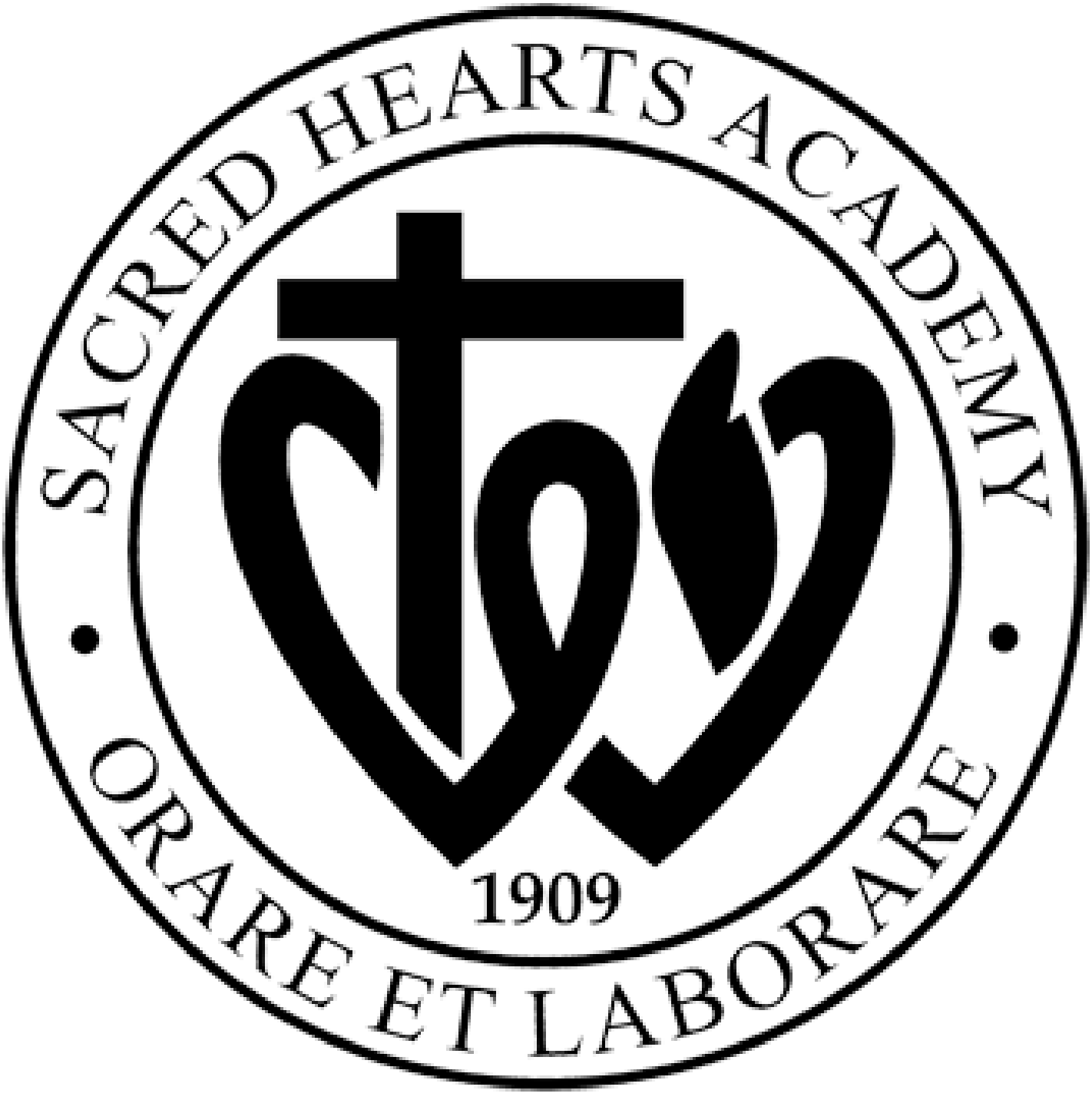
Sacred Hearts Academy

Middle School (Grades 6-8)

Academic Course Guide

2026 - 2027



Mission

Sacred Hearts Academy is a Catholic college preparatory school which provides girls and young women an exceptional education, the experience of God’s compassionate love revealed in the Hearts of Jesus and Mary and the inspiration to become leaders for the communities and the world.

Philosophy

The Academy is committed to the student whose growth as a person is central to all its endeavors. It is an independent Catholic elementary and high school for girls from preschool to grade 12. It offers a college preparatory education to students with varied academic abilities, needs, religious traditions, and socioeconomic backgrounds. As a Catholic school, the Academy is rooted in the teachings and traditions of the Catholic Church.

As a Sacred Hearts school, the Academy promotes the ideal of living in and loving the world as Jesus and Mary did.

The Eucharist, in all its dimensions, is a vital part of the educational process and is best expressed through respect for people and the building of community.

Parents are partners in the education of their children and, together with faculty, staff, students, administrators, and alumni, are encouraged to work to build a community that witnesses God's love in the world.

Through its educational programs, the Academy challenges students to grow in understanding and appreciation of their human worth, to take responsibility for their own development, and to care for the world in which they live.

School Motto

Orare et Laborare: To pray and to work

Advisory Program

The Sacred Hearts Advisory Program fosters compassion and moral responsibility, as well as personal, social, and emotional development, community building, and academic skill development. Advisory classes are led by faculty and counselors who serve as students' mentors and advocates. The faculty and counselors are referred to as advisors. Students develop supportive relationships with these advisors and their peers within the advisory. Advisories serve as a safe space where students can try new ideas and explore their identities. In the process, they cultivate a sense of self-- academically, emotionally, and socially.

Academic Collaboration Period (ACP)

ACP is for High School students on designated days and times. ACP is a designated study time for:

- used for academics: making up work, tests, quizzes
- conferencing with teachers; tutoring, re-teaching (if applicable)
- conferencing with counselors: academic, behavioral, or social-emotional discussions
- collaborating with peers: group work, project planning, and execution

Assignment of Grades

Only the semester grades are recorded on the official transcripts, and they are based on:

- 80% on the 1st and 2nd semester grades
- 20% on the final exam/project grade for 1st or 2nd semester

Final assessments are given at the end of each semester, in December and in May. The last three days of the semester are designated exam days. Some classes may have final performances and/or projects that count as the final exam.

Grading System

SHA Middle School uses the following scale for assigning grades and calculating GPA.

Grade	Percentage
A	**93 - 100**
A -	**90 - 92**
B +	**87 - 89**
B	**83 - 86**
B -	**80 - 82**
C +	**77 - 79**
C	**73 - 76**
C -	**70 - 73**
D +	**67 - 69**
D	**63 - 66**
D -	**60 - 62**
F	**0 - 59**

This Academic Guide and Course Catalog outlines the various course offerings that constitute the academic program for grades 6 through 8.

GRADE 6 CORE CLASSES

THEOLOGY 6

Grade 6 Religion nurtures students' understanding of Scripture, Church teaching, and their identity as beloved children of God. Students explore Salvation History, the life and teachings of Jesus Christ, and the foundations of Catholic belief. Through study of the Sacraments,

prayer, and moral decision-making, students grow in their relationship with Christ and the Church. Students will also integrate Catholic Social teaching principles with academic goals to develop "faith in action." Students will go beyond the simple act of volunteering by identifying the needs of the community, study it's causes through a religious lens, and reflect on their service learning experience.

Along with the Theology curriculum, students will also deepen their understanding of human dignity, virtue, and authentic relationships rooted in God's plan for love by studying St. John Paul's teachings on Theology of the Body.

ENGLISH 6

Grade 6 English guides students through a rich sequence of literary and informational texts while building essential language arts skills. Students explore a variety of genres—such as narrative literature, myths, mysteries, historical topics, and poetry—while developing close reading strategies, deep comprehension, and academic vocabulary. Through structured units and immersive learning experiences, students engage in analytical discussion, evidence-based writing (including narrative, analytical, and research writing), and interpretation of text to support clear communication. This course prepares students for upper middle school by strengthening critical thinking, purposeful writing, and confidence with complex texts. **This course follows the Amplify ELA curriculum.**

MATH 6

Grade 6 Mathematics develops students' number sense and problem-solving skills while introducing foundational concepts that prepare them for Pre-Algebra and beyond. Students deepen their understanding of ratios, rates, and proportional relationships and apply these ideas to real-world problems. The course expands their work with rational numbers—fractions, decimals, and integers—while developing fluency with expressions, equations, and algebraic reasoning. In Geometry and Measurement, learners explore area, surface area, and volume, and in Statistics and Probability, they collect, analyze, and interpret data to understand variability and patterns.

PHYSICAL SCIENCE 6

Grade 6 Science engages students in hands-on, phenomenon-based learning aligned to the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). The course explores four physical science units: Waves, Electromagnetic Forces, Chemical Interactions, and Gravity & Kinetic Energy. Students investigate wave properties and their applications in communication and technology; explore the relationship between electricity and magnetism; examine the structure and properties of matter and chemical changes; and analyze how gravity, mass, and motion influence energy and movement. Across all units, students practice evidence-based reasoning, model, design investigations, and analyze data. Through collaborative inquiry and real-world applications, learners develop critical thinking skills and deepen their understanding of natural phenomena as they think and work like scientists.

SOCIAL STUDIES 6

Grade 6 Social Studies is a world history course that explores major civilizations and global connections from ancient times through the post-classical era. Students study early river valley societies and classical civilizations such as Greece, Rome, India, and China, examining how geography, culture, religion, government, and innovation shaped societies. The course also highlights trade networks, cultural exchange, and the rise of empires across regions.

Through inquiry, discussion, and analysis of historical sources, students develop critical thinking skills and a deeper understanding of the interconnected world.

GRADE 7 CORE CLASSES

FOUNDATIONS IN FAITH I

This course is designed to engage students to see God first in themselves and then in one another. Students are encouraged and challenged to discover God's actions in their lives by building a relationship with Jesus. We will learn about the teachings of the Catholic Faith and practice building a sense of community in the class. Students will also learn the importance of "giving back" to the community through their Service-Learning Project. Students will learn the art of "being mindful" and how to incorporate this practice into their lives.

ENGLISH 7

In this course, students will explore a variety of texts, including but not limited to: short stories, novels, essays, news articles, and poems. In studying these texts, students will identify, analyze, and use literary elements and devices. Writing instruction focuses on articulating a central idea, supported by clear reasoning and evidence, and emphasizes basic conventions and foundational concepts in English grammar and mechanics. **This course follows the Amplify ELA curriculum.**

MATH 7

This is a course preparing students for pre-algebra that requires them to investigate and solve problems in teams or pairs. Students develop problem-solving abilities and prepare for success in future algebra courses. Topics covered include operations with rational numbers, ratios, percents, and algebraic expressions and equations. Emphasis is placed on understanding mathematics, and the learning process will include many problems that require teamwork. Students are expected to become active participants and effective communicators (both in writing and orally).

EARTH SCIENCE 7

Earth Science is an earth science-based laboratory and project-based course. Topics include Plate Tectonics, Volcanoes, Earthquakes, Physical Oceanography, and Astronomy. Students will investigate the forces that cause changes to both earth and space. By understanding the Earth's and space's physical history, students gain the ability to make intelligent, informed decisions about our future.

WORLD GEOGRAPHY 7

Grade 7 Social Studies class covers geography and examines the key terms and concepts needed to understand the world's geography. Students will become knowledgeable about pertinent environmental issues and focus on the geography of the United States of America and countries worldwide. Students will learn to read for key ideas, develop a geographical vocabulary, express and defend ideas clearly, order events chronologically, create and interpret maps, charts, and graphs, recognize and interpret primary sources, and ask relevant questions. Students will be assessed a $5.00 lab fee to cover all in-class projects.

GRADE 8 CORE CLASSES

FOUNDATIONS IN FAITH II

This course invites students to realize their value and dignity as cherished children of God. Guided by texts on Sacraments, Morality, and the Old Testament, students will experience prayer and a faith community and learn about the beauty and richness of the Catholic faith. The course also includes studying and reflecting on the wonder and responsibility of human sexuality. It will provide an opportunity for students to reflect on and discuss their Service-Learning Activities in light of the moral teachings of Jesus to love and care for all people and creation.

ENGLISH 8

This course emphasizes critical reading, writing, speaking, and thinking to strengthen the analysis and evaluation of written material. Using literature as a basis, students will write in multiple creative and expository modes, with composition instruction focusing on generating ideas, outlining and organizing thesis-based essays, structuring sentences, and using words effectively. **This course follows the Amplify ELA curriculum.**

PRE-ALGEBRA

Grade Level: 8

Prerequisite: Grade 7 Math or recommendation.

This course is designed to prepare students for success in algebra. Topics include concepts and skills for understanding the number system, performing operations on numbers, exploring number properties, and using problem-solving strategies and techniques, as well as analyzing and graphing relations and functions. Students are expected to become active participants and effective communicators (both in writing and orally).

ALGEBRA I

Grade Level: 8

Prerequisite: Grade 7A Math, Pre-Algebra, or recommendation.

This is the first course in algebraic principles. Topics covered include operations with real number equations and inequalities, graphing, exponents, polynomials, factoring, rational expressions, radicals, and quadratic functions and equations. Problem-solving and applications are emphasized in all areas. Students are expected to become active participants and effective communicators (both in writing and orally).

LIFE SCIENCE 8

Life Science is a life science-based laboratory course. Topics include Cells, Genetics, Animal and Plant Diversity, Human Structure and Function, and Ecology. Students will practice critical thinking and deductive reasoning, and become conversant with the scientific method in everyday life. Students will apply the content from this class to deepen their understanding of life and the world around them.

US HISTORY BEGINNING - 1887

The Grade 8 Social Studies course covers the origins of American culture and concludes with Reconstruction in 1877. This course will give students a broad perspective on the foundations of our nation's early years. Students are engaged in historical, ethical, and political controversies that have shaped the course of history and are prepared to identify and

expand upon recurring themes in American history. Students will learn to read for key ideas and recognize and interpret primary sources. A strong emphasis on basic reading, writing, and thinking skills is complemented by frequent opportunities for assessment, analysis, and asking relevant questions to enhance the learning process. Students will be assessed a $5.00 lab fee to cover all in-class projects.

ELECTIVES

On their registration form, students will number their preferences from 1 to 5. Every student must have a year of movement, i.e. Ballet, Hula, or PE. **Preference will be given to the best of our ability. Offerings may change depending on overall interest and availability.**

ROBOTICS

Grade Level: 6-8

This course covers the fundamentals of designing and building VEX competition robots. Students will be introduced to the basics of electronics, pneumatics, programming in ROBOTC, using machine tools, and creating an actual autonomously and remotely controlled VEX competition robot with touch sensors, distance sensors, and encoders. Mathematical concepts of proportions, gear ratios, and torque will also be covered to enforce a theoretical understanding of the physical properties of the robot's movement. Students are invited to participate in a VEX competition.

MUSIC

Grade Level: 6-8

Offering a general Music Class, students will learn to sing, use instruments and perform. Students will develop basic music literacy skills while exploring a variety of musical styles and cultures. The course encourages creativity, collaboration, and confidence while fostering a lifelong appreciation for music.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION/HEALTH

Grade Level: 6-8

Physical Education is an important part of the total educational program. Students participate in physical activities that help them develop an understanding of their own and others' physical abilities. Students become aware of the social benefits of physical activity through participation. The mental and emotional benefits of physical activity become evident when an active role in physical activity is encouraged. Health is designed to promote student learning regarding health issues that affect their immediate and long-term health. Maintaining a healthy way of living requires a balance of physical, mental-emotional, and social well-being. Health education provides students with the knowledge and skills necessary to understand how to lead a healthy life.

ART/CREATIVE MEDIA

Grade Level: 6-8 Course Fee: $100

This course is designed to explore the art world through a variety of materials, techniques, projects, discussions, observations, and sensory experiences. Students will develop problem-

solving skills, critical thinking, time management, collaboration, and leadership abilities through both independent and group work.

Throughout the course, students will engage in drawing, painting, printmaking, and sculpture using a wide range of traditional and digital media. Materials include graphite, charcoal, scratchboard, watercolor, acrylic paints and inks, papier-mâché, clay, and digital creations using iPads and laptops. Students will create both two-dimensional and three-dimensional works of art.

The course emphasizes creative thinking, artistic expression, and the development of technical skills while fostering an appreciation for the visual arts.

HULA

Grade Level: 6-8 Course Fee: $150

Hula is an introductory course in hula. Hawaiian culture, history, language, and its relation to hula are explored. The Hawaiian language is taught to the extent that it allows a better understanding of the dance. Oli, mele, hula olapa, and possibly modern hula will be introduced. Students will begin with a history of hula and its significance to Hawaiian culture. Students participate in at least one performance each semester.

BEGINNING BAND

Grade Level: 6-8

Course Fee:

- $20 organization fee (charged to all students registered for band class)
- $60 instrument rental fee (charged to all students using a school instrument. They are exempt from this fee if they purchase or own a personally owned instrument)

Band Kit: 50 - $80 depending on the instrument. (This includes all the instrument accessories, mouthpiece, and the band method book)

Beginning Band introduces the fundamentals and joy of playing a musical instrument. No previous musical experience is required. Fundamentals of music theory, aural training, and sight-reading are important aspects of this course. Students are encouraged to take private lessons if they are more serious about playing their instrument to their full potential. Students must participate in the Winter and Spring school concerts and the OBDA Festival of Beginning & Intermediate Bands in May. There are additional organization, festival, and uniform fees.

INTERMEDIATE BAND

Grade Level: 7-8

Course Fee:

- $20 organization fee (charged to all students registered for band class)
- $60 instrument rental fee (charged to all students using a school instrument. They are exempt from this fee if they purchase or own a personally owned instrument)

Band Kit: $50 - $80 depending on the instrument. (This includes all the instrument accessories, mouthpiece, and the band method book)

Prerequisite: 1 year of Band or Director's approval.

The Intermediate Band is for students who have already learned the basics of playing a musical instrument for at least 1 year. This course involves intermediate-level performance, intermediate musical theory, beginning conducting techniques, and additional performance opportunities, including participation in the Solo & Ensemble Festival, Honor or Select Bands, and off-island trips. Students are highly encouraged to take private lessons and purchase their instruments for performance. Students must participate in the Winter and Spring school concerts and the OBDA Festival of Beginning & Intermediate Bands in May.

BALLET I

Grade Level: 6-8 Course Fee: $150

This course introduces the foundational technique for dance. With an emphasis on classical ballet technique and an introduction to contemporary dance, students will learn dance basics while beginning to develop their artistry. In this year-long course, students will learn musicality, vocabulary, and dance etiquette. They will have the opportunity to perform in two full-length productions at the end of each semester.

BALLET II

Grade Level: 7-8 Course Fee: $150

Prerequisite: 1 year of Ballet or Instructor's approval

This course introduces the foundational technique for dance. With an emphasis on classical ballet technique and contemporary dance, students will learn dance basics while beginning to develop their artistry. In this year-long course, students will learn musicality, vocabulary, and dance etiquette. This course focuses on developing well-rounded dancers by taking the time to establish solid technique. The course will also focus on the growth and expansion of each student's artistry. Students will learn

choreography and participate in rehearsals. They will have the opportunity to perform in two full-length productions at the end of each semester.

WORLD LANGUAGE OFFERINGS

Only available to grade 8 as a High School Elective credit. Once in High School, the student will have the opportunity to continue in that language for two more years or choose another language to complete their World Language requirement in High School.

HAWAIIAN (Grade 8 ONLY)

This introductory language course provides the basic knowledge needed to learn Hawaiian. The four primary areas of skill are listening (ho'olohe), writing (kakau), reading (heluhelu), and

speaking ('olelo). Students are introduced to basic vocabulary, sentence patterns, stories, and dialogues. Hawaiian culture will also be integrated throughout the course.

JAPANESE (Grade 8 ONLY)

Japanese is an introductory course in the Japanese language and culture. This class will develop the ability to use appropriate interpretive, interpersonal, and presentation language skills to build communication efficacy. In addition to language skills, this course enables students to learn Japanese typing, cultivate critical thinking skills in Japanese, and compare Japan with other cultures to gain a deeper understanding of the world and their own society. The aim is to build a positive attitude and a solid base of the language and world. This class also focuses on 21st-century skills such as communication, collaboration, technology, and leadership.

SPANISH I (Grade 8 ONLY)

In this course, Spanish language and culture are taught through listening, speaking, reading, and writing through 21st-century communication, collaboration, and technology skills. Interpersonal communication is emphasized as students acquire vocabulary and understand the nature of language through grammar. Students develop cultural competency by studying and comparing their home culture and the many cultures where

Spanish is spoken. The topics covered are greetings, introductions, numbers, the calendar, weather, geography, identity, hobbies, question-asking, school life, clothing, family members and activities, descriptions, food, eating preferences, emotions, and transportation. Students will express likes and dislikes and communicate about the present, past, and future as they understand the basics of the Spanish language. The class is highly interactive and collaborative.