language examination. Additionally, students will be prepared for the AP Spanish Literature course by reading authentic prose and poetry, studying literary devices, and engaging in literary discussions.

Expected Workload: Daily homework (including weekends at times), cumulative speaking/reading/writing tests (tests on material studied throughout the year), homework during breaks, a lot of new material taught at a fast pace, class taught at nearly native pace all in Spanish, read novels and poems in Spanish, expectation to always speak and write in Spanish.

AP Spanish Language

Pre-req: Teacher's recommendation plus Honors Spanish 3 with at least a B or Spanish 3 / Spanish 4 with at least an A-

AP Spanish Language is a demanding course conducted entirely in Spanish similar to other classes however closer to a native speaking pace. Students communicate in clear, effective, linguistically correct manners, both formally and informally, in a variety of settings. Students must be able to understand and accurately use a wide range of vocabulary pertinent to topics such as: technology, global social conditions, relationships and entertainment. When using Spanish students demonstrate awareness of the cultural diversity and language variance in the Spanish-speaking world. Language examples are drawn from a variety of mediums including music, television, magazines, newspapers, essays and emails. Students develop key language skills such as being able to identify and summarize main points, important details, make inferences, and predict outcomes both in oral and written form. During the course students write a variety of essays, including analytical, comparative and persuasive. These are the skills and forms necessary for success on the AP Spanish Language examination. Additionally, students will be prepared for the AP Spanish Literature course by reading authentic prose and poetry, studying literary devices, and engaging in literary discussions.

Expected Workload: Daily homework (including weekends at times), cumulative speaking/reading/writing tests (tests on material studied throughout the year), homework during breaks, a lot of new material taught at a fast pace, class taught at a native pace all in Spanish, read novel and other texts in Spanish, expectation to always speak and write in Spanish.

Honors Topics in Advanced Spanish - Lit & Film

Pre-req: Department recommendation plus AP Spanish Language / AP Spanish Language (Heritage) with at least a B and a passing score on the AP Spanish Language Exam.

Honors Topics in Advanced Spanish Literature and Film instills students with a love for Spanish literature and language as a means of practical creative communication. The class is at a similar level as that of a Spanish AP Literature class. The course introduces students to the formal study of a representative body of Peninsular and Latin American literary texts and to provide students with a learning experience equivalent to that of a third-year college course. The extensive list of readings exposes students to a wide variety of Spanish-speaking cultures, genres and types of discourse which will enable students to trace the history of Spanish prose, theater and poetry from the 11th century to modern times through the canon of literature. The reading list is also intended to acquaint students with significant works that have become sources for history, sociocultural studies and art worldwide. At the end of the year, students in this class have the option to take the AP Spanish Literature exam, and those who perform satisfactorily on it may receive credit for a comparable college-level literature course.

Expected Workload: Daily homework (including weekends at times), cumulative speaking/reading/writing tests (tests on material studied throughout the year), homework during breaks, a lot of new material taught at a fast pace, class taught at nearly native pace all in Spanish, read novels and poems in Spanish, expectation to always speak and write in Spanish.

AP Spanish Literature & Culture

Pre-req: Department recommendation plus passing the AP Spanish Language & Culture class with an A and scoring a 4 or higher on the AP Exam or passing Honors Topics in Adv. Spanish-Lit/Film with at least a B.

Spanish Literature and Culture course is designed for students highly motivated to become fluent in Spanish, and go beyond oral proficiency, this course is an academic study of Literature in Spanish at a college-level pace. The course has an extensive list of 38 titles that include works from the 14th century until the contemporary period. Students are introduced to a body of work from Peninsular Spanish, Latin American, and U.S. Hispanic literature, including short stories, novels, poetry, drama, and essays. The goal of the course is for students to read critically, think deeply, and write analytically to demonstrate their understanding of the texts they encounter. The College Boards description of the course sums our hope perfectly, "that when students apply the methods of literary analysis suggested in the course, and focus their attention on linguistic detail coupled with critical interpretation and analysis of texts, they will acquire skills that they will be able to apply to many other areas of learning and life.

Expected Workload: Daily homework (including weekends), cumulative speaking/reading/writing tests(tests on material studied throughout the year), homework during breaks, a lot of new material taught at a fast pace, class taught at a native pace in Spanish, read approximately 38 texts (shorts stories, novels, essays, plays, and poems) in Spanish, expectation to always speak and write in Spanish.

Mandarin 1

Pre-req: None.

This course is designed for students with no prior knowledge of Mandarin Chinese. It aims to lay a solid foundation for future study of the language and culture. It begins with consistent practice of pronunciation, tones, basic Chinese character writing (including practicing calligraphy with brushes and ink) and study of simple sentence structures/collocations, which will be drilled intensively through a variety of exercises. The focus of this beginning Chinese course is on training of listening and speaking skills, with regular exposure to Chinese culture and social norms. Special attention is also given to Pinyin (combining sounds into syllables), an indispensable key skill to the mastery of Mandarin Chinese. By the end of the school year, successful completion of Chinese I will enable students to attain approximately the Novice-Mid to Novice-High levels of Mandarin Chinese proficiency on the ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages) proficiency scale.

Expected Workload: Daily homework (including weekends at times), cumulative speaking/reading/writing tests(tests on material studied throughout the year), homework during breaks, class taught mostly in Chinese with necessary exceptions, read basic text and write in Chinese.

Mandarin 2

Pre-req: Mandarin 1 with at least a C or mastery of Vistamar Standards for Chinese 1.

As a sequel to Chinese I, Mandarin Chinese II offers continued intensive study of modern spoken and written Chinese, stressing the four basic language skills of speaking, writing, listening and reading comprehension. Its focus is on building students' communicative competence and accuracy, with exposure to Chinese society and culture being an integral part of the learning process. Everyday speech patterns will continue to be drilled intensively through various exercises in the classroom. By the end of the school year, successful completion of Chinese II will enable students to attain approximately the Novice-High to Intermediate low levels of Mandarin Chinese proficiency on the ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages) proficiency scale.

Expected Workload: Daily homework (including weekends at times), cumulative speaking/reading/writing tests(tests on material studied throughout the year), homework during breaks, class taught mostly in Chinese with limited necessary exceptions, read basic text and write in Chinese, expectation to begin speaking in Chinese.

Mandarin 3

Pre-req: Mandarin 2 with at least a C or mastery of Vistamar Standards for Chinese 2.

This is an intermediate level Mandarin Chinese course designed for students who have successfully completed Mandarin Chinese I and II. It emphasizes the overall development of complex language skills in listening, speaking, reading, and writing of modern Chinese through learning more Chinese characters, collocations, and more complex sentence structures. At this level, students achieve relatively high linguistic competence and have a much deeper understanding of Chinese culture and society. Oral presentations and written tasks in Chinese are assigned regularly. Students will be trained and encouraged to solve linguistic as well as cultural problems they encounter in reading themselves with the help of given annotations and dictionaries. By the end of the school year, successful completion of Chinese III will enable students to attain approximately the Intermediate-Low to Intermediate-Mid levels of Mandarin Chinese proficiency on the ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages) proficiency scale.

Expected Workload: Daily homework (including weekends at times), cumulative speaking/reading/writing tests(tests on material studied throughout the year), homework during breaks, class taught at a near-native pace all in Chinese with as few exceptions as possible, read text and write in Chinese, expectation to always speak in Chinese.

Honors Mandarin 3

Pre-req: Mandarin 2 with at least an A- and department recommendation

The goal of Honors Mandarin 3 is for students to develop a deep level of proficiency and sophistication with their Mandarin language skills. They will hone their reading and listening comprehension while they broaden and sharpen their speaking and writing. Students will be able to communicate about familiar and some unfamiliar topics in three modes—interpersonal, interpretive and presentational. Students will be able to describe experiences, give opinions, and narrate a story. Furthermore, they will connect sentences with many details and develop cohesive ideas through extended discourse in Mandarin. Because this course has honor status, the workload is rigorous and the expectations for students are high. Honors Mandarin 3 is an accelerated learning option for those students who are interested in taking an AP course earlier than the regular pathway. By the end of the school year, successful completion of Honors Chinese III will enable students to attain approximately the Intermediate-Low to Intermediate-Mid levels of Mandarin Chinese proficiency on the ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages) proficiency scale.

Expected Workload: Daily homework (including weekends at times), cumulative speaking/reading/writing tests (tests on material studied throughout the year), homework during breaks, a lot of new material taught at a fast pace, class taught at nearly native pace all in Chinese, read text in Chinese, expectation to always try to speak in Chinese.

Mandarin 4

Pre-req: Mandarin 3 with at least a C or mastery of Vistamar Standards for Mandarin 3

Mandarin Chinese 4 is designed to enable advanced learners of Chinese to further develop their overall language proficiency and further enhance their cultural awareness through extensive reading of selected texts representing various aspects of Chinese culture, society, history as well as literary genres, in addition to the regular textbook Integrate Chinese (Level 2 Part 2). Oral presentations and written tasks in Chinese are assigned regularly. Students will be trained and encouraged to solve linguistic as well as cultural problems they encounter in reading themselves with the help of given annotations and dictionaries. Classic Chinese will be introduced at the end of the second semester. By the end of the school year, successful completion of Chinese 4 will enable students to attain the Intermediate-Mid to Intermediate-High level of Mandarin Chinese proficiency on the ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages) proficiency scale.

Expected Workload: Daily homework (including weekends at times), cumulative speaking/reading/writing tests (tests on material studied throughout the year), homework during breaks, a lot of new material taught at a fast pace, class taught at nearly native pace all in Chinese, read text in Chinese, expectation to always try to speak in Chinese.

AP Chinese Language & Culture

Pre-req: Department recommendation plus passing Honors Chinese 3 with at least a B or Chinese 3 / Chinese 4 with at least an A-

This course is designed to help intermediate and pre-advanced Chinese-learners to further develop their overall language proficiency and competency as well as their cultural awareness. This aim is to be achieved through intensive and extensive study of selected texts representing various aspects of Chinese philosophy, culture, society, history, geography, and literature. The ultimate goal of this course is to successfully get students prepared for the AP Chinese Exam. By the end of the school year, successful completion of this AP Chinese course will enable students to attain the Intermediate-High to Advanced Low level of Mandarin Chinese proficiency on the ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages) proficiency scale.

Expected Workload: Daily homework (including weekends at times), cumulative speaking/reading/writing tests (tests on material studied throughout the year), homework during breaks, a lot of new material taught at a fast pace, class taught at a native pace all in Chinese, read text and write in Chinese, expectation to always speak in Chinese

Paths through the World Language Department					
	9th Grade	10th Grade	11th Grade	12th Grade	Notes
Traditional	Spanish 1	Spanish 2	Spanish 3	Spanish 4	Based on middle school transcript and/or Vistamar Placement Test, a student might be placed in Spanish 2 in the 9th grade year. In this case the student would start in Spanish 2, Spanish 3, Spanish 4, and if recommended take AP Spanish Language & Culture in their senior year. And if a student excels in Spanish 1 9th grade year, teacher may recommend for Honors Spanish 2 sophomore year.
	Chinese 1	Chinese 2	Chinese 3	Chinese 4	If a student excels their junior year in Chinese 3(an "A" in the class) and the teacher approves, they may have the opportunity to take AP Chinese Lang./Cult. senior year.
Honors	Honors Spanish 2	Honors Spanish 3	AP Span Lang./Cult.	Topics in Adv Spanish Lit/Film (Honors) or AP Span Lit/Cult.	If student does not want to take AP junior year they can take Spanish 4 and AP Lang./Cult. their senior year. If student excels in AP Lang./Cult. junior year (A in class and 4 or higher on AP exam) they can go into AP Lit./Cult. with teacher approval during senior year.
	Chinese 1	Chinese 2	Honors Chinese 3	AP Chinese Language & Culture	
Heritage Spanish	Honors Spanish 3 (Heritage)	AP Span Lang./Cult. (Heritage)	Topics in Adv Spanish Lit/Film (Honors)	AP Span Literature & Culture	If student does not want to take Topics junior year they can take AP Lit./Cult. if along with teacher approval they excel in AP Lang./Cult.(heritage) sophomore year (A in class and 4 or higher on AP exam). Student should know that if they take AP Spanish Lit./Cult. junior year, they will not have a course offering senior year because AP Spanish Lit./Cult. is the highest level class we offer.