

UPPER SCHOOL CURRICULUM GUIDE



2025-2026

THE COLORADO SPRINGS SCHOOL

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Contents (Click headings to reveal links)

Courses offered in alternate years are indicated by a *. The semester and year they are offered are listed in the course description so that students can map out their choices during their time at CSS.

Information in this handbook is subject to change. The last revision of this handbook was October 2025.

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INTRODUCTION TO THE UPPER SCHOOL CURRICULUM

The Colorado Springs School's Upper School curriculum is ordered to address the unique needs and interests of the maturing pre-university learner. A broad and demanding liberal arts curriculum offers our students the best opportunities to understand themselves and the wonders around them. At the same time, a strong liberal arts approach provides the best foundation for further study and for life. Differentiators of the CSS course of studies include:

- a fourth year of math
- the College Overview and Public Speaking courses for sophomores
- four Experience-Centered Seminars (ECS)
- an integrated global perspective
- at least two years of art (with exposure to music, theater, and visual)
- commitment to at least one club
- participation in athletics/activities
- at least 18 hours of community service each year
- guided student reflection

CSS strives to offer distinctive opportunities for students to develop self-confidence, as well as the inquiry, analytical, documentation, and presentation skills they will need in competitive college environments and life. Small classes provide an environment in which students receive deeper, individualized feedback and are exposed to topics through interactive, student-centered approaches. The CSS Upper School is committed to developing resourceful, independent, healthy, and responsible young people.

GENERAL INFORMATION

COURSE LOAD

Students are expected to take a minimum of five courses or 2.5 credits per semester. This load does not include the yearly expectation for students to participate in an Experience-Centered Seminar (ECS) and a minimum of two competitive athletic, theatrical, or activities seasons. Students are cautioned against taking too many Advanced Placement courses in any single year or “overloading” themselves with a schedule that consists of many of the Upper School’s most demanding courses. Students are urged to find a balance between a challenging course load and ample time to pursue individual passions or school-sponsored activities. For this reason, any student who wishes to enroll in more than three AP courses during a single semester must receive approval from the Upper School Division Director.

SCHEDULE CHANGES AND CONFLICTS

Students who wish to add or drop a course based on their preliminary schedule for a given year are welcome to do so within the first week of the course. As a general rule, a student’s enrollment status in a year-long course may only change during the first week of the fall semester. ***Schedule changes must be initiated by emailing or speaking to the Division Director or Director of College Counseling.*** Requests will be evaluated, but it cannot be guaranteed that the request will be granted. Junior and senior students will be required to discuss the implications of a schedule change with the Director of College Counseling.

It is sometimes necessary to change the courses requested by a student due to scheduling conflicts. As best as possible, CSS will work in partnership with the student, their parent(s)/guardians, and course instructors to design an alternative schedule that best aligns with the student’s academic goals for the year.

From time to time, certain scheduling conflicts may not be resolved due to constraints associated with the master schedule for the Upper School. In these situations, online course enrollment may be considered. The Upper School Division Director and Registrar will coordinate approved programs and courses with any student who requests an online option. ***The process of getting a course approved can be initiated by filling out this [form](#).*** CSS, however, places a priority on in-person learning and experience-rich instruction. For this reason, online courses that serve to substitute a student’s experience in a comparable class offered by CSS will seldom be approved. The cost associated with registration for an online course will be deferred to the student or family.

SUMMER SCHOOL

CSS does not provide summer instruction for academic credit. However, students may need to recover course credit to fulfill a graduation requirement or may wish to accelerate their exposure to a particular topic. After such students obtain approval from the Upper School Division Director, they may pursue summer enrollment through another institution. ***The process of getting a course approved can be initiated by filling out this [form](#).*** This policy is to ensure that summer coursework that is taken to fulfill CSS graduation requirements is equal to the content and challenge of a comparable course at CSS. The student must submit an official transcript with the grade for the summer class to the CSS Registrar when the course has been completed.

DIPLOMAS OF DISTINCTION

Diplomas of Distinction are awarded to graduates who pursue advanced study in specialized areas within CSS. Students entering 10th grade will have the opportunity to begin a sequence in either Health Careers or Fine Arts. Those sequences will include contact with practitioners in the local community. Students must apply and be accepted into these programs. CSS plans to develop more DOD opportunities in the future. Students are encouraged to see the Division Director or Director of College Counseling for more information.

ADVANCED PLACEMENT COURSES (APs)

In any given school year, CSS's Upper School offers a wide variety of AP courses. These courses, which serve to challenge a student's intellectual development at a level that might be experienced in college, are just one example of CSS's commitment to rigorous and college-preparatory academics. AP courses require that a student be able to meet the demands of an accelerated curriculum pace and a heavier nightly homework load compared to standard classes offered at CSS, as well as a high-stakes end-of-year exam. For their efforts, however, students who demonstrate mastery in an AP course can earn college credit and advanced placement and stand out in the admissions process. Furthermore, CSS and many colleges weigh a student's earned semester grades for AP courses with an extra point when calculating GPA. Because these courses are understandably demanding of students' time, it is uncommon for a student to be able to handle more than three (3) AP courses in any given year. CSS does encourage all students to attempt at least one AP course before graduation.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR AP COURSES

Students are automatically eligible to register for certain AP courses if they meet the criteria below:

- Carry a cumulative minimum GPA of 3.00 (unweighted),
- Earn the minimum grade listed in the prerequisite courses noted in the course description for a given AP course.

In addition, students who earn placement into AP courses consistently demonstrate the ability to:

- Turn in assignments on time
- Self-advocate by asking for help as needed
- Independently pursue the study of a topic beyond what is presented in a textbook, class lecture, or course material
- Display a sincere interest, academic curiosity, and/or passion in the discipline
- Apply intellectual maturity to critically think about college-level material,
- Utilize integrity in the face of academic demands
- Collaborate as a contributing and prepared partner in group work
- Contribute as a poised and vocal participant in classroom discussion
- Process large volumes of challenging information at a high level.

Students who do not earn automatic eligibility may petition for approval to take an AP course. Such students may obtain an [AP & Advanced Course Petition Form](#) from the Registrar. After completing the form, a joint meeting will occur with the course teacher, the Department Chair, and the Upper School Division Director to discuss the student's motivation for pursuing the challenge of the AP course. Teacher recommendations can play an important role in this

petition process, and the Department Chair will discuss the situation with the student's prerequisite class teacher(s) and the AP course teacher before a petition is granted or denied.

An individual student who requests to take more than two AP courses must understand that the workload, level of critical thinking expected, and time management stress of such a schedule may trump other endeavors the student would like to pursue. Consequently, an evaluation committee will collaborate with any student who desires to take multiple AP courses simultaneously. The objective of the committee's work will be to aid a student in designing a well-rounded schedule that adequately positions the student to attain personal and stated long-term goals. In most cases, the committee will include the Upper School Division Director, Director of College Counseling, relevant Department Chairs or prerequisite teachers, and the student's advisor.

AP CAPSTONE

Students can earn AP Capstone recognition from the College Board with successful completion of at least 4 AP courses with scores of 3 or higher on the corresponding exams. Students must also complete AP Seminar and AP Research in grades 10-12. Students will be invited to enroll in AP Seminar starting in grade 10 and, assuming successful completion of AP Seminar, have the opportunity to enroll in AP Research the following year. Both Seminar and Research are asynchronous courses. Students seeking more information should see the Division Director, Director of College Counseling or AP Coordinator.

WEIGHTED GRADES

Advanced Placement courses are weighted. One point is added to each grade when calculating the GPA; therefore, an 'A' is 5 points rather than 4, and a 'B' is 4 points rather than 3. The weighted and unweighted grading tables are below:

Weighted GPA			Unweighted GPA			
Letter Grade	Percent Grade	5.333 Scale		Letter Grade	Percent Grade	4.333 Scale
A+	98-100	5.333		A+	98-100	4.333
A	93-97.999	5.000		A	93-97.999	4.000
A-	90-92.999	4.667		A-	90-92.999	3.667
B+	87-89.999	4.333		B+	87-89.999	3.333
B	83-86.999	4.000		B	83-86.999	3.000
B-	80-82.999	3.667		B-	80-82.999	2.667
C+	77-79.999	3.333		C+	77-79.999	2.333
C	73-76.999	3.000		C	73-76.999	2.000
C-	70-72.999	2.667		C-	70-72.999	1.667

D+	67-69.999	1.333		D+	67-69.999	1.333
D	63-66.999	1.000		D	63-66.999	1.000
D-	60-62.999	0.667		D-	60-62.999	0.667
F	Below 59	0.000		F	Below 59	0.000

CSS UPPER SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

A total of 24 credits are required for a student to earn a CSS diploma. CSS students are required to complete and pass (at a grade of 60% or higher) the following coursework:

SUBJECT	REQUIRED ENROLLMENT
ENGLISH	4 years/ 8 semesters
MATHEMATICS	4 years/ 8 semesters
HISTORY	3 years/ 6 semesters
SCIENCE	3 years/ 6 semesters
WORLD LANGUAGE	3 years/ 6 semesters
ART	2 years/ 4 semesters*
EXPERIENCE-CENTERED SEMINAR (ECS)	4 terms
COLLEGE OVERVIEW	1 quarter
PUBLIC SPEAKING	1 quarter
ACTIVITIES - Athletics, Theatre, approved CSS activities, and pre-approved non-CSS activities	4 years/ 2 seasons or activities per year

*Students receive 0.5 credit from year-long arts courses (Band, Vocal Ensemble) towards the 2-year arts graduation requirement. Additional credits earned from these courses count as General Core Electives and do not count toward the art graduation requirement.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Upper School students are required to complete a minimum of 18 community service hours each year. Enthusiastic students often earn hours far in excess of this minimum requirement.

CSS strives to help students get started on the annual requirement by dedicating one school day to service. Students contribute to projects hosted by a wide range of community partners, such as the Rocky Mountain Field Institute, Cheyenne Mountain State Park, CPCD Giving Children a Head Start, and Care and Share Food Bank for Southern Colorado. On average, students earn six hours for this day of service. Students are then expected to accrue the remaining 12 hours of service through projects or organizations that align with their individual passions and interests.

Community service hours must be verified by a project supervisor on the Google Doc titled "[US Community Service Documentation Form](#)" and then submitted to the Upper School faculty member responsible for tracking community service hours (or the supervisor may email the information directly). The eligibility window for annual service hours begins with the day that follows Commencement and concludes one day prior to Commencement.

Students who do not meet this requirement will have to complete double the number of **missed** hours during the following year, in addition to satisfying the annual expectation of hours for the same year.

SENIOR CAPSTONE EXPERIENCE

Seniors embark on an individualized, student-generated project to be completed at the end of their senior year. The Capstone adds direction, intention, and purpose to the senior year. It reinforces the school's focus on project-based, individualized learning. It requires students to "own" their learning as they transition to a new phase of their education, preparing them to better thrive and network in college and life. Additionally, it deepens students' resumes, enhances their college applications, differentiates them from the general pool of college applicants, and is intended to also help them explore possible professional goals.

Starting in the fall, seniors develop their Capstone experiences in consultation with the Capstone Director, Faculty Sponsor, and a Community Mentor. Proposals are approved by an administrative committee. Capstones culminate in each student's digital design of a project artifact and reflection, as well as a formal presentation in front of peers, parents, and faculty on Senior Night in May.

COURSE OFFERINGS BY ACADEMIC DEPARTMENT

Courses offered in alternate years are indicated by a *. The semester and year they are offered are listed in the course description so that students can map out their choices during their time at CSS.

ENGLISH

English courses in the Upper School follow a scope and sequence from general survey courses to more specific, narrower foci and Advanced Placement courses. The sequence begins by looking at literature from around the world; departmental scope then moves specifically to European works, followed by American pieces. All literature study is accompanied by practiced reading skills, including increasing awareness of literary technique and analysis and a variety of writing assignments, all supported by contextual vocabulary and grammar work. Classes also practice oral language skills through active discussion, oral presentations, speeches, and recitations. The department adopts a multi-sensory, experiential look at reading and writing while, at the same time, practicing key writing skills that prepare students for the demands of college-level written work in many disciplines. Students graduate with a keen awareness of the impact literature has on our society and culture; an ability to discuss topics in literature and other art forms with intelligence and finesse; and honed, original, and creative personal writing skills.

WORLD LITERATURE

This course explores literature from Western and non-Western traditions, both ancient and modern. After spending the first few weeks discussing the summer reading selection, Salman Rushdie's *Haroun and the Sea of Stories*, the course focuses on three major texts: Homer's *Odyssey*, Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, and Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, supplementing the study of these masterworks with short stories, poems, and non-fiction essays. These texts also supply students with a core vocabulary that they are expected to apply in their writing. Grammar instruction, focused on mastering punctuation and developing sophistication in sentence structure, complements instruction in writing clear and effective paragraphs and essays.

Semesters: Fall and Spring **Grade Level:** 9

Required for Graduation: Yes

Credit: 1.0 Required

EUROPEAN LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION

This course intersperses the study of proper composition tools, including the writing process, editing skills, and both in- and out-of-class essay writing, with the study of literature from Europe. After working with the summer assignments, the curriculum begins with the earliest piece ever written in English: *Beowulf*. Course studies then chronologically move through several of Geoffrey Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales*, William Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*, British Romantic poetry, a satire unit with excerpts from Miguel de Cervantes *Don Quixote*, and a 20th century set of short stories from World War II. Throughout the year, students practice and study a variety of writing styles, such as narrative, expository, and descriptive, while focusing on several genres such as poetry, plays, novels, and essays.

Semesters: Fall and Spring **Grade Level:** 10

Required for Graduation: Yes

Credit: 1.0 Required

AMERICAN LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION

This course offers an intensive examination of major works of American Literature from the 17th century to present day. Students read texts in major literary genres, including the novel, the short story, poetry, and the essay. Authors studied include Jhumpa Lahiri, Anne Bradstreet, Frederick Douglass, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Mark Twain, Emily Dickinson, Robert Frost, F. Scott Fitzgerald, and the writers of the Harlem Renaissance. Students discuss and write about key themes in the works of these authors, such as what it means to be an American, the nature of the American dream, the quest for freedom, and the relation of the individual to society. Vocabulary building and grammar review complement instruction in writing and literary analysis.

Semesters: Fall and Spring **Grade Level:** 11

Required for Graduation: Yes, unless a student enrolls in AP English Language and Composition

Credit: 1.0

AP ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND COMPOSITION

The Advanced English Language and Composition course follows the structure of the AP syllabus set out by the College Board while covering material at a pace that allows for in-depth study of topics. This course builds upon both the World Literature and European Literature courses while focusing specifically on American Literature. Students analyze texts on a deeper level, examining rhetoric and syntax used to persuade an audience. The largely nonfiction readings expose students to various American voices from different time periods and prepare students for more selective literary study in the senior year and beyond. Vocabulary lists and grammar lessons evolve from the literature and student writing. Students write extensively – especially analytical, argument, and synthesis essays. The class culminates with the AP Language and Composition exam in May.

Semesters: Fall and Spring **Grade Level:** 11

Credit: 1.0

Prerequisite: *Minimum of A- (90%) in both semesters of European Literature and Composition, and teacher recommendation*

SENIOR SEMINAR: TOPICS IN LITERATURE

Senior Seminar students practice applying real-world interests to reading material and written analysis and synthesis. The course begins with a practical college essay workshop to lead each senior through a full writing process in collaboration with the College Counselor. Following this writing workshop, students explore a variety of critical literary theories using their summer reading choice as a basis for this application. The remainder of the year may include such texts as *Born a Crime*, *Pretty Little Mistakes*, and a variety of short fiction and non fiction selections. Instruction in critical theories and journalistic styles offer the class multiple ways to choose their

reading and writing paths, dependent upon their individual interests and desires to broaden their academic writing. Solid research skills also play an important role as students practice synthesizing information gleaned from outside sources while repeatedly practicing solid MLA formatting standard conventions. Discussions, papers, tests, and quizzes give students ample opportunities to hone their skills in writing, vocabulary, oral communication, and critical analysis in preparation for college-level work.

Semesters: Fall and Spring **Grade Level:** 12

Required for Graduation: Yes, unless a student enrolls in AP English Literature and Composition

Credit: 1.0

AP ENGLISH LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION

The AP English Literature and Composition course focuses on reading, analyzing, and writing about imaginative literature (fiction, poetry, drama) from various periods. Students engage in close reading and critical analysis of imaginative literature to deepen their understanding of the ways writers use language to provide both meaning and pleasure. As they read, students consider a work's structure, style, and themes, as well as its use of figurative language, imagery, and symbolism. Writing assignments include expository, analytical, and argumentative essays that require students to analyze and interpret literary works. The class culminates with the AP Literature and Composition exam in May.

Semesters: Fall and Spring **Grade Level:** 12

Credit: 1.0

Prerequisite: *Minimum of A- (90%) in both semesters of American Literature and Composition or minimum of B- (80%) in both semesters of AP Language and Composition, and teacher recommendation*

EXPERIENCE-CENTERED SEMINARS

The Experience-Centered Seminar (ECS) program at CSS is designed to allow students to approach large, complex, multidisciplinary problems, to experience other cultures, and to apply classroom theory widely in the world. Each Upper School student participates in one ECS each year in February / March. Courses span three weeks and fall into the following categories: STEM, Arts, Cultural/Language Immersion, Outdoor and Natural Resources, Social and Current Issues. These Seminars can take place locally, regionally, nationally or internationally.

Some Seminars are place-based; that is, they study a substantive question in a part of the world in which it is relevant. Examples are ocean biodiversity in Bonaire and comparative government in Scandinavia. These Seminars are infused with cross-cultural exposure.

Other Seminars are project-based; that is, they focus on a specific product and the process that generates it. Examples of this are *The Great Iron Pour*, through which students study the history of metal discovery and use, build their own cupola, then melt iron to cast art pieces; and *Space Exploration*, in which students apply the engineering process when designing and building high altitude balloon payloads and model rockets to meet flight criteria.

Still, other ECSs combine project-based, place-based, and service-learning-based models. Examples of this are *Expedition Quebec*, which exposes students to French-Canadian language and culture; and *Sustainable Water in Tanzania*, which engages students in helping individual families construct stormwater catchment basins that fundamentally change the lives of mothers and children in arid, developing countries.

Students will receive an ECS course catalog with the offerings for each academic year. They will have the opportunity to select three Seminars that they would be interested in participating in and will then be assigned to one of them.

Semester: Midpoint of Spring Semester **Grade Level:** 9, 10, 11, 12

Required for Graduation: Yes – one ECS per year of enrollment at CSS

Credit: 1.0

GENERAL CORE

NINTH GRADE ART

This course is designed to provide exposure and exploration in each of three disciplines: Music, Theatre, and Visual Arts. The section dedicated to music focuses on the language, practices, and possibilities of music. Students will learn to explain the music we hear, and see and have the opportunity to advance their knowledge and understanding of music in its instrumental and vocal forms. This course provides the tools to refine listening skills, enhance performance skills, and foster creativity in the budding composer/musician. The theatre component focuses on exposing students to the fundamental skills inherent in the multiple elements of theatre. Students will be exposed to acting and characterization, movement and vocal production, pantomime and improvisation, terminology, and the elements of oral interpretation of literature. The concepts of imagination as well as developing a creative mindset are emphasized as important tools for life-long success. Through the visual arts section of the course, students develop skills in creative conceptualization, visual design and communication while they solidify skills in drawing, composition, color use, and working with 3-D materials. The course prepares students to engage in a wide variety of Upper School art electives with established skills and ability to apply art concepts as they express their own ideas.

Semesters: Fall and Spring **Grade Level:** 9

Required for Graduation: Yes

Credit: Required 1.0 Arts Credits

COLLEGE OVERVIEW

This required course is one of the hallmarks of the CSS experience and is designed to intimately prepare sophomores for the college admission process. Information regarding every aspect of the college admission process is covered during the class. Students begin by initiating their own searches for “best fit” colleges and universities. Each student is also expected to develop a list of potential colleges, create a resume, write a personal statement, critically analyze college propaganda, develop a college plan, prepare for the college entrance exams, analyze a transcript, and research scholarship possibilities. As a result, CSS students are aware of and primed for the rigorous college admission process well before their senior year, which gives them the advantage of strong mentorship and advocacy with colleges, as well as the gift of time to strategically plan. This course is partnered with Public Speaking to round out a full semester.

Semester: Half **Grade Level:** 10

Required for Graduation: Yes

Credit: 0.25 Required

PUBLIC SPEAKING

Public Speaking is a performance course designed to improve students' public communication skills. Students create, practice, deliver and critique speeches in a variety of modes (introductory, impromptu, commemorative, informative and persuasive). Readings and discussions cover the following topics related to public speaking and speech-writing: purposes, ethics, audience, organization, research and development of ideas, and delivery. Students are actively engaged in both the speaking and listening processes. Through this course, students gain skills and practice to prepare them for the speech each of them will deliver to the entire Upper School student body.

Semester: Half **Grade Level:** 10

Required for Graduation: Yes

Credit: 0.25 Required

YEARBOOK / YEARBOOK EDITOR

The Yearbook class is responsible for creating each year's edition of *Et Après*, the CSS yearbook. It is a year-long class that relies heavily on personal organization, digital design skills, and commitment to the yearbook team. The class begins by brainstorming possible ideas for yearbook pages and concepts. Each student chooses their assignments in collaboration with the team. Students are responsible for initiating, organizing, and photographing assignments using their own or the school's digital cameras. Students design pages in Walsworth Yearbooks' proprietary "Online Design" software, including writing descriptions and captions, and peer proofing. This class demands that students show initiative and are able to manage independent work with the support of regular teacher and editor check-ins. Students will be offered many opportunities to take on specialized leadership roles, such as editor, senior "wrangler," marketing director, photographer, etc.

Semesters: Fall and Spring **Grade Level:** 9, 10, 11, 12

Credit: 1.0

SOCIAL STUDIES

The History Department engages students in critical thinking about historical and contemporary events, teaches global awareness, and refines research, writing, and public speaking skills to prepare them for college and life beyond. Group projects, debates, and reenactments require students to engage actively and synthesize learning. Beginning with the core courses, students develop a broad understanding of global human geography and world history before moving into a more detailed study of American history. Beginning in the junior year, students choose from a wide array of electives and advanced offerings that introduce them to college-level courses and themes. Many Experienced-Centered Seminars build on the foundations of CSS history courses, emphasizing history, political science, cultural anthropology, economics, sociology and psychology, as well as integrating these academic fields into life experiences.

GLOBAL STUDIES & WORLD GEOGRAPHY

What is globalization and how does it impact societies worldwide? Why is there conflict in the Middle East? What is going on in Ukraine? South Sudan? Global Studies & World Geography is an examination of the physical, political and cultural realities of our planet with an in-depth examination of major world regions, including Africa, Asia, and Central and South America. Students will examine geography, history, culture, politics, and current events around the world. While exploring the meaning of “global citizenship,” students will focus on a series of interrelated topics: population, gender roles, economic development, food, urbanization, globalization, democratization, water, and climate change. They will gain a deep appreciation for many of the major issues our world faces today. Students will participate in many debates, simulations, and other hands-on activities, with an emphasis on developing skills of research, historical thinking, diplomacy, negotiation, and persuasion. Students will complete two major research projects. In the fall, students select a topic of their choosing to research and create a project (website, paper, performance, exhibit or documentary).

Semesters: Fall and Spring **Grade Level:** 9

Required for Graduation: Yes

Credit: 1.0 Required

WORLD HISTORY

World History is a survey course focusing on understanding, analyzing, and comparing people and institutions globally from 500 CE to the present. Students hone their analytical skills through examining primary and secondary sources, engaging in regular seminar style discussions to build conversation skills and their ability to use textual evidence to support their ideas, and developing analytical writing skills through composing essays in a draft-writing process. Students develop the essential historical thinking skills and global understandings that better prepare them for a dynamic world.

Semesters: Fall and Spring **Grade Level:** 10

Required for Graduation: Yes

Credit: 1.0 Required

UNITED STATES HISTORY

United States History covers the period from 1400 to the present. Special emphasis is placed on the colonial period and the post-revolutionary debates about the Constitution. The expansion of the territory of the country through settlement, Manifest Destiny, and the Mexican-American and Spanish-American Wars also receives attention. The modern period of United States History from 1865 to the present completes the course with emphasis on the consequences of the two World Wars and the Cold War.

Semesters: Fall and Spring **Grade Level:** 11

Required for Graduation: Yes

Credit: 1.0 - *Either US History or AP US History is required.*

AP U.S. HISTORY

AP U.S. History provides a rigorous, college-level study of the United States from 1400 to 2008. Emphasis is placed on the themes regarding the change, conflict, and socio-economic development of the United States. From the earliest arrival of European explorers to the Iraq War, we examine American history from a wide variety of perspectives, and with a diverse set of tools. Students examine primary sources while working with college-level textbooks, and there is a heavy emphasis on developing higher-level skills of historical analysis. There are numerous debates and simulations, including re-enactments of the Congressional debate on the eve of the War of 1812, the dropping of the atomic bombs on Japan in August 1945, and the events of the Cold War. The class culminates with the AP US History exam in May.

Semesters: Fall and Spring **Grade Level:** 11, 12

Prerequisites: *Junior or senior status; minimum of A- (90%) in both semesters of the student's most recently completed non-AP history course or minimum of B (83%) in both semesters of the student's most recently completed AP history course; teacher recommendation*

Credit: 1.0

AP COMPARATIVE GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

AP Comparative Government and Politics is an intensive college-level course that is directly related to the CSS philosophy of preparing students to be active citizens of an increasingly diverse nation and an increasingly interdependent world. Focusing on specific issues of government and politics in the six AP required countries: Mexico, Great Britain, Nigeria, Iran, China, and The Russian Federation. The course has a broader goal of helping students to develop a strong theoretical framework through which they will be able to analyze the political complexities of our globalized world. Within each of the AP countries, students study various aspects of history, culture, politics, and economics. The class culminates with the AP Comparative Government and Politics exam in May.

Semesters: Fall and Spring **Grade Level:** 11, 12

Credit: 1.0

Prerequisites: *Junior or senior status*

***AP MICROECONOMICS**

Microeconomics focuses on building a strong foundation in economic theory that allows a student to understand important topics such as antitrust laws, public goods, competitive markets, and international trade. From the determination of prices by demand and supply to the provision of public goods, this course provides all the ideas found in a college-level course. It places primary emphasis on the nature and functions of product markets and includes the study of factor markets and the role of government in promoting greater efficiency and equity in the economy.

The course also includes a significant experiential component. Students in this course run the on-campus bookstore, using the concepts learned in class to make decisions about pricing, inventory investment, and other aspects of business strategy. The class culminates with the AP Microeconomics exam in May.

Semester: Fall and Spring **Grade Level:** 11, 12

Credit: 1.0

Offered 2025-2026

***AP MACROECONOMICS**

Macroeconomics emphasizes the theoretical foundations required to understand topics including inflation, unemployment, economic growth, fiscal policy, and monetary policy. It places particular emphasis on the study of national income and price determination and also develops familiarity with economic performance measures, economic growth, and international economics. This interdisciplinary course blends analytical thinking and economic theory with a survey of economic challenges currently facing our country. The class culminates with the AP Macroeconomics exam in May.

Semester: Fall and Spring **Grade Level:** 11, 12

Credit: 1.0

Offered 2025-2026

CIVICS

Civics: Law & Morality

This course is designed to provide students with practical knowledge and a working understanding of government as well as the moral philosophy upon which government and justice systems are based. Students will be able to apply knowledge of the US Constitution, basic moral philosophy, and demonstrate their understanding of how the American system of government functions on the local, state and national levels as well as the impact on individual citizens. Students will examine historic moral philosophies and understand how classical theories support our modern application of law and justice.

Semester: Fall and Spring **Grade Level:** 11, 12

Credit: 1.0

MATHEMATICS

CSS's Upper School Mathematics curriculum builds upon the foundation set in earlier years. Students' ability to think abstractly continues to develop through these years. The sequence of courses and projects within courses reflects this development. The link between all courses is the inclusion of real-world scenarios, projects, and the use of technology to study the concepts at hand. This reaches to some of the ECS programs offered as well. For example, the Tall Ships ECS incorporated the use of vectors, mapping location, population samples, and more. On campus, students often use real-life examples to apply new skills such as survey peers for data collection and interpretation, use a force plate to measure the force required for an action, and measure shadows to approximate heights of trees or buildings. The Upper School math curriculum begins with Geometry in 9th grade and culminates as a senior with an option of choices such as Calculus III, Advanced Statistics, and Discrete Mathematics.

HONORS GEOMETRY

Geometry reinforces foundational algebra skills through the lens of geometric concepts. Students continue to polish the use of variables in order to solve problems; these problems are based on geometric definitions and relationships. Beginning with a few undefined terms and postulates, numerous theorems are the foundation for setting up algebraic equations. Algebra skills such as writing and solving linear equations, linear inequalities, systems of equations, polynomials, and quadratics are reinforced throughout the course, with the calculations of angle measurements, areas of plane figures and volumes of three-dimensional objects. Properties of polygons and circles are investigated and the concepts of congruency and similarity are established. Peer coaching and frequent discussions in class are an important part of the proof-writing process. Current technology and hands-on activities allow students to focus on problem-solving skills and strategies. The geometry vocabulary of the year is solidified with an Origami Unit in the second semester. Students reinforce and synthesize concepts through projects that can incorporate art and strengthen public speaking skills.

Semesters: Fall and Spring **Grade Level:** 9

Credit: 1.0 Required

Prerequisite: *Completion of Algebra 1*

ALGEBRA II

Algebra II incorporates virtually all the areas of mathematics studied in previous courses, including geometry and fundamental mathematical calculations. Students develop stronger and more advanced skills in the manipulation of variables in formulas, solving equations, graphing, and finding mathematical models that approximate real-world data. A variety of functional forms are studied and manipulated, including linear, exponential, quadratic, and polynomial. These traditional topics are supplemented with units on matrices, conic sections, roots, powers, and solving systems of equations. Students will use a variety of tools, including Desmos, slide rules, and pencil and paper to help visualize solutions, changes in variables, and patterns.

Semesters: Fall and Spring **Grade Level:** 10

Credit: 1.0

Prerequisite: *Completion of Geometry*

ALGEBRA II WITH TRIGONOMETRY

Algebra II incorporates virtually all the areas of mathematics studied in previous courses, including geometry and fundamental mathematical calculations. Students develop stronger and more advanced skills in the manipulation of variables in formulas, solving equations, graphing, and finding mathematical models that approximate real-world data. A variety of functional forms are studied, including linear, exponential, quadratic, and trigonometric. Within the study of trigonometry, students verify trigonometric identities, solve trigonometric equations, and analyze the behavior of inverse trigonometric functions. Among the applications using these functional forms are direct and inverse variation, exponential growth and decay, and parabolic motion. These traditional topics are supplemented with units on matrices, conic sections, roots, powers, and solving systems of equations. Students will use a variety of tools, including Desmos, slide rules, and pencil and paper to help visualize solutions, changes in variables, and patterns.

Semesters: Fall and Spring **Grade Level:** 10

Credit: 1.0

Prerequisite: *Completion of Geometry with a B+ or teacher's recommendation.*

FUNCTIONS, STATISTICS, AND TRIGONOMETRY (FST)

FST offers students an opportunity to further develop the skills of Algebra II. Students begin the course working with the rules of exponents, rationals, radicals, and general review topics. This will progress to more in-depth work with exponential, logarithmic, and trigonometric functions. Students will work primarily without calculators developing skills of algebraic simplification and manipulation of variables, but will also learn the capabilities of a full-function calculator. For this reason, a graphing calculator is a course requirement. Students will work extensively with trigonometry including applications, theory, and proofs both with and without calculators. Hand graphing without calculators is another major focus. Developing this intuitive understanding of the nature and shape of functions and their graphs is a valuable asset. In the spring, students will get an introduction to the beginnings of calculus such as limits, derivatives, and some applications. This course brings together topics from classes previously taken and enriches them with new applications and extensions of pre-existing mathematical techniques.

Semesters: Fall and Spring **Grade Level:** 11

Credit: 1.0

Prerequisite: *Completion of Algebra 2 or Algebra II with Trigonometry*

AP PRE-CALCULUS (S1) AND AP CALCULUS AB (S2)

This class meets for 90 minutes daily and is worth two full math credits. The first semester will be listed on students' transcripts as Precalculus and the second semester as AP Calculus AB. The second semester is weighted for the purposes of calculating GPAs.

AP Calculus AB is an introductory college-level Calculus course. Students cultivate their understanding of differential and integral Calculus by engaging with real-world problems represented graphically, numerically, analytically, and verbally, and using definitions and

theorems to build arguments and justify conclusions as they explore concepts like change, limits, and the analysis of functions. The class culminates with the AP Calculus AB exam in May.

Semesters: Fall and Spring **Grade Level:** 11, 12

Credit: 2.0

Prerequisite: *Completion of either Algebra II with Trigonometry or FST with a B+ or teacher's recommendation.*

DISCRETE MATHEMATICS

“Discrete Mathematics” refers to virtually every topic in college-level mathematics that does not require any Calculus. In other words, Discrete Mathematics focuses on entities that are not continuous but, instead, come in clearly defined units — natural numbers, sets, planar graphs, proofs, computer algorithms, logical statements, etc. Different semesters of Discrete Mathematics will deal with different branches of mathematics. (Two semesters are still required for a full math credit.) Possible semester-long topics include number theory, computability and logic, game theory, graph theory, group theory, naive set theory, and probability. The lasting appeal of Discrete Math is that much of it is very different from any other math class students will previously have been exposed to. As a result, Discrete Math is appropriate for many different types of students: students who have no interest in Calculus, students who have already learned some Calculus and want to try something very different, or students who simply want to take a math elective.

Semesters: Fall and Spring **Grade Level:** 11, 12

Credit: 1.0

Prerequisite: *Completion of either FST or Algebra II with Trigonometry.*

AP CALCULUS BC

AP Calculus BC further develop the concepts that students learn in AP Calculus AB and cover two full semesters of college-level calculus, including the material ordinarily taught in a third-semester, university-level multivariable calculus course. After briefly reviewing the fundamentals of limits, derivatives, integrals, and their applications, students are introduced to sequences and series and learn how to represent analytic functions as infinite series. Students then learn the important features of vectors, vector operations, and vector-valued functions. This allows students to extend their knowledge of Calculus into multidimensional spaces and to understand such important concepts as gradients, curl, line integrals, and second-order differential equations. The class culminates with the AP Calculus BC exam in May.

Semesters: Fall and Spring **Grade Level:** 12

Credit: 1.0

Prerequisite: *Advanced Calculus I*

AP STATISTICS

AP Statistics covers all the core concepts of a typical AP Statistics course, but with a particular emphasis on computer applications and Bayesian reasoning. Students learn introductory

combinatorics and discrete probability theory (including both frequentist and Bayesian interpretations of probability) before being introduced to game theory, several different probability density functions, confidence intervals, hypothesis tests, and analysis of variance. During the first month of the course, students develop skills in Python and, from that point on, solve all types of problems using both spreadsheet functions and their own original Python code. The class culminates with the AP Statistics exam in May.

Students who wish to take the AP Statistics exam additionally learn how to solve exam problems using TI-Nspire calculators and are supported in taking and reviewing practice tests.

Semesters: Fall and Spring **Grade Level:** 11, 12

Credit: 1.0

Prerequisite: *FST or Algebra II with Trig*

ADVANCED ORDINARY DIFFERENTIAL EQUATIONS

This course will be offered on an as-needed basis to students who have completed Advanced Calculus III no later than the end of their junior years. Topics to be covered in the first semester include separable differential equations, equations with homogeneous coefficients, equations with linear coefficients, partial integration, and exact differential equations, integrating factors, Bernoulli equations, and their applications. In the second semester, we will learn about systems of first-order equations, higher-order differential equations, select topics in linear algebra (including matrix algebra, eigenvectors, and eigenvalues), and various applications as time permits.

Semesters: Fall and Spring **Grade Level:** 12

Credit: 1.0

Prerequisite: *Advanced Calculus III*

Finance

Students today face an increasing number of financial choices as a result of the global economy in which we live. This course focuses on the financial-life aspects of the student's roles as citizens, family members, consumers, and active daily participants in the business world. This course is designed to assist students in recognizing their financial responsibilities today and those they will encounter in the future. Topics will include budgeting, banking, consumer credit, stocks, bonds, mutual funds, and money management strategies. Financial simulations and investment challenges are examples of activities designed for this course.

Semesters: Fall and Spring **Grade Level:** 11, 12

Credit: 1.0

Prerequisite: *Completion of Algebra 2 or Algebra II with Trigonometry*

COMPUTER SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING

Counts toward science credit

ROBOTICS

This course introduces students to the principles of robotics, offering a hands-on exploration of mechanical design, programming, and autonomous control using the VEX V5 Robotics platform. Students will learn to construct and program robots capable of solving real-world challenges, integrating sensors, motors, and structural components to enhance functionality. Throughout the course, students will collaborate in teams to design, iterate, and compete in robotics challenges, developing strategic thinking and problem-solving skills. By engaging in the iterative engineering process, students will gain insights into automation, artificial intelligence, and the role of robotics in various industries.

Semester: Fall and Spring **Grade level:** 10, 11, 12

Credit: 1.0

Prerequisite: *None*

AP COMPUTER SCIENCE A

This rigorous, entry-level course introduces students to the foundational concepts of modern computing and the impact of technology on society. Through a project-based and student-centered approach, students explore topics such as programming, algorithms, data, cybersecurity, and the Internet.

Using Code.org's App Lab and Carnegie Mellon's Computer Science Academy, students will design and build interactive applications while developing computational thinking, problem-solving, and collaboration skills. The course emphasizes creativity, equity, and real-world relevance, preparing students for further study in computer science and related fields. The class culminates with the AP Computer Science A exam in May.

Semesters: Fall and Spring

Grade Level: 9, 10, 11, 12

Credit: 1.0

Prerequisite: *None*

INTRODUCTION TO ENGINEERING

This course provides students with a foundational understanding of engineering through hands-on, project-based learning. Students will explore core concepts such as mechanical systems, energy transfer, materials science, and design thinking while engaging in collaborative problem-solving and iterative design processes.

Emphasis is placed on teamwork, technical documentation, data analysis, and communication, with students maintaining engineering notebooks and presenting their work to authentic audiences. The course fosters creativity, critical thinking, and resilience, preparing students for future studies and careers in engineering and related fields.

Semesters: Fall and Spring

Grade Level: 9, 10, 11, 12

Credit: 1.0

Prerequisite: *None*

SCIENCE

Science is an intense, participatory study in the Upper School. Experimentation, demonstration, and modeling are used to illustrate theory and build scientific skills. The science department aims to produce graduates who understand the importance of scientific consensus based on empirical evidence, and how this relates to their day-to-day lives. All students must take Biology and then Chemistry, followed by at least 1.0 credit of additional science electives. The Science Department offers several advanced course options to prepare students interested in pursuing science-field careers.

Honors BIOLOGY

Because evolution by natural selection is considered the unifying theory of biology, this course is approached from an evolutionary perspective, with an understanding that evolution works at the molecular level and has impacts at every level of biotic organization from the cell to the ecosystem. The course begins focusing on the role of macromolecules and the evolution of cells. After students have gained an understanding of the structure and function of cells and DNA, students examine the mechanisms of inheritance, genetics, and biotechnology. From there, the course continues with an in-depth exploration of the various mechanisms of evolution and progresses through the tree of life with a focus on Domain Eukarya. Within the Domain Eukarya, students study fungi, various lineages of plants, and nine phyla of animals. The course concludes with a study of how biotic communities evolve to form many types of ecosystems and how they are impacted by both natural and anthropogenic changes. A second, equally significant theme throughout the course is the development of scientific thought and methodologies. Students practice all aspects of controlled experimentation, and progress from teacher-directed to student-directed experimentation by the end of the course. Successful completion of this course will prepare students for future collegiate or AP Biology coursework.

Semesters: Fall and Spring **Grade Level:** 9

Required for Graduation: Yes

Credit: 1.0 Required

CHEMISTRY

Chemistry focuses on lab-oriented studies where students gather experimental results in an effort to discover regularities that lead to an understanding of the chemical properties of matter and the chemical changes that occur in the composition of matter. Readings, class discussions, and supplement laboratory work help develop a detailed descriptive and quantitative understanding of the physical and chemical properties of matter, atomic structure, and chemical reactions.

Semesters: Fall and Spring **Grade Level:** 10

Required for Graduation: Yes

Credit: 1.0 Required

Prerequisite: *Completion of Algebra 1*

***AP PSYCHOLOGY**

Psychology introduces students to the systematic and scientific study of human behavior and mental processes. While considering the psychologists and studies that have shaped the field, students explore and apply psychological theories, key concepts and phenomena associated with such topics as the biological bases of behavior, sensation, perception, learning, developmental psychology, clinical psychology, and social psychology. In addition to extensive readings and class discussions, students test psychological theories through experimentation and observation, and by integrating current research on topics such as adolescent development, sleep, motivation, and learning. The course follows the structure and guidelines set forth by the College Board while covering material at a pace that allows for in-depth study of topics. The AP curriculum will not be covered in its entirety, but additional student initiative and instructor support will help prepare students for the AP Psychology exam. The class culminates with the AP Psychology exam in May.

Semesters: Fall and Spring **Grade Level:** 11, 12

Credit: 1.0

Prerequisite: *Junior or senior status; minimum B (83%) in both semesters of Biology or minimum B- (80%) in both semesters of AP Biology; teacher recommendation.*

Offered 2025-2026

***AP BIOLOGY**

Advanced Placement Biology is an extremely rigorous course that relies heavily on the foundational terms and concepts introduced in general biology and chemistry (both prerequisite courses). It follows the syllabus written by the College Board. This includes a review of chemistry, properties of water, classes of macromolecules, and cell structure and function. Building on cell processes, the course dives deeply into cell communication, genetics, gene expression, and biotechnologies. It applies the concepts of genetics to examine evolution from a micro and macro perspective. Lastly, it explores how living things form populations, communities and ecosystems that respond to one another and to the environment. Quantitative analysis and graphic presentation of data is a major component of this course. Several major laboratory exercises teach experimental design and technique, as well as demonstrating the applications and implications of biological concepts. Students who pass the AP exam with a sufficient score may receive credit from the college or university that they attend. The class culminates with the AP Biology exam in May.

Semesters: Fall and Spring **Grade Level:** 11, 12

Credit: 1.0

Prerequisite: *Minimum of A- (90%) in all semesters of Biology and Chemistry; teacher recommendation*

Offered 2026-2027

***AP CHEMISTRY**

The Advanced Chemistry course follows the structure of the AP Chemistry syllabus set out by the College Board while covering material at a pace that allows for in-depth study of topics, but not necessarily completing the entire AP curriculum. Student initiative with instructor support may prepare some students to challenge the AP Chemistry exam. The first semester of Advanced Chemistry addresses a quick review of Introductory Chemistry, which is a prerequisite course. Thermochemistry (including heat capacity, specific heat, Hess's Law, and enthalpy of formation) is studied, followed by nuclear chemistry, the chemistry of bonds and bonding, intermolecular forces, and the physics of phase changes. In the second semester, students study chemical kinetics, chemical equilibria, acids and bases, solubility and precipitation, entropy and free energy, and electrochemistry. The class culminates with the AP Chemistry exam in May.

Semesters: Fall and Spring **Grade Level:** 11, 12

Credit: 1.0

Prerequisite: *Minimum of A- (90%) in both semesters of Chemistry; teacher recommendation*

Offered 2025-26

***ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE**

Environmental Science explores the interrelationships between humanity and the natural environment. It provides the scientific principles and methodologies required to understand and analyze these relationships in order to assess risks and evaluate solutions. It is one of the most interdisciplinary courses taught at CSS, as it contains elements of sociology, history, mathematics, and politics in addition to life, chemical, and physical sciences. The course will include topics such as Ecosystems & Biodiversity, Populations, Earth's Systems, Land & Water Use, Energy Resources & Use, Atmospheric Pollution, Aquatic & Terrestrial Pollution, and Global Change. Students will practice designing scientific investigations and proposing solutions based on both qualitative and quantitative data. Simulations, debates, and presentations will also be used to make clearer connections to the real-world complexity of these topics. Beyond learning about the many perspectives at play, students will be encouraged to develop their own set of priorities related to their personal lifestyles and political choices. Students will be empowered to use their new understanding and personal priorities to promote change in our communities.

Semesters: Fall and Spring **Grade Level:** 11, 12

Credit: 1.0

Prerequisite: *Completion of Biology and Chemistry*

Offered 2026-2027

***ANATOMY & PHYSIOLOGY**

This Anatomy & Physiology course takes students on an in-depth tour of human form and function. Students study the major systems of the body: nervous, muscular, skeletal, digestive, reproductive, urinary, endocrine, cardiovascular, immune, and how they are interrelated. The connection between structure and function is emphasized throughout the course as students continually relate anatomy to physiology. Students have an opportunity to meet medical professionals to learn about careers in the field and to practice methodologies and concepts

used in those fields. Lab opportunities to augment classwork are a part of the course and they include mammal dissection as one of many activities. Major projects include research presentations on disorders of the human body and how lifestyle factors affect the body, as well as a reflection paper synthesizing and applying their knowledge to their own bodies, lifestyles, and futures.

Semesters: Fall and Spring **Grade Level:** 11, 12

Prerequisite: Completion of Biology and Chemistry

Credit: 1.0

Offered 2025-2026

AP PHYSICS

The Physics course offers an in-depth exploration of mechanics, electricity and magnetism, waves and oscillations, and modern physics. Applied physics topics will be incorporated based on student skills and preferences. The class takes a laboratory-based approach to enhance scientific inquiry, experimental design, data analysis, and error analysis. Students will employ a variety of mathematical skills and concepts, including algebra and trigonometry, to analyze and model physical phenomena. Conceptual understanding, critical thinking, and problem-solving will be applied to case studies and models. Students will practice communicating scientific findings through reports and presentations, fostering a comprehensive skill set in research methodology and physics principles. Students in this course will be prepared for either the AP Physics I, AP Physics II, AP Physics C exams. Some students will choose to take multiple AP Physics exams. The class culminates with the AP Physics exam in May.

Semesters: Fall and Spring **Grade Level:** 11, 12

Credit: 1.0

Prerequisite: *Completion of Biology, Chemistry, and either Algebra II with Trigonometry or FST or teacher recommendation*

WORLD LANGUAGES

CSS's Upper School program continues to foster language fluency and cultural understanding. Students learn, practice and work toward mastery of increasingly complex structures, as well as nuances unique to each language and culture. In the classroom, students read, discuss, present, and prepare projects on a variety of relevant topics that engage them in the use of the language and provide them with opportunities for meaningful self-expression and communication. Upper School students also have the unique opportunity to participate in immersion experiences in Spanish and French through our Experience-Centered Seminar (ECS) program. Past Seminars have taken students to Spain, Mexico, Peru, France, Canada, Madagascar, and Cameroon.

FRENCH

FRENCH II

French II fosters fluency in listening and speaking, reinforces and adds to the basic structural patterns learned in French I, enhances writing and reading skills, and increases awareness and understanding of cultural differences. Various new tenses (passé composé, imparfait, futur simple, conditionnel, and subjonctif) and structures are acquired, which enhance students' ability to tell stories and express ideas. Students create and share technical presentations highlighting events from a virtual trip to a Francophone country where they are required to price, plan, and schedule everything from flights to trains to meals and cultural activities. Students also imagine their study abroad experience in Paris, France, where they find a job, apartment, university, and plan their daily life. Students are expected to use French in class discussions and activities.

Semesters: Fall and Spring **Grade Level:** 9, 10, 11

Credit: 1.0

Prerequisites: *French I or passing score of 80% or higher on the placement test, or completion of CSS Middle School French with an 80% average or above.*

FRENCH III

French III continues to develop and hone skills in all areas of language acquisition: listening, speaking, reading and writing. New, complex grammatical structures are introduced and emphasized in context. Students build on the grammar concepts and verb tenses introduced in French II. Vocabulary is expanded and conversational ability improves. Students are introduced to literary analysis as they read short stories, essays, and news articles in French. Students study in-depth French and Francophone culture through texts, videos, and music. Participation is maximized through the use of skits, dialogues, presentations, and other meaningful and engaging activities. In their second semester, students focus on their writing and presentational French to prepare for CSS's writing intensive French IV course.

Semesters: Fall and Spring **Grade Level:** 10, 11, 12

Credit: 1.0

Prerequisites: *French II or passing score of 80% or higher on the placement test, or completion of CSS Middle School French with a minimum grade average of A- (90%) and 8th Grade French teacher recommendation.*

***FRENCH IV**

French IV reviews and reinforces auditory, oral, reading, writing and cultural skills. A strong emphasis is placed on refining all grammatical concepts as well as developing the ability to write expository essays by combining idiomatic expressions with academic language. Students work to develop speaking fluency and proficiency in thought and expression. A global awareness is fostered through the appreciation and understanding of Francophone cultures as students study history and literature from various French-speaking regions of the world. In the first semester, main course texts are documentaries and short films. As students' listening comprehension improves, they focus on reading comprehension in the second semester. In the past, students have read *Un papillon dans la cité*, *Le Petit Prince*, and selections from *Candide* and *Suite Française*. Students participate in an in-depth study and analysis of these readings and build their writing skills in length and complexity.

Semesters: Fall and Spring **Grade Level:** 10, 11, 12

Credit: 1.0

Prerequisites: *French III or a passing score of 80% or higher on the placement test.*

Offered 2025-2026

***FRENCH V**

In French V, an emphasis is placed on refining all grammatical structures as well as developing the three modes of communication (Interpersonal, Interpretive and Presentational) defined by the Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century. Students continue to work toward fluency and proficiency in thought and expression. In activities, discussions, presentations and written work, students demonstrate an understanding of French language and cultures, make use of interdisciplinary topics, make comparisons between languages and cultures, and effectively use French in real-life situations. In the second semester, significant attention is given to the AP exam and preparation for the different tasks on the exam: formal email responses, cultural comparisons in oral presentations, argumentative essays, simulated conversations, and multiple choice practice of written and audio sources.

Semesters: Fall and Spring **Grade Level:** 11, 12

Credit: 1.0

Prerequisites: *French IV or a passing score of 80% or higher on the placement test.*

Offered 2026-2027

***AP FRENCH LANGUAGE**

French IV students with high proficiency can take AP French directly after completing French IV. Students with lower proficiencies can gain an extra year of French language practice by taking French V before taking AP French. AP French is a college-level class. Students enrolled in the AP course complete specific activities and exercises designed to prepare them for a successful performance on the AP exam. Students strive to master the French language and continue to demonstrate an understanding of Francophone culture and literature through class discussions,

presentations and written work. French V and AP French are taught in a combined classroom and cover the same set of topics. Those enrolled in the AP course complete additional activities and exercises designed to prepare them for the AP exam. This class culminates in the AP French Language exam in May.

Students focus on the following themes: global challenges, science and technology, contemporary life, the family and the community, beauty and aesthetics, and identity and the self. Students study the following grammar: subjunctive to express the indefinite and nonexistent, imperfect subjunctive, preterite perfect of subjunctive, and plus-perfect subjunctive. Class discussions are often focused on understanding cultural perspectives of the following topics: economy, religion and philosophy, the well-being of society, access to technology, the impact of technology in our society and in people, ethics, life styles and their impact on society, human geography, family structure, the impact of social media in our society, heroes, important characters in French history, the impact of immigration – economically and socially, and ethnic identities.

Semesters: Fall and Spring **Grade Level:** 11, 12

Credit: 1.0

Prerequisites: *Minimum of A- (90%) in both semesters of French IV or successful completion of French V; French IV teacher recommendation.*

Offered 2025-2026

SPANISH

SPANISH I

Spanish I introduces students to the sounds of the Spanish language and the cultures of Spanish-speaking countries around the world. Students build a basic vocabulary on a variety of topics, learn key phrases, and are introduced to the concept of verb conjugation. By the end of the course, students are able to conjugate common verbs in the present tense, form simple sentences, and maintain basic dialogues in Spanish. This course targets all four aspects of language acquisition: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Minimum enrollment for this course requires at least four students.

Semesters: Fall and Spring **Grade Level:** 8, 9

Credit: 1.0

SPANISH II

Spanish II fosters fluency in listening and speaking reinforces basic structural patterns in the language, develops writing and reading skills, and increases awareness and appreciation of cultural differences. Students are expected to use Spanish in all class discussions and activities. This course covers topics such as: classroom rules and extracurricular activities, daily routines, special events and fashion, directions and places around the city, people, places and situations, descriptions of past events, emergencies, heroic acts, injuries, television and film and, finally, cooking and instruction.

Students will also focus on the introductions and mastery of grammatical concepts: affirmative and negative commands, reflexive verbs, direct and indirect object pronouns, the imperfect

tense, and the imperfect progressive. Additionally, this course dives into cultural perspectives on schools, parties, clothing, shopping, holidays, food, and film in Spanish-speaking countries.

Semesters: Fall and Spring **Grade Level:** 9, 10, 11

Required for Graduation: Yes

Credit: 1.0

Prerequisites: *Spanish I or the completion of CSS Middle School Spanish; alternatively, a placement test score of at least 80% .*

SPANISH III

Spanish III advances student fluency through reading, writing, speaking and listening. Students learn additional structures and acquire a wide range of vocabulary while increasing awareness of cultural differences and ways of thinking in Spanish-speaking countries. Students watch cultural videos in Spanish, read articles from Spanish websites such as bbcmundo.com, and learn about Latin American and Spanish holidays, such as “El día de los Muertos.” Different types of music are introduced and “salsa” lessons are performed in class. Cooking could be added to the course as well. Students participate in class discussions about different topics such as sports, art, employment, health, and traditions in Latin America and Spain, in order to have an educational and engaging Spanish immersion experience. Grammar is a crucial component in our Spanish classes, students learn it in order to correctly apply it when speaking. Classes are taught in Spanish and students are expected to use Spanish in all class activities.

Semesters: Fall and Spring **Grade Level:** 10, 11, 12

Credit: 1.0

Prerequisites: *Spanish II or completion of CSS middle school Spanish with teacher recommendation; alternatively, a placement test score of 90% of above.*

SPANISH IV – GRAMMAR AND COMPOSITION

Spanish IV continues to advance student fluency in the language through reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Students hone their ability to conjugate regular and irregular verbs in basic and complex verb tenses. Students also acquire a wide range of advanced vocabulary words, reinforce past vocabulary, and increase awareness of cultural differences and ways of thinking. They read and analyze stories, essays, and articles from a variety of sources. Students learn about American and Spanish holidays and traditions. They learn about music and cultural dances. Students research different topics, such as the outdoors and sports activities, customs, and technology, and present them to the class in order to practice Spanish, learn about cultural activities and traditions in the Hispanic world, compare their community and/or country with Latin America and Spain, and foremost to make learning fun and engaging. Classes are taught in Spanish and students are expected to use Spanish in all class activities.

Semesters: Fall and Spring **Grade Level:** 11, 12

Credit: 1.0

Prerequisites: *Spanish III or a placement test score of 90% of above.*

***AP SPANISH LANGUAGE**

Spanish IV students with high proficiency can take AP Spanish immediately after completing Spanish IV. Students with lower proficiencies can gain an extra year of Spanish language practice by taking Spanish V before taking AP Spanish. AP Spanish is a college-level class. Students enrolled in the AP course complete specific activities and exercises designed to prepare them for a successful performance on the AP exam. Students strive to master the Spanish language and continue to demonstrate an understanding of Spanish culture and literature through class discussions, presentations, and written work. Spanish V and AP Spanish are taught in a combined classroom and cover the same set of topics. Those enrolled in the AP course complete additional activities and exercises designed to prepare them for the AP exam. This course culminates with the AP Spanish Language exam in May.

Semesters: Fall and Spring **Grade Level:** 11, 12

Credit: 1.0

Prerequisites: *Minimum of A- (90%) in both semesters of Spanish IV; and teacher recommendation.*

Offered: 25-26

ARTS

The Upper School Arts program provides comprehensive training and exposure to a wide variety of artistic disciplines. The arts are considered equal to core subjects, with two years of arts classes required for graduation. Through diverse offerings students are consistently challenged in creative problem-solving, refinement of artistic techniques, and adaptability to new forms of self-expression. The Art Department believes in educating the whole individual; students find themselves performing on stage through music, acting, and dance while producing visual art in such diverse areas as metal-casting, oil painting, darkroom photography, figure drawing, ceramics, video production, printmaking, and glass-working. Course titles starting with * are offered at different intervals within a three-year rotation. Semesters and years offered are noted under each course description.

Classroom interaction and critique strengthen the student's artistic voice, vision, and ability to effectively communicate. Visiting professional artists provide connections to the greater community, helping to reinforce coursework within the studio environment of the arts classroom and often assisting as integral elements of arts ECS courses. Every individual is provided the tools and experiences required to participate in local and regional exhibitions and to perform for a wide range of audiences. Students are encouraged to enrich their transcripts and resumes and develop personal portfolios for collegiate admissions, scholarships, and personal growth, and develop life-long abilities in creative thinking and problem-solving.

ARTS/NINTH GRADE

This course is designed to provide exposure and exploration in each of three disciplines: Music, Theatre, and Visual Arts. The section dedicated to music focuses on the language, practices, and possibilities of music. Students will learn to explain the music we hear, and see and have the opportunity to advance their knowledge and understanding of music in its instrumental and vocal forms. This course provides the tools to refine listening skills, enhance performance skills, and foster creativity in the budding composer/musician. The theatre component focuses on exposing students to the fundamental skills inherent in the multiple elements of theatre. Students will be exposed to acting and characterization, movement and vocal production, pantomime and improvisation, terminology, and the elements of oral interpretation of literature. The concepts of imagination as well as developing a creative mindset are emphasized as important tools for life-long success. Through the visual arts section of the course, students develop skills in creative conceptualization, visual design and communication while they solidify skills in drawing, composition, color use, and working with 3-D materials. The course prepares students to engage in a wide variety of Upper School art electives with established skills and an ability to apply art concepts as they express their own ideas.

Semesters: Fall and Spring **Grade Level:** 9

Required for Graduation: Yes

Credit: 1.0 Required

VISUAL ARTS

ADVANCED ART

Advanced Art is for exceptional art students who are excited about exploring their artistic side with more independence. Students have the opportunity to pursue more refinement in their skills, explore new areas of art, and intensely study previously experienced art forms. This course allows access to a wide variety of materials and techniques, establishes portfolio and art reviews, and creates a dialogue with professional artists. The course allows students some flexibility in level of productivity. While one student may create as many different pieces as possible, another student may focus more deeply on a fewer number of pieces. Classroom interaction and critiques strengthen the student's artistic voice, vision and ability to communicate effectively. This course will serve as the first of two courses for serious art students wishing to develop a personal art portfolio. This portfolio may be directed toward college applications, competing for awards and scholarships, taking the AP Studio Art Exam, and/or for personal growth.

Semesters: Fall and Spring **Grade Level:** 11, 12

Credit: 1.0

Prerequisites: *Junior or senior status; teacher recommendation*

Note: This course is offered every year.

PORTFOLIO STUDIO ART

This course builds on the foundations created in Advanced Art, and students add to their evolving work portfolio that they started in this prerequisite course. By the end of the year, students will have created a rich portfolio of their artwork. The development of a personal portfolio through consistent and thorough creative studies has far reaching effects into any future pursuits. Students may use their portfolio at the annual art school portfolio review to determine collegiate choices, compete in scholastic awards, and prepare materials for the AP Studio Art Exam. They are informed about and encouraged to enter various art shows and competitions, and to submit for publication.

Semesters: Fall and Spring **Grade Level:** 12

Credit: 1.0

Prerequisites: *Senior status; completion of Advanced Art; teacher recommendation*

Note: This course is offered every year.

***BRONZE CASTING**

In this course, students develop models in wax and clay, practice a variety of mold-making techniques, pour molten bronze and aluminum into their creations, finish their sculptures using both hand and power tools, and apply classic patinas to complete artworks. Three-dimensional design concepts are practiced using models of various materials, leading to both freestanding sculptures and reliefs. Cast metal works from ancient Greece through contemporary artists are explored with lectures and research projects on specific artists. Aspects of metallurgy and chemistry of metals are explored and culminate in a final written exam. Students are required to keep a sketchbook with their notes and drawings as they work their way through the many materials and techniques that must be learned to produce their cast sculptures.

Semester: Spring **Grade Level:** 10, 11, 12

Credit: 0.5

Prerequisites: *Completion of Arts Foundations*

Offered 2026-2027

CERAMICS / ADVANCED CERAMICS

In Ceramics, students explore both hand-building and wheel-throwing techniques. Students use different clay techniques such as coiling, slab-rolling, and wheel-throwing to create a variety of ceramic pieces. In addition, glazing and different firing techniques are explored. The elements of art and principles of design are used to help students create work that speaks to their individuality and their observations of the world around them. Individual and group critiques are also used to help students better understand the creative decisions they make. An understanding of the process of constructing a ceramic piece from start to finish is emphasized: wedging the clay, forming the piece, adding texture or smoothing, drying, bisque-firing, glazing, and glaze-firing. Students engage in both individual and formal group critiques to analyze, interpret and evaluate artwork. Students culminate the semester with a final ceramics project. Advanced Ceramics is for students who are interested in refining techniques and learning new skills such as wheel-throwing. This course allows the student to have more flexibility and independence in choosing projects while continuing to improve upon their understanding of the different processes in Ceramics. Students learn more about different firing techniques and clay bodies. Students culminate the semester with a final ceramics project.

Semester: Fall **Grade Level:** 10, 11, 12

Credit: 0.5

Prerequisites:

1. *For Ceramics: completion of Arts Foundations*
2. *For Advanced Ceramics: completion of Ceramics*

Note: This course is offered every year.

***DARKROOM PHOTOGRAPHY**

Darkroom Photography explores the ability of the camera and photography to interpret a wide range of subject matter. Concentration is on making images that give the viewer new perspectives on a subject, equally emphasizing craftsmanship with creative vision. The processes of 35mm black and white film exposure, development, contact printing and enlarging are introduced and practiced. Students gain a thorough understanding of camera mechanics, darkroom developing procedures, mounting, and presentation of finished photographs. Alternative processes may be explored through mediums like cyanotype or solar printing. The history of photography is briefly covered in the context of the innovations necessary for the invention of the modern process of photography, and students present research projects on famous photographers and specific historic processes. Students complete a series of assignments that explore the fundamental characteristics of camera vision as an art form. Emphasis is placed on creating the best possible image quality.

Semester: Fall **Grade Level:** 10, 11, 12

Credit: 0.5

Prerequisites: *Completion of Arts Foundations*

Offered 2025-2026 and 2027-2028

***FIBER ARTS**

This course is designed to give students an opportunity to explore the making and decorating of a variety of Fiber Arts. Creating textiles as both utilitarian and decorative objects will be introduced through different processes such as felting, macrame, knitting, crocheting, and weaving. Decorative processes such as embroidery and fabric dyeing will also be explored. In addition, a survey on creating 3-D Fiber Arts projects will be included. We will research a Fiber Arts process from different cultures and present our findings to the class. Through the creation of individualized projects using the various Fiber Arts processes, the student will have exposure to an array of textile skills and techniques. Students will be encouraged to create contemporary applications of techniques and create a variety of projects that broaden their knowledge and individual skills.

Semester: Spring **Grade Level:** 10, 11, 12

Credit: 0.5

Prerequisites: *Completion of Arts Foundations*

Offered 2026-2027

GLASS / ADVANCED GLASS

This course explores a wide range of historical and contemporary methods of glassworking. The class begins the challenging process of learning how to handle molten glass by working with torches to create small-scale works, beginning with bead-making and decorating. Other torch-based projects include small animal sculptures and small blown objects. The class also explores the less dexterously demanding area of kiln-based fusing, which often requires more deliberate planning and forethought. An extension of the kiln process then culminates through the creation of slumping molds to form reliefs, vessels, and abstract forms. At the advanced level, students work to design individual glass projects and create torch-worked 3-D artworks with fragile and delicate details as well as large-scale sculptures.

Semester: Spring **Grade Level:** 10, 11, 12

Credit: 0.5

Prerequisites:

1. *For Glass: completion of Arts Foundations*
2. *For Advanced Glass: completion of Glass*

Note: This course is offered every year.

***JEWELRY MAKING**

During Jewelry class, students will explore a variety of techniques and create different body adornments and small sculptural pieces. The elements of art and principles of design are emphasized to help guide students to create work that speaks to their individual creativity and their observations of their surroundings. Individual and group critiques are also used to help students better understand the creative decisions they make. An understanding of the process of constructing a piece of jewelry from start to finish will be emphasized: research, sketchbook drawing, design, follow-through, and refinement of new skills. Students begin with a variety of

cold connections and wirework techniques, focusing on sawing, filing, riveting, wirework, hammering and polishing. When students have learned these skills, they will delve into hot techniques such as annealing and soldering. Students move through a variety of projects, which include both sculptural work and jewelry, such as rings, bracelets, earrings, pendants and necklaces. Students will engage in both individual and formal group critiques to analyze, interpret, and evaluate artwork. Students culminate the semester with a final jewelry project.

Semester: Fall (2025) **Grade Level:** 10, 11, 12

Credit: 0.5

Prerequisites: *Completion of Arts Foundations*

Offered 2027-2028

***METAL SCULPTURE**

This course explores the diverse and challenging world of 3-D design and fabrication. Beginning with small-scale projects, students explore some of the methods and means of expression possible using 3-D materials including bending, curving, stretching, and creating armatures. From this foundation, students begin to work with steel and other metals, and are introduced to various welding and riveting methods, as well as traditional blacksmithing techniques. Students also investigate the many possibilities of color and texture created by paint, patinas, and mechanical surfacing techniques. Each student creates at least one research presentation and a variety of sculptural projects. Keeping an active sketchbook is an important component of this class.

Semester: Fall (2025) **Grade Level:** 10, 11, 12

Credit: 0.5

Prerequisites: *Completion of Arts Foundations*

Offered 2028-2029

***OIL-BASED PAINTING**

This course explores a broad range of materials and techniques that operate within the oil-based medium. Some of these media are familiar to many, such as linseed or solvent-based oils, while others are less so, such as encaustic and oil sticks. Even though these media are some of the simplest forms of pigment vehicles, they each have their own specialized techniques, many of which are tied to specific periods and places in history. Students explore these diverse forms of painting as media and technique, and learn their historical contexts. Students create research presentations on artists or periods associated with these media. A wide variety of projects are completed while practicing painting technique and color theory.

Semester: Fall **Grade Level:** 10, 11, 12

Credit: 0.5

Prerequisites: *Completion of Arts Foundations*

Offered 2026-2027

***PRINTMAKING**

Printmaking is the multiplication of images. Historically it dates back to the Paleolithic Period when man printed his hand on cave walls. The Printmaking course provides an introduction to

the different processes of multiplying images through the transference of ink to paper. In this course, students explore different types of printmaking, including the multi-unit print and the self-contained print. Students learn the techniques of intaglio, relief, linocut, and collagraph. In addition, students are exposed to the artwork of various printmakers to gain an understanding of the different types of printmaking. Students broaden their art vocabulary related to the elements of design, develop an understanding of the properties and preparation of printmaking, and share personal expression by creating original works of art. Through research and presentation, students learn the history of printmaking as well as artists who are famous for printmaking. Students engage in both individual critiques and formal group critiques to analyze, interpret, and evaluate artwork.

Semester: Spring (2026) **Grade Level:** 10, 11, 12

Credit: 0.5

Prerequisites: *Completion of Arts Foundations*

Offered 2025-2026 and 2028-2029

***STONE CARVING**

In this course, students create sculptures in stone using both modern and classic techniques. Three-dimensional composition is developed while surveying the rich history of working in hard and soft stone. Materials focus is given to alabaster carving, with preliminary training of technique done with plaster forms. Students who excel with the process may continue to work into harder and more challenging limestone carving. Sketches, clay models, paper, plaster, and foam forms created while researching various artists and historical works in stone lead to the production of several stone sculptures. Hammers and chisels, power grinders, and various finishing techniques are explored. Students give presentations on their research projects and display their finished stone sculptures in the Louisa Gallery.

Semester: Fall **Grade Level:** 10, 11, 12

Credit: 0.5

Prerequisites: *Completion of Arts Foundations*

Offered 2026-2027

***STUDIO DRAWING**

In this course, the student learns to draw various subjects using traditional drawing media. The elements and principles of art are presented and used to create drawings of quality. Different approaches to drawing are explored using mediums like charcoal, graphite, colored pencil, ink and pastel. Focus is on developing technical skills while refining composition and design within each artwork. Homework assignments are designed to enhance the classroom projects and develop proficiency. Art History is used to reference specific developments in representation and mark-making techniques, and student research projects are orally presented to the class along with visual references. Through demonstrations, exercises and completed works, the student exhibits growth in drawing skills. In writing critical analyses of completed works, the student evaluates their own success and develops an understanding of the language of art.

Semester: Fall (2025) **Grade Level:** 10, 11, 12

Credit: 0.5

Prerequisites: *Completion of Arts Foundations*

***WATER-BASED PAINTING**

This course explores a range of materials and techniques that operate within an aqueous medium. Some of these media are familiar to many, such as watercolor or acrylic painting, while others are less so, such as dyeing, fresco, or egg tempera. Even though these media are some of the simplest forms of pigment vehicles, they each have their own specialized techniques, many of which are tied to specific periods and places in history. Students explore these diverse forms of painting as media and technique, as well as in historical context. Students create research presentations on artists or periods associated with these media. Major projects completed while practicing painting techniques and color theory are based on modern watercolor and acrylic approaches.

Semester: Fall **Grade Level:** 10, 11, 12

Credit: 0.5

Prerequisites: *Completion of Arts Foundations*

Offered 2027-2028

***WOODWORKING & WOODCARVING**

In this hands-on course, traditional woodcarving techniques are used to create three-dimensional sculptures and relief carvings. As time permits, techniques and processes for furniture, lathe work and cabinet-making projects are introduced. Particular focus will be given to understanding the nature of wood properties and types, and include demonstration of various carving techniques. These include knife work, hammer and chisel, router and chainsaw, followed by various surface treatments.

Semester: Fall **Grade Level:** 10, 11, 12

Credit: 0.5

Prerequisites: *Completion of Arts Foundations*

Offered 2027-2028

THEATRE

***ACTING / SCREENPLAY FOR THE CAMERA**

Acting / Screenplay for the Camera is a class offered for the student who may be interested in how to act or write for film or commercials. Students explore and understand the basics of play/screenwriting, acting for film, copyediting, and how to set up basic shots with the camera. In this class, students will write, act and produce short bits of content, trailers, advertisements, documentaries, scenes, etc. Basic understanding of video editing, costuming, and equipment(mics, recording equipment) will be explored.

Semester: Fall **Grade Level:** 10, 11, 12

Credit: 0.5

Prerequisites: *Completion of Arts Foundations*

Offered 2026-2027

***SCENE STUDY AND DIRECTING**

This course is designed to give students the tools to properly analyze, deconstruct and reconstruct a scene. Students will explore the techniques of the great acting teachers; Stanislavski, Meissner and Uta Hagen. Students will also use their leadership skills to direct scenes. They will learn the basics of staging theatre in a proscenium, thrust, and in the round. Emphasis will be placed on the dynamics of how acting and staging work together to tell a story.

Semester: Spring **Grade Level:** 10, 11, 12

Credit: 0.5

Prerequisites: *Completion of Arts Foundation*

Offered 2026-2027

***STREET PERFORMANCE/ GUERILLA THEATRE**

This class will approach performances using unconventional staging methods. Street performing (busking) and Guerilla theatre explore spontaneous, surprise performances in places outside of a traditional theatre. Actors will learn techniques to create a performance space, and to capture an unwitting audience. Areas of street performance include street magic, duet comedy, and circus techniques. When exploring Guerilla theatre, actors will learn how to adapt meaningful scenes to public places. Actors will use their individual talents to create a performance that entertains or delivers a message. This class is perfect for students who have a wide range of skills that are looking for ways to showcase their abilities outside of a traditional theatre setting. Think Vaudeville with a purpose.

Semester: Fall **Grade Level:** 10, 11, 12

Credit: 0.5

Prerequisites: *Completion of Arts Foundations*

Offered 2027-2028

***MOVEMENT AND THE ENSEMBLE**

This course involves intensive physical activity. If you are an off-season athlete looking for conditioning and physical arts training, this class is for you! Students will engage in stage movement theory as it relates to the individual as well as the ensemble. Stage combat, Pantomime, and Dance will be the focus of the individual. Physical theatre, Clowning, and Ensemble work will be the focus of the ensemble. As the ensemble, students will use the Laban Efforts, and Bogart's Viewpoints, and Brechtian techniques as a guide through physical exploration. Calisthenic training and balance work is crucial to a performer's success and will be integrated into the course. This class is not for the casual theatre enthusiast.

Semester: Spring **Grade Level:** 10, 11, 12

Credit: 0.5

Prerequisites: *Completion of Arts Foundations*

Offered 2027-2028

***TECHNICAL THEATRE**

This course exposes students to the world of technical theatre. They learn about stage management, lighting, sound, props, set design, set construction, marketing, makeup and costumes. Students learn basic skills and vocabulary in each discipline. Students learn about the scene shop, the various tools involved, and scene shop safety. All of the skills involved in this class transfer well to other areas whether they choose a career in theatre or not. Special emphasis will be placed on an individual's aptitudes in the second half of the course.

Semester: Spring (2026) **Grade Level:** 10, 11, 12

Credit: 0.5

Prerequisites: *Completion of Arts Foundations*

Offered 2028-2029

***IMPROVISATION**

This course introduces students to the elements of the improvisational stage. Students develop their quick thinking skills and begin to understand the concepts and elements that are necessary to properly construct and participate in an improvisational performance. Students will study short-form and long-form improvisation. Characters, accents, props, and physicality will be explored to create improvisational scenes. Students will also explore the devised process to create a fully original and improvised narrative. The study will culminate in a performance of the troupe as organized by the students.

Semester: Spring (2026) **Grade Level:** 10, 11, 12

Credit: 0.5

Prerequisites: *Completion of Arts Foundations*

Offered 2028-2029

***THE PERFORMANCE PORTFOLIO**

This course is designed for performers who are serious about building a body of work to present professionally. This course will prepare students for the professional world of performance and entertainment. They will prepare for the audition process, research pathways to professional representation, and build a portfolio of 6-8 pieces of performance in their discipline. Whether a student is a singer, actor, or dancer, this course is designed to build a portfolio of recorded work to showcase to any potential employer outside of The Colorado Springs School.

Semester: Fall (2025) **Grade Level:** 10, 11, 12

Credit: 0.5

Prerequisites: *Completion of Arts Foundations; teacher recommendation*

Offered 2028-2029

MUSIC

BAND

The Upper School Band is a performing arts ensemble that integrates students from the 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th grades. This ensemble places emphasis on the student's ability to command or grasp the knowledge, skill, creativity and artistic sensitivity required when performing instrumental music. Students refine instrumental technique, enhance their musicianship and aesthetic awareness, elevate their ability to read music, adjust intonation, understand differences in style, and identify the importance of teamwork within the ensemble.

A wide variety of music literature is used to challenge this group's versatility and expand their vision for the vast possibilities instrumental music has to offer. Students are presented with opportunities to have solos, perform in small ensembles, and take on other leadership roles. Upper School Band is not considered a beginning band experience; however, students who are new to an instrument and have a serious desire to participate in this type of ensemble can successfully integrate themselves into the band. Interested students who find themselves in this situation will receive support from the Band Director, Upper School Band mentors, and possibly through private lesson instruction. Students also play an active part in discussions on the selection of music, the sharing of great recordings to develop listening skills, and in supporting and energizing both the school and the local community. Upper School Band students participate in a variety of concerts throughout the school year (including the CSS Winter and Spring Concerts, the school's Commencement Exercises, and occasionally other public performances). This is a year-long course of study and a year-long commitment to the ensemble.

Semester: Fall and Spring **Grade Level:** 9, 10, 11, 12

Credit: 1.0

VOCAL ENSEMBLE

The Upper School Vocal Ensemble integrates students from the 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th grades as they work as a team in preparation for performances. Although some background in music is helpful, prior experience or training is not required. This ensemble places emphasis on the student's ability to command or grasp the knowledge, skill, creativity and artistic sensitivity required in performing vocal music. A wide variety of music literature and styles are used to challenge this group's versatility and expand their vision for the vast possibilities vocal music has to offer. It draws on repertoire from diverse traditions, including Western classical music, world folk music, and jazz, this full-year course explores the art of ensemble singing. Students are presented with opportunities to have solos, perform in small ensembles, and take on other leadership roles. Upper School Vocal Ensemble students participate in a variety of concerts throughout the school year, including the CSS Winter and Spring Concerts, the school's Commencement Exercises, and occasionally other public performances. This is a year-long course of study and a year-long commitment to the ensemble.

Semester: Fall and Spring **Grade Level:** 9, 10, 11, 12

Credit: 1.0