

# The Pennsylvania School

## Course Catalog & Graduation Requirements

*Last Updated 2/01/26*

### ENGLISH – LANGUAGE ARTS

#### Language Arts 9

- **Department:** English
- **Prerequisite:** None
- **Course Type:** Required
- **Credit:** 1.0
- **Difficulty:** 3/5
- **Course Description:** Language Arts 9 offers students a comprehensive introduction to high school English, focusing on building essential reading, writing, and communication skills. Students explore a variety of literary genres, including fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and drama, developing skills in literary analysis, critical thinking, and text interpretation. Writing assignments throughout the course guide students in crafting narrative, argumentative, and expository essays, while targeted exercises strengthen grammar, vocabulary, and sentence structure. Through this course, students gain a solid foundation in language arts, preparing them for future high school English courses.

#### Language Arts 10

- **Department:** English
- **Prerequisite:** Language Arts 9
- **Course Type:** Required
- **Credit:** 1.0
- **Difficulty:** 4/5
- **Course Description:** Language Arts 10 deepens students' understanding of literature and advanced writing techniques. This course covers a diverse selection of literary works, including novels, short stories, poetry, and drama, allowing students to analyze complex themes, characters, and stylistic choices. Writing assignments challenge students to refine their skills in persuasive, analytical, and research-based writing, with a focus on developing strong thesis statements, coherent arguments, and effective use of evidence. Grammar, vocabulary, and language mechanics are also reinforced. By the end of the course, students will have enhanced their critical reading abilities and writing proficiency, building a strong foundation for upper-level English studies.

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## Language Arts 11

- **Department:** English
- **Prerequisite:** Language Arts 10
- **Course Type:** Required
- **Credit:** 1.0
- **Difficulty:** 5/5
- **Course Description:** Language Arts 11 immerses students in American literature, offering a deeper look into the nation's literary heritage and historical context. Through reading classic and contemporary works, students explore key themes, cultural influences, and stylistic developments that shape American literature. The course emphasizes advanced analytical skills as students examine complex texts, identifying literary techniques and thematic elements. Writing assignments focus on argumentative, analytical, and research-based essays, with an emphasis on developing clear, persuasive arguments supported by textual evidence. Additionally, students continue to enhance their grammar, vocabulary, and language skills. By the course's end, students will have a well-rounded understanding of American literature and strengthened critical thinking and writing abilities in preparation for post-secondary studies.

## Language Arts 12

- **Department:** English
- **Prerequisite:** Language Arts 11
- **Course Type:** Required
- **Credit:** 1.0
- **Difficulty:** 5/5
- **Course Description:** Language Arts 12 provides students with a comprehensive exploration of British and world literature, spanning classic and modern texts that reflect diverse cultures, philosophies, and historical periods. This course encourages students to analyze themes, narrative structures, and literary styles across different genres, deepening their understanding of global perspectives in literature. Writing assignments emphasize analytical, expository, and reflective essays, enhancing students' ability to construct insightful arguments and interpret complex texts. Grammar and vocabulary instruction are integrated to support advanced language proficiency. By the end of the course, students will be well-prepared for college-level reading and writing, equipped with a nuanced understanding of literature from around the world.

## Journalism

- **Department:** English
- **Prerequisite:** None
- **Course Type:** Elective
- **Credit:** 0.5
- **Difficulty:** 2/5
- **Course Description:** The Journalism course provides students with an in-depth look at the field of journalism, focusing on essential skills such as research, interviewing, and article writing. Students explore the history, ethics, and principles that shape journalism today while gaining practical experience in writing news, feature, editorial, and sports articles. The course emphasizes clear, concise writing and the importance of accuracy, objectivity, and fairness in reporting. Additionally, students learn about the impact of digital media and the role of social media in modern journalism. By the end of the course,

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students will have developed a foundational skill set for producing informative, engaging content and a critical understanding of the role of journalism in society.

## Creative Writing

- **Department:** English
- **Prerequisite:** None
- **Course Type:** Elective
- **Credit:** 1.0
- **Difficulty:** 3/5
- **Course Description:** The Creative Writing course invites students to explore and refine their creative expression through various forms of writing, including short stories, poetry, creative nonfiction, and dramatic scripts. Students learn key elements of storytelling, such as character development, setting, plot structure, and theme, while experimenting with their unique writing style and voice. The course emphasizes drafting, revising, and peer feedback, helping students enhance their writing skills and develop confidence as writers. Through diverse writing prompts and projects, students cultivate their creativity and critical thinking, culminating in a personal portfolio of their creative works.

## Contemporary Novels

- **Department:** English
- **Prerequisite:** None
- **Course Type:** Elective
- **Credit:** 0.5
- **Difficulty:** 3/5
- **Course Description:** The Contemporary Novel course invites students to explore modern literature by engaging with a range of contemporary novels, each offering unique insights into today's world and diverse perspectives. Through reading, analysis, and discussion, students develop a deeper understanding of how recent authors address themes relevant to current issues, society, and the human experience. The course encourages critical thinking as students examine character development, plot structure, and thematic elements, fostering both an appreciation for modern storytelling and the analytical skills needed to interpret complex texts.

## Speech

- **Department:** English
- **Prerequisite:** None
- **Course Type:** Elective
- **Credit:** 0.5
- **Difficulty:** 2/5
- **Course Description:** In this course, students will gain foundational skills in public speaking through exploration of the communication process, study of speech types, and development of strong argumentation. Emphasis is placed on reducing anxiety, improving clarity, and mastering the basic principles of research, organization, and delivery needed for effective speeches. By the end of the course, students will be able to craft and deliver either informative or persuasive speeches with properly researched content, logical structure, and visuals when appropriate. They will also develop critical listening and evaluation skills with respect to both written and spoken arguments.

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## SCIENCES

### Biology

- **Department:** Science
- **Prerequisite:** None, Physical Science or equivalent recommended
- **Course Type:** Required
- **Credit:** 1.0
- **Difficulty:** 4/5
- **Course Description:** The Biology course offers a comprehensive introduction to the study of living organisms and their environments. Through a combination of theoretical lessons, labs, and interactive activities, students explore topics such as cell structure and function, genetics, evolution, ecology, and the diversity of life. The course emphasizes scientific inquiry and critical thinking, encouraging students to analyze data, form hypotheses, and understand the processes that sustain life. Students also examine human impact on ecosystems and consider ethical issues in biology. By the end of the course, students will have a solid foundation in biological principles, preparing them for advanced studies in science.

### Chemistry

- **Department:** Science
- **Prerequisite:** Biology
- **Course Type:** Required
- **Credit:** 1.0
- **Difficulty:** 4/5
- **Course Description:** The Chemistry course introduces students to the fundamental principles of chemistry, exploring the composition, properties, and changes of matter. Key topics include atomic structure, chemical bonding, reactions, stoichiometry, thermodynamics, and the behavior of gases, liquids, and solids. Students engage in virtual labs and problem-solving exercises to reinforce concepts, applying scientific methods and analytical skills to real-world situations. The course emphasizes safe laboratory practices, critical thinking, and the application of chemical principles to everyday life. By the end, students will have a strong grasp of essential chemistry concepts, preparing them for further studies in the sciences.

### Anatomy & Physiology

- **Department:** Science
- **Prerequisite:** Biology
- **Course Type:** Elective
- **Credit:** 1.0
- **Difficulty:** 3/5
- **Course Description:** The Anatomy and Physiology course offers an in-depth study of the human body, examining the structure and function of various organ systems, including the skeletal, muscular, circulatory, respiratory, and nervous systems. Students explore how these systems work individually and together to maintain homeostasis and overall health. The course combines theoretical knowledge with virtual labs and interactive activities, allowing students to engage in practical applications of anatomical and physiological concepts.

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## Earth Science

- **Department:** Science
- **Prerequisite:** None
- **Course Type:** Elective
- **Credit:** 1.0
- **Difficulty:** 4/5
- **Course Description:** The Earth Science course provides students with a comprehensive understanding of Earth's systems and processes, including geology, meteorology, oceanography, and astronomy. Students explore topics such as Earth's structure, plate tectonics, the rock cycle, weather patterns, climate, and the solar system. The course emphasizes scientific investigation and critical thinking, encouraging students to analyze natural phenomena and understand the dynamic interactions that shape our planet. Through hands-on activities, virtual labs, and data analysis, students gain insights into Earth's resources, environmental issues, and the impact of human activities. By the end of the course, students will have a solid foundation in Earth sciences, preparing them for advanced study and fostering an appreciation for our planet.

## Physical Science

- **Department:** Science
- **Prerequisite:** None
- **Course Type:** Elective
- **Credit:** 1.0
- **Difficulty:** 2/5
- **Course Description:** The Physical Science course provides students with a foundational understanding of the principles of physics and chemistry. Covering topics such as matter, energy, motion, forces, and chemical reactions, the course offers insight into the fundamental concepts that govern the physical world. Through virtual labs, problem-solving activities, and practical applications, students learn to apply scientific principles and analyze real-world phenomena. The course emphasizes scientific inquiry, critical thinking, and hands-on exploration, helping students build essential skills for further study in science. By the end, students will have a solid grounding in physical science concepts, preparing them for more advanced courses in physics and chemistry.

## Marine Science

- **Department:** Science
- **Prerequisite:** None
- **Course Type:** Elective
- **Credit:** 0.5
- **Difficulty:** 2/5
- **Course Description:** The Marine Science course introduces students to the study of ocean ecosystems, focusing on the physical, chemical, biological, and geological aspects of marine environments. Students explore topics such as ocean currents, marine

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biodiversity, the structure and function of marine ecosystems, and the impact of human activities on oceans. The course includes virtual labs, interactive activities, and real-world applications to deepen students' understanding of marine life and oceanography.

Emphasis is placed on scientific inquiry, conservation, and the importance of sustainable practices to protect marine ecosystems. By the end of the course, students will have a thorough understanding of marine science and an appreciation for the vital role oceans play in the global environment.

## Physics

- **Department:** Science
- **Prerequisite:** None
- **Course Type:** Elective
- **Credit:** 1.0
- **Difficulty:** 4/5
- **Course Description:** The Physics course introduces students to the fundamental laws governing matter and energy, exploring topics such as motion, forces, energy, waves, electricity, and magnetism. Through a combination of theoretical lessons, virtual labs, and problem-solving exercises, students learn to analyze physical phenomena and apply mathematical principles to real-world situations. The course emphasizes critical thinking and scientific reasoning, allowing students to explore concepts like Newton's laws, conservation of energy, and the behavior of waves and particles. By the end, students will gain a strong understanding of core physics principles, laying the groundwork for further studies in science and engineering.

## Renewable Energy

- **Department:** Science
- **Prerequisite:** None
- **Course Type:** Elective
- **Credit:** 0.5
- **Difficulty:** 2/5
- **Course Description:** The Renewable Energy course provides students with an in-depth exploration of sustainable energy sources and their importance in addressing global energy needs. Students examine various forms of renewable energy, including solar, wind, hydroelectric, geothermal, and biomass, learning how each technology works and its environmental impact. The course also covers topics such as energy conservation, the economics of renewable energy, and the challenges and benefits of transitioning to sustainable energy solutions. Through interactive activities, case studies, and project-based learning, students gain insight into the role of renewable energy in combating climate change and promoting a sustainable future. By the end of the course, students will understand key concepts in renewable energy and be prepared to think critically about energy solutions for the future.

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## Space Explorations

- **Department:** Science
- **Prerequisite:** None
- **Course Type:** Elective
- **Credit:** 0.5
- **Difficulty:** 2/5
- **Course Description:** The Space Explorations course takes students on a journey through the universe, covering topics such as the solar system, stars, galaxies, black holes, and the technology used in space exploration. Students learn about the history of space travel, major milestones in space exploration, and the science behind rockets, satellites, and space probes. The course also explores current and future missions, the potential for human life on other planets, and the ethical considerations of space exploration. Through engaging activities, virtual simulations, and research projects, students deepen their understanding of astronomy and the technological advancements that make space exploration possible. By the end of the course, students will have a broad understanding of the cosmos and humanity's ongoing quest to explore beyond Earth.

## MATHEMATICS

### Pre-Algebra

- **Department:** Math
- **Prerequisite:** None
- **Course Type:** Elective
- **Credit:** 1.0
- **Difficulty:** 2/5
- **Course Description:** The Pre-Algebra course prepares students for high school mathematics by building a strong foundation in essential math concepts. Students explore topics such as integers, fractions, decimals, ratios, proportions, percentages, and basic algebraic expressions. The course emphasizes problem-solving, critical thinking, and the application of math skills to real-world situations. Through practice exercises and interactive activities, students learn to work with variables, solve equations, and understand fundamental geometric concepts. By the end of the course, students will be equipped with the skills necessary for success in Algebra I and other advanced math courses.

### Algebra I

- **Department:** Math
- **Prerequisite:** None, Pre-Algebra or equivalent recommended
- **Course Type:** Required
- **Credit:** 1.0
- **Difficulty:** 3/5
- **Course Description:** The Algebra I course introduces students to the foundational principles of algebra, focusing on understanding and manipulating algebraic expressions, equations, and inequalities. Key topics include linear functions, quadratic functions, exponents, polynomials, factoring, and systems of equations. Students learn to solve real-world problems using algebraic methods, developing critical thinking and analytical

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skills. The course includes interactive exercises and practical applications to reinforce concepts and promote mastery. By the end of the course, students will have a strong grasp of algebraic techniques, preparing them for future studies in mathematics, including Geometry and Algebra II.

## Geometry

- **Department:** Math
- **Prerequisite:** Algebra I
- **Course Type:** Required
- **Credit:** 1.0
- **Difficulty:** 3/5
- **Course Description:** The Geometry course provides students with a comprehensive understanding of geometric principles, focusing on the properties and relationships of shapes, angles, lines, and solids. Topics include congruence, similarity, the Pythagorean theorem, trigonometry, circles, transformations, and the application of proofs. Students learn to reason logically, use deductive and inductive reasoning, and apply geometric concepts to solve real-world problems. The course includes interactive activities and visual aids to support conceptual understanding. By the end of the course, students will be well-prepared for advanced math courses, including Algebra II and Pre-Calculus, with a solid foundation in geometric reasoning and problem-solving skills.

## Algebra II

- **Department:** Math
- **Prerequisite:** Algebra I, Geometry
- **Course Type:** Required
- **Credit:** 1.0
- **Difficulty:** 3/5
- **Course Description:** The Algebra II course builds on foundational algebraic concepts, introducing students to more complex topics such as functions, polynomials, rational expressions, logarithms, and sequences and series. Students explore linear, quadratic, exponential, and logarithmic functions, as well as systems of equations and inequalities. The course emphasizes analytical thinking and problem-solving skills, encouraging students to apply algebraic techniques to real-world scenarios. Through interactive exercises and practical applications, students gain a deeper understanding of advanced algebra. By the end of the course, students will be prepared for higher-level math courses like Pre-Calculus and Calculus, with a solid mastery of Algebra II concepts.

## Pre-Calculus

- **Department:** Math
- **Prerequisite:** Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II
- **Course Type:** Elective
- **Credit:** 1.0

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- **Difficulty:** 4/5
- **Course Description:** The Pre-Calculus course prepares students for the advanced study of calculus by deepening their understanding of algebraic and trigonometric concepts. Topics covered include polynomial, rational, exponential, logarithmic, and trigonometric functions, as well as sequences, series, and introductory limits. Students explore analytic geometry, complex numbers, vectors, and parametric equations, applying these concepts to solve real-world problems. The course emphasizes critical thinking, problem-solving, and the development of mathematical reasoning skills. By the end of the course, students will be well-equipped for the challenges of Calculus, with a strong foundation in advanced algebraic and trigonometric principles.

## Calculus

- **Department:** Math
- **Prerequisite:** Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II
- **Course Type:** Elective
- **Credit:** 1.0
- **Difficulty:** 4/5
- **Course Description:** The Calculus course introduces students to fundamental calculus concepts, including limits, derivatives, integrals, and the Fundamental Theorem of Calculus. Students learn to analyze functions, calculate rates of change, and determine the area under curves, applying these concepts to solve real-world problems in physics, engineering, and economics. Topics such as continuity, differential equations, and applications of derivatives and integrals are covered in depth. The course emphasizes analytical thinking, problem-solving, and mathematical rigor, preparing students for college-level calculus and advanced studies in STEM fields. By the end of the course, students will have a solid grasp of essential calculus principles, equipping them for success in higher education.

## Consumer Math

- **Department:** Math
- **Prerequisite:** Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, Pre-Calculus highly recommended
- **Course Type:** Elective
- **Credit:** 1.0
- **Difficulty:** 2/5
- **Course Description:** The Consumer Math course equips students with practical math skills for managing personal finances and making informed financial decisions. Topics include budgeting, banking, **Credit**, loans, taxes, insurance, and investments, with a focus on real-life applications. Students learn how to calculate interest, compare financial products, and understand the costs associated with **Credit** and loans. The course also covers topics such as housing costs, transportation expenses, and financial planning. Emphasizing critical thinking and responsible financial decision-making, this course prepares students to handle everyday financial situations confidently and responsibly. By the end of the course, students will be equipped with essential skills for financial independence and success.

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## Accounting

- **Department:** Math
- **Prerequisite:** None
- **Course Type:** Elective
- **Credit:** 0.5
- **Difficulty:** 2/5
- **Course Description:** The Accounting course introduces students to the fundamentals of financial accounting, covering essential concepts such as the accounting cycle, financial statements, assets, liabilities, and equity. Students learn how to record, summarize, and interpret financial information, gaining hands-on experience with ledgers, journals, and balance sheets. The course emphasizes the importance of accuracy, ethical practices, and financial analysis in business. Through practical applications and case studies, students develop skills in managing financial data, preparing them for careers in finance, business, and entrepreneurship. By the end of the course, students will have a strong foundation in accounting principles, useful for both personal finance and professional settings.

## FOREIGN LANGUAGE

### French 1

- **Department:** Foreign Language
- **Course Type:** Required (unless taking Spanish 1)
- **Prerequisite:** None
- **Credit:** 1.0
- **Difficulty:** 2/5
- **Course Description:** The French I course introduces students to the fundamentals of the French language, focusing on essential skills in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Students learn basic vocabulary, grammar, and sentence structure to communicate in everyday situations. Key topics include greetings, introductions, describing people and places, discussing daily routines, and expressing likes and dislikes. The course also integrates cultural exploration, providing insights into the customs, traditions, and lifestyles of French-speaking communities. Through interactive exercises and practical conversations, students gain confidence in their language skills. By the end of the course, students will have a strong foundation in French, preparing them for French II and further language study.

### French 2

- **Department:** Foreign Language
- **Prerequisite:** French 1
- **Credit:** 1.0
- **Difficulty:** 3/5
- **Course Description:** The French II course builds on the foundational skills acquired in French I, advancing students' abilities in listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

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Students expand their vocabulary and deepen their understanding of French grammar, verb conjugations, and sentence structures. Topics include discussing past and future events, expressing opinions, and navigating more complex conversations. The course also explores the cultures of French-speaking countries, enhancing students' appreciation for global Francophone communities. Through interactive exercises, dialogues, and cultural studies, students gain confidence and fluency in French. By the end of the course, students will be prepared for more advanced French studies, with improved proficiency in communication and comprehension.

## Spanish 1

- **Department:** Foreign Language
- **Prerequisite:** None
- **Course Type:** Required (unless taking French 1)
- **Credit:** 1.0
- **Difficulty:** 2/5
- **Course Description:** The Spanish I course introduces students to the basics of the Spanish language, focusing on foundational skills in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Students learn essential vocabulary, basic grammar, and sentence structure, enabling them to communicate in everyday situations. Topics include greetings, introductions, describing people and places, talking about daily activities, and expressing preferences. Cultural aspects of Spanish-speaking countries are also integrated, helping students appreciate the diversity of the Spanish-speaking world. Through interactive activities and practice exercises, students build confidence in their language skills. By the end of the course, students will have a solid foundation in Spanish, preparing them for more advanced study.

## Spanish 2

- **Department:** Foreign Language
- **Prerequisite:** Spanish 1
- **Course Type:** Elective
- **Credit:** 1.0
- **Difficulty:** 3/5
- **Course Description:** The Spanish II course builds on the basics covered in Spanish I, advancing students' skills in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Students expand their vocabulary and deepen their understanding of Spanish grammar, including verb conjugations in various tenses and more complex sentence structures. Topics include discussing past and future events, expressing opinions, giving and following directions, and participating in more detailed conversations. Cultural studies are also emphasized, allowing students to explore the customs, traditions, and daily life of Spanish-speaking communities. Through engaging activities and practical applications, students gain greater fluency and confidence in Spanish. By the end of the course, students will be prepared for more advanced Spanish studies, with an enhanced ability to communicate and understand the language.

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## SOCIAL STUDIES

### World History

- **Department:** Social Studies
- **Prerequisite:** None
- **Course Type:** Required
- **Credit:** 1.0
- **Difficulty:** 3/5
- **Course Description:** The World History course provides students with a comprehensive overview of global history, exploring significant events, civilizations, and movements from ancient times to the present. Students examine the cultural, political, economic, and social developments that have shaped societies across the world, including the rise and fall of empires, major world religions, revolutions, and the impacts of colonization and globalization. Emphasis is placed on analyzing primary and secondary sources, understanding cause-and-effect relationships, and developing historical thinking skills. Through this course, students gain a deeper understanding of how past events influence the modern world, preparing them for advanced studies in history and fostering informed global citizenship.

### American History

- **Department:** Social Studies
- **Prerequisite:** None
- **Course Type:** Required
- **Credit:** 1.0
- **Difficulty:** 3/5
- **Course Description:** The American History course offers students an in-depth exploration of the United States' history, tracing significant events, influential figures, and transformative movements from early colonization to contemporary times. Students study key periods such as the American Revolution, Civil War, Reconstruction, industrialization, both World Wars, the Civil Rights Movement, and recent developments in modern America. Emphasis is placed on analyzing primary sources, understanding cause-and-effect relationships, and recognizing the impact of historical events on today's society. Through this course, students gain a comprehensive understanding of American history, preparing them for advanced studies and fostering informed, engaged citizenship.

### World Geography & Cultures

- **Department:** Social Studies
- **Prerequisite:** None
- **Course Type:** Elective
- **Credit:** 1.0
- **Difficulty:** 3/5
- **Course Description:** The World Geography and Cultures course introduces students to the physical and cultural landscapes of various regions around the globe. Students study

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the geographical features, climates, resources, and human-environment interactions that shape different parts of the world. The course also emphasizes cultural diversity, exploring languages, religions, traditions, and societal structures of various populations. Through map analysis, case studies, and interactive activities, students gain a broader perspective on global issues, population patterns, and cultural dynamics. By the end of the course, students will have an enriched understanding of geography and cultures, preparing them for informed global engagement and further studies in social sciences.

## American Government

- **Department:** Social Studies
- **Prerequisite:** None
- **Course Type:** Elective
- **Credit:** 0.5
- **Difficulty:** 2/5
- **Course Description:** The American Government course provides students with a foundational understanding of the structure, functions, and principles of the United States government. Students explore the Constitution, the branches of government, the roles and responsibilities of federal, state, and local governments, and the rights and responsibilities of citizens. Key topics include the legislative process, the judiciary, political parties, elections, and the role of media and public opinion. The course emphasizes critical thinking, analysis of primary documents, and the importance of civic participation. By the end of the course, students will gain a thorough understanding of American government and be prepared for informed, active citizenship.

## Civics

- **Department:** Social Studies
- **Prerequisite:** None
- **Course Type:** Elective
- **Credit:** 0.5
- **Difficulty:** 2/5
- **Course Description:** The Civics course provides students with a comprehensive understanding of citizenship, government functions, and civic responsibilities within the United States. Students explore foundational topics, including the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, the roles of federal, state, and local governments, and the electoral process. The course also covers the importance of civic engagement, examining how citizens can actively participate in their communities and influence government decisions. Through the study of current events, primary documents, and case studies, students learn the principles of democracy, rights and responsibilities, and the impact of government policies on daily life. By the end of the course, students will be prepared to engage thoughtfully and responsibly as informed citizens.

## Economics

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- **Department:** Social Studies
- **Prerequisite:** None
- **Course Type:** Elective
- **Credit:** 0.5
- **Difficulty:** 3/5
- **Course Description:** The Economics course introduces students to the fundamental principles of economics, focusing on both microeconomic and macroeconomic concepts. Students explore topics such as supply and demand, market structures, the role of government in the economy, fiscal and monetary policy, and international trade. The course emphasizes critical thinking and real-world applications, helping students understand economic decision-making, personal finance, and the impact of economic policies on society. Through case studies, data analysis, and interactive activities, students gain a solid understanding of how economies function and how economic principles apply to their daily lives. By the end of the course, students will be prepared for informed financial decision-making and further studies in economics.

## Business Law

- **Department:** Social Studies
- **Prerequisite:** None
- **Course Type:** Elective
- **Credit:** 0.5
- **Difficulty:** 3/5
- **Course Description:** The Business Law course introduces students to the legal principles and regulations that govern the business world. Students explore topics such as contract law, ethics, consumer rights, employment law, and the role of government in regulating businesses. The course also covers the structure of the court system, legal procedures, and the impact of laws on businesses and individuals. Through case studies, real-world examples, and interactive discussions, students gain an understanding of legal responsibilities and the importance of ethical decision-making in business. By the end of the course, students will be equipped with a foundational knowledge of business law, preparing them for careers in business and further studies in legal or business fields.

## Psychology

- **Department:** Social Studies
- **Prerequisite:** None
- **Course Type:** Elective
- **Credit:** 1.0
- **Difficulty:** 3/5
- **Course Description:** The Psychology course introduces students to the scientific study of behavior and mental processes, providing a foundation in key psychological concepts and theories. Students explore topics such as human development, personality, learning, memory, emotions, and mental health. The course also covers research methods, ethical considerations, and the influence of biology and environment on behavior. Through case studies, interactive activities, and discussions, students gain insights into the complexities of human behavior and the factors that shape it. By the end of the course, students will

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have a foundational understanding of psychology, preparing them for further studies in social sciences and helping them apply psychological concepts to real-life situations.

## Sociology

- **Department:** Social Studies
- **Prerequisite:** None
- **Course Type:** Elective
- **Credit:** 0.5
- **Difficulty:** 3/5
- **Course Description:** The Sociology course introduces students to the study of society, social behaviors, and the factors that influence human interactions. Key topics include culture, socialization, social structures, group dynamics, social stratification, and the impact of institutions such as family, education, and religion on individuals and communities. Students explore contemporary social issues, examine the role of diversity and inequality, and learn about sociological research methods. Through case studies, discussions, and analysis of real-world scenarios, students gain a deeper understanding of how societies function and the complexities of social relationships. By the end of the course, students will have a foundational understanding of sociology, preparing them for further studies in social sciences and enhancing their awareness of societal influences on behavior.

## Ethnic Studies

- **Department:** Social Studies
- **Prerequisite:** None
- **Course Type:** Elective
- **Credit:** 0.5
- **Difficulty:** 3/5
- **Course Description:** The Ethnic Studies course provides students with an in-depth exploration of the diverse cultural, social, and historical contributions of various ethnic groups in the United States. Students examine topics such as identity, race, ethnicity, immigration, and the impact of systemic inequalities on different communities. The course encourages critical thinking and open discussion, allowing students to analyze the experiences and challenges faced by various ethnic groups, as well as their roles in shaping American society. Through historical case studies, primary sources, and contemporary issues, students gain a broader perspective on social justice, inclusion, and cultural appreciation. By the end of the course, students will develop an informed understanding of ethnic diversity and the importance of equity and empathy in society.

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## THE ARTS

### Music Appreciation

- **Department:** The Arts
- **Prerequisite:** None
- **Course Type:** Required
- **Credit:** 0.5
- **Difficulty:** 2/5
- **Course Description:** The Music Appreciation course introduces students to the diverse world of music, exploring its history, styles, and cultural significance across different eras and regions. Students study key musical elements such as melody, rhythm, harmony, form, and texture, learning how these components come together to create various genres. The course covers classical, jazz, folk, and popular music, highlighting influential composers, performers, and historical movements. Through listening exercises, analysis, and research, students gain a deeper understanding and appreciation for music's role in society and its impact on human emotions and experiences. By the end of the course, students will be equipped with the skills to analyze and appreciate music from a wide range of genres and periods.

### Art Appreciation

- **Department:** The Arts
- **Prerequisite:** None
- **Course Type:** Required
- **Credit:** 0.5
- **Difficulty:** 2/5
- **Course Description:** The Art Appreciation course introduces high school students to the world of visual arts, exploring a wide range of artistic styles, movements, and techniques from various cultures and historical periods. Students learn to analyze and interpret artwork, gaining an understanding of elements such as color, form, line, texture, and space. The course covers significant art movements and influential artists, encouraging students to consider the cultural and historical contexts that shape art. Through discussions, virtual museum tours, and interactive assignments, students develop an appreciation for artistic expression and critical thinking skills. By the end of the course, students will have a broader understanding and appreciation of the visual arts, preparing them for further studies or personal enrichment in art.

### Advanced Drawing

- **Department:** The Arts
- **Prerequisite:** None
- **Course Type:** Elective
- **Credit:** 0.5
- **Difficulty:** 2/5
- **Course Description:** The Advanced Drawing course offers students an opportunity to refine and expand their drawing skills through a focus on advanced techniques, creative expression, and personal style development. Students explore a variety of drawing media, including charcoal, graphite, ink, and colored pencils, while studying complex subjects such as portraiture, figure drawing, still life, and landscapes. The course emphasizes

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principles of composition, perspective, shading, and texture, encouraging students to apply these techniques in unique and expressive ways. Through critiques, portfolio development, and project-based assignments, students enhance their technical proficiency and artistic confidence. By the end of the course, students will have a strong portfolio showcasing their progress and creativity, preparing them for further art studies or personal artistic pursuits.

## Art History

- **Department:** The Arts
- **Prerequisite:** None
- **Course Type:** Elective
- **Credit:** 0.5
- **Difficulty:** 2/5
- **Course Description:** The Art History course offers students an in-depth exploration of the history of visual arts, examining significant artworks, movements, and artists from ancient times to the modern era. Students study art from various cultures, including Western and non-Western traditions, understanding how historical, social, and cultural contexts influence artistic expression. Key topics include ancient art, Renaissance, Baroque, Impressionism, Modernism, and contemporary art. Through critical analysis, virtual museum tours, and reflective assignments, students learn to interpret and evaluate art, recognizing its impact on society and human experience. By the end of the course, students will have a comprehensive understanding of art history, preparing them for further studies and enhancing their cultural awareness and appreciation for the arts.

## Theater Studies

- **Department:** The Arts
- **Prerequisite:** None
- **Credit:** 0.5
- **Difficulty:** 2/5
- **Course Type:** Elective
- **Course Description:** The Theater course introduces students to the world of performing arts, covering foundational concepts in acting, stage production, and theater history. Students explore essential elements such as character development, script analysis, voice, movement, and improvisation. The course also provides an overview of theater genres, influential playwrights, and the evolution of theater from ancient to modern times. Through interactive activities, performances, and projects, students gain hands-on experience in various aspects of theater, from acting techniques to stage design. By the end of the course, students will have a deeper understanding of theatrical arts, enhancing their confidence, creativity, and appreciation for performance.

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## Graphic Design

- **Department:** The Arts
- **Prerequisite:** None
- **Credit:** 0.5
- **Course Type:** Elective
- **Difficulty:** 3/5
- **Course Description:** The Graphic Design course introduces students to the principles and techniques of visual communication, providing a foundation in digital design. Students learn essential design elements such as color theory, typography, layout, and composition while using industry-standard software to create projects like logos, posters, advertisements, and digital illustrations. The course emphasizes creativity, critical thinking, and problem-solving as students develop their own design style and learn to convey messages effectively through visuals. Through hands-on projects and portfolio-building assignments, students gain practical skills and a solid understanding of graphic design fundamentals, preparing them for further studies or careers in design fields.

## HEALTH

### Nutrition

- **Department:** Health
- **Prerequisite:** None
- **Course Type:** Elective (can fulfill Health requirement)
- **Credit:** 0.5
- **Difficulty:** 2/5
- **Course Description:** The Nutrition course introduces students to the principles of healthy eating and the role of nutrition in maintaining overall wellness. Students explore essential topics, including macronutrients and micronutrients, the digestive system, metabolism, and the impact of diet on physical and mental health. The course also covers dietary guidelines, reading food labels, meal planning, and the relationship between nutrition and lifestyle diseases. Through interactive activities, case studies, and practical applications, students learn to make informed food choices and understand the importance of balanced nutrition. By the end of the course, students will be equipped with knowledge and skills to support lifelong healthy eating habits and wellness.

### Personal Fitness

- **Department:** Health
- **Prerequisite:** None
- **Course Type:** Elective (can fulfill Health requirement)
- **Credit:** 0.5
- **Difficulty:** 2/5
- **Course Description:** The Personal Fitness course is designed to help students build a foundation for lifelong health and fitness by focusing on personal goal setting, exercise routines, and fitness principles. Students learn about the components of fitness, including cardiovascular endurance, muscular strength, flexibility, and body composition.

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## Physical Education

- **Department:** Health
- **Prerequisite:** None
- **Course Type:** Elective (can fulfill Health requirement)
- **Credit:** 1.0
- **Difficulty:** 1/5
- **Course Description:** The Physical Education course encourages students to develop and maintain a healthy, active lifestyle through physical fitness, sports, and wellness activities. Students learn about the benefits of regular exercise, including improved cardiovascular health, strength, flexibility, and mental well-being. The course covers fitness principles, goal setting, exercise safety, and techniques for a variety of physical activities, such as aerobic and anaerobic exercises, strength training, and flexibility routines. Students are also introduced to the fundamentals of sportsmanship, teamwork, and personal responsibility. By the end of the course, students will have the knowledge and skills to create personalized fitness plans, fostering lifelong habits for physical health and wellness.

## First Aid

- **Department:** Health
- **Prerequisite:** None
- **Course Type:** Elective (can fulfill Health requirement)
- **Credit:** 0.5
- **Difficulty:** 2/5
- **Course Description:** The First Aid course equips students with essential knowledge and skills to respond to medical emergencies and provide basic first aid. Topics include assessing situations, performing CPR, treating wounds, handling fractures, and managing common medical emergencies such as choking, burns, and allergic reactions. Students learn the importance of safety, quick decision-making, and effective communication in emergency situations. Through interactive simulations, demonstrations, and practice exercises, students gain confidence in their ability to provide initial care until professional help arrives. By the end of the course, students will be prepared to handle basic first aid situations responsibly and effectively.

## Health: Living Your Best Life

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- **Department:** Health
- **Prerequisite:** None
- **Course Type:** Elective (can fulfill Health requirement)
- **Credit:** 0.5
- **Difficulty:** 2/5
- **Course Description:** The Healthy Living: Your Best Life course empowers students to make informed choices that promote physical, mental, and emotional well-being. Covering topics such as nutrition, physical fitness, mental health, stress management, and substance abuse prevention, the course encourages students to develop healthy habits that support a balanced lifestyle. Students explore strategies for goal setting, personal responsibility, and decision-making that contribute to lifelong wellness. Through interactive activities and practical applications, students gain the skills and knowledge needed to improve their health and well-being. By the end of the course, students will be better equipped to lead healthy, fulfilling lives and make positive health choices.

## Health: Mental Health & Well-Being

- **Department:** Health
- **Prerequisite:** None
- **Course Type:** Elective (can fulfill Health requirement)
- **Credit:** 0.5
- **Difficulty:** 2/5
- **Course Description:** The Mental Health and Well-Being course provides students with a comprehensive understanding of mental health, focusing on strategies to promote emotional wellness, resilience, and self-care. Topics include understanding mental health, recognizing signs of stress and anxiety, coping mechanisms, building healthy relationships, and the importance of mindfulness and self-reflection. Students also learn about common mental health challenges, stigma reduction, and when and how to seek help for themselves or others. Through reflective exercises, discussions, and practical applications, students develop skills to manage their mental well-being effectively. By the end of the course, students will have a deeper understanding of mental health and be equipped with tools to maintain balance and resilience in their lives.

## TECHNOLOGY

### Basic Web Design

- **Department:** Technology
- **Prerequisite:** None
- **Course Type:** Elective
- **Credit:** 0.5
- **Difficulty:** 3/5
- **Course Description:** The Basic Web Design course introduces students to the essentials of creating and designing websites. Students learn foundational skills in HTML, CSS,

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and web design principles, enabling them to structure, style, and enhance web pages. Key topics include page layout, typography, color theory, graphics, and responsive design, focusing on creating visually appealing and user-friendly websites. The course emphasizes hands-on projects, where students apply their skills to design and build functional web pages. By the end of the course, students will have a solid understanding of basic web design concepts, preparing them for more advanced studies in web development and design.

## Computer Basics

- **Department:** Technology
- **Prerequisite:** None
- **Course Type:** Elective
- **Credit:** 0.5
- **Difficulty:** 3/5
- **Course Description:** The Computer Basics course provides high school students with a fundamental understanding of computers and digital literacy skills essential for academic and career success. Students explore topics such as computer hardware, software, operating systems, internet safety, and basic troubleshooting. The course also introduces essential skills in using productivity software, including word processing, spreadsheets, and presentations. Emphasis is placed on developing responsible digital habits, understanding cybersecurity, and navigating online resources effectively. By the end of the course, students will be proficient in using computers and digital tools, preparing them for more advanced technology courses and everyday digital tasks.

## Digital Media

- **Department:** Technology
- **Prerequisite:** None
- **Course Type:** Elective
- **Credit:** 0.5
- **Difficulty:** 3/5
- **Course Description:** The Digital Media course introduces students to the world of digital content creation and multimedia production. Students learn key concepts and skills in areas such as graphic design, photography, video production, audio editing, and animation. The course emphasizes creativity and technical proficiency as students explore digital tools and software to produce engaging multimedia projects. Topics include storytelling, composition, lighting, sound, and post-production techniques, providing a comprehensive overview of digital media practices. By the end of the course, students will be able to create polished digital media projects and will be prepared for further study or careers in digital media and communications.

## Intro to Artificial Intelligence

- **Department:** Technology

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- **Prerequisite:** None
- **Course Type:** Elective
- **Credit:** 0.5
- **Difficulty:** 3/5
- **Course Description:** The Introduction to Artificial Intelligence course offers students a beginner-friendly overview of AI, its concepts, and its applications in today's world. Students learn about the fundamentals of machine learning, neural networks, natural language processing, and computer vision. The course explores how AI impacts various industries, including healthcare, finance, and technology, while addressing ethical considerations and societal implications. Through interactive projects and real-world examples, students gain insights into how AI systems work and develop problem-solving skills relevant to AI technology. By the end of the course, students will have a foundational understanding of artificial intelligence, preparing them for further studies or careers in AI and related fields.

## Intro to Java Programming

- **Department:** Technology
- **Prerequisite:** None
- **Course Type:** Elective
- **Credit:** 0.5
- **Difficulty:** 5/5
- **Course Description:** The Introduction to Java Programming course introduces students to the fundamentals of programming using Java, one of the most widely used programming languages. Students learn essential coding concepts, such as variables, data types, control structures, loops, arrays, and object-oriented programming principles. Through hands-on exercises and coding projects, students develop problem-solving skills and learn to write, debug, and test Java programs. The course emphasizes practical applications, encouraging students to create functional programs while understanding programming logic. By the end of the course, students will have a solid foundation in Java, preparing them for more advanced programming courses and careers in software development.

## Robotics: Applications and Careers

- **Department:** Technology
- **Prerequisite:** None
- **Course Type:** Elective
- **Credit:** 0.5
- **Difficulty:** 3/5
- **Course Description:** The Robotics: Applications and Careers course introduces students to the exciting world of robotics and its applications across various industries. Students explore fundamental robotics concepts, including mechanics, electronics, programming, and automation. The course covers topics such as sensors, actuators, and the integration of hardware and software to create functional robotic systems. Students also examine real-world uses of robotics in fields like manufacturing, healthcare, and space exploration, as well as emerging career opportunities in robotics and automation.

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Through interactive projects and simulations, students gain hands-on experience in designing and programming simple robots. By the end of the course, students will have a foundational understanding of robotics principles and be better prepared for further studies or careers in robotics and engineering.

## BUSINESS

### Entrepreneurship

- **Department:** Business
- **Prerequisite:** None
- **Course Type:** Elective
- **Credit:** 0.5
- **Difficulty:** 3/5
- **Course Description:** The Entrepreneurship course provides students with the essential skills and knowledge needed to start and manage their own business. Students learn about key aspects of entrepreneurship, including idea generation, market research, business planning, financing, marketing, and operations management. The course emphasizes the development of a viable business plan, guiding students through each step of launching a small business. Additionally, students explore the challenges and rewards of entrepreneurship, along with strategies for problem-solving, risk management, and innovation. By the end of the course, students will be equipped with the foundational skills to pursue entrepreneurial ventures or further studies in business.

### Financial Literacy

- **Department:** Business
- **Prerequisite:** None
- **Course Type:** Elective
- **Credit:** 0.5
- **Difficulty:** 3/5
- **Course Description:** The Financial Literacy course equips students with essential skills for managing personal finances and making informed financial decisions. Topics include budgeting, saving, **Credit**, debt management, investing, taxes, and financial planning. Students learn how to set financial goals, create a budget, understand **Credit** scores, and explore various investment options. The course emphasizes responsible financial habits, helping students build a foundation for long-term financial stability. Through practical exercises and real-life scenarios, students gain the confidence to navigate financial challenges and make sound financial choices. By the end of the course, students will be prepared to manage their finances responsibly and plan for their financial futures.

### Intro to Business

- **Department:** Business
- **Prerequisite:** None

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- **Course Type:** Elective
- **Credit:** 0.5
- **Difficulty:** 2/5
- **Course Description:** The Introduction to Business course provides students with a foundational understanding of business principles and practices. Students explore topics such as economics, entrepreneurship, marketing, finance, management, and business ethics. The course also covers the structure and function of different types of businesses, the role of technology in business, and the importance of effective communication and teamwork. Through real-world examples, case studies, and projects, students gain insight into how businesses operate and make decisions. By the end of the course, students will have a solid understanding of basic business concepts, preparing them for further studies in business or entrepreneurship.

## Social Media Business Marketing

- **Department:** Business
- **Prerequisite:** None
- **Course Type:** Elective
- **Credit:** 0.5
- **Difficulty:** 2/5
- **Course Description:** The Social Media Business Marketing course teaches students how to effectively use social media as a tool for business promotion and brand building. Students explore key concepts such as content creation, audience engagement, branding strategies, analytics, and campaign management across platforms like Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn. The course also covers the importance of target audience analysis, social media ethics, and the role of influencers in marketing. Through practical assignments and real-world case studies, students learn how to create and manage effective social media marketing campaigns. By the end of the course, students will have a strong foundation in social media marketing, preparing them for careers in digital marketing or entrepreneurship.

## Startups and Innovation

- **Department:** Business
- **Prerequisite:** None
- **Course Type:** Elective
- **Credit:** 0.5
- **Difficulty:** 3/5
- **Course Description:** The Startups and Innovation course introduces students to the fast-paced world of startups, focusing on the skills and mindset needed to drive innovation and create new business ventures. Students explore topics such as idea development, market analysis, product design, funding options, and scaling a business. The course emphasizes creative problem-solving, resilience, and adaptability, essential traits for successful entrepreneurs in the startup ecosystem. Through case studies, projects, and interactive activities, students gain hands-on experience in developing and pitching startup ideas. By the end of the course, students will have a foundational understanding of

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startup dynamics and innovation, preparing them for entrepreneurial pursuits or advanced business studies.

## CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

### Character Education

- **Department:** Personal Development
- **Prerequisite:** None
- **Course Type:** Elective
- **Credit:** 0.5
- **Difficulty:** 1/5
- **Course Description:** The Character Education course helps students develop essential life skills and personal values that contribute to responsible and ethical behavior. Students explore key concepts such as integrity, respect, responsibility, empathy, perseverance, and citizenship. The course encourages self-reflection and personal growth, challenging students to apply these values in real-life situations and interactions. Through discussions, activities, and case studies, students gain insights into ethical decision-making, positive relationships, and community involvement. By the end of the course, students will have a stronger understanding of character principles, equipping them to make thoughtful, respectful choices and positively impact their communities.

### Career Planning

- **Department:** Personal Development
- **Prerequisite:** None
- **Course Type:** Elective
- **Credit:** 0.5
- **Difficulty:** 1/5
- **Course Description:** The Career Planning course helps students explore potential career paths and develop a plan for achieving their professional goals. Students assess their interests, strengths, and skills to identify career options that align with their personal attributes. The course covers essential topics such as goal setting, resume building, job search strategies, interviewing techniques, and workplace skills. Students also learn about educational and training requirements for various careers and the steps to pursue them. By the end of the course, students will have a clearer understanding of their career aspirations and a practical plan for entering the workforce or pursuing further education.

### Personal Leadership

- **Department:** Personal Development
- **Prerequisite:** None
- **Course Type:** Elective

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- **Credit:** 0.5
- **Difficulty:** 1/5
- **Course Description:** The Personal Leadership course empowers students to develop leadership skills that enhance their personal and professional lives. Students explore key concepts such as self-awareness, goal-setting, communication, decision-making, and ethical leadership. The course emphasizes the importance of personal responsibility, resilience, and the ability to influence others positively. Through self-reflection, case studies, and interactive activities, students learn how to apply leadership principles to real-life situations and foster personal growth. By the end of the course, students will have a toolkit of leadership skills that can be applied in various contexts, preparing them for future leadership roles and personal success.

## Hybrid Courses – Dual Diploma Students Only

### American History + Literature

- **Department:** Core Course
- **Prerequisite:** None
- **Course Type:** Required (*for dual-diploma students ONLY*)
- **Credit:** 2.0
- **Difficulty:** 155

# GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

To graduate from the Penn School as a full-time student, students must successfully complete a total of 21 credits, distributed across the following core subject areas and electives. Students are also required to maintain a minimum GPA of 2.0 throughout their high school years.

Subject Area	Required Credits
English	4
Math	4
Science	3
Social Studies	3
The Arts	1
Health & Fitness	1
World Languages	1
Electives	4
Total	21

## English – 4 Credits

The required courses for English are: Language Arts 9, Language Arts 10, Language Arts 11, and Language Arts 12.

## Math – 4 Credits

Students must complete Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II.

In addition, students are required to select courses totaling 1 credit. Available options include Pre-Algebra, Pre-Calculus, Calculus, Consumer Math, AP Calculus AB, AP Calculus BC, and AP Statistics.

## Science – 3 Credits

Required courses for Science include Biology and Chemistry.

In addition, students must choose courses totaling 1 credit from options such as Earth Science, Anatomy & Physiology, Physical Science, Physics, Marine Science, Renewable Energy, Space Explorations, AP Biology, AP Chemistry, and AP Physics 1.

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## **Social Studies – 3 Credits**

The required Social Studies courses are: World History and U.S. History.

Students must then select courses totaling 1 credit from options such as Ethnic Studies, World Geography & Cultures, American Government, Civics, Economics, Business Law, Psychology, Sociology, AP European History, AP Psychology, AP Statistics, AP United States Government and Politics, AP United States History, and AP World History Modern.

## **The Arts – 1 Credit**

Required courses in The Arts are: Music Appreciation and Art Appreciation.

## **Health & Fitness – 1 Credit**

Students must select courses totaling 1 credit from options including Nutrition, Personal Fitness, First Aid, Health: Living Your Best Life, and Health: Mental Health & Well-Being.

## **World Languages – 1 Credit**

Students must choose one of the following courses: Spanish 1 or French 1.

Not required for international students. Instead, international student shall be required to take an additional elective.

## **Electives – 4 Credits**

In English, students can select electives such as Contemporary Novels, Speech, Journalism, AP English Language & Composition, and AP English Literature A&B. In Science, electives include Anatomy & Physiology, Earth Science A&B, Marine Science, Physics, Renewable Energy, Space Explorations, AP Chemistry, AP Biology, and AP Physics.

In Math, electives include Accounting, Calculus, Consumer Math, and Pre-Calculus. In Social Studies, elective options include Business Law, Psychology, Sociology, Ethnic Studies, World Geography & Cultures, American Government, Civics, and Economics. Health & Fitness electives include Nutrition, Personal Fitness, First Aid, Health: Living Your Best Life, and Health: Mental Health & Well-Being.

For The Arts, electives include Music Appreciation, Theater Studies, Advanced Drawing, Art Appreciation, Art History, Basic Drawing, Beginning Painting, and Graphic Design.

Business & Technology electives include Basic Web Design, Computer Basics, Digital Media, Entrepreneurship & Small Business, Financial Literacy, Intro to Artificial Intelligence, Intro to Business, Intro to Java Programming, Robotics: Applications and Careers, Social Media Business Marketing, and Startups and Innovation.

For World Languages, electives include Spanish II and French II.

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Personal Development electives include Character Education, Career Planning, and Personal Leadership.