

Great River School 2009-2010 Course Guide ~ Semester 2

A2 (9th & 10th Grade)

*****CORE CLASSES*****

(Students will be placed into core classes, as they are required)

Mathematics – Zach Schultz

A2 Math: Students will work through concepts in Pre-Algebra, Algebra, Geometry, Algebra 2 and beyond as appropriate. Students will work on concepts in conjunction with other 9/10 core classes and the Minnesota State Standards. This course is project based as much as possible, but proof of competency for each standard will be required and may take the form of tests and quizzes.

Science – Tami Limberg

Earth Science: This inquiry based class encompasses several areas of science, Physical, Earth, and Chemical Sciences. Topics will include geology, rock types, forces that change the Earth, atoms, matter, chemical equations, the Periodic Table, forces of motion, and other topics. Students should be ready to learn through lab experiments and exercises. Students will keep a Field Journal (that can be purchased from Tami on orientation night) for all notes and lab reports.

Social Studies – Molly Keenan

Geography: Students will study human interaction with place and space, locally and globally; according to an adolescent Montessori approach combined with the Minnesota state social studies standards for geography.

They will:

- use anthropology, economics, and history to develop geographical and humanist perspectives;
- interpret current events using geographical perspectives;
- learn how to read, use, and create a variety of maps;
- identify physical and political locations globally; and
- develop new perspectives on the places they inhabit and value.

English – Kate Diehn

Communications: This class is part of the two-year cycle of Language Arts at the A2 level. The goal of the communications course is for students to become conscious and considerate of the images and messages around them, and the images and messages that they produce. We will do this through a study and understanding of five types of communication: intrapersonal, interpersonal, small group or group, public speaking, and mass communication. Our approach to these types of communication will vary, but will include writing (creative and expository), reading fiction and nonfiction (novels, plays, essays), and studying visual texts (art, advertisements, other media).

A2 (9th & 10th Grade) Electives

****FULL YEAR ELECTIVES****

Beginning Spanish: This course is designed to teach the fundamentals of Spanish grammar and pronunciation, basic skills in speaking, writing and understanding the spoken and written word, to introduce the Latin-American culture, geography and way of life, and to develop an appreciation for another culture and lifestyle through the study of language. As the instructor, I am looking forward to helping you discover a new realm of communicative skills, knowledge of the Spanish language, and appreciation of Hispanic culture. Guide: Enrique Garita

Intermediate Spanish: This course aims to develop and expand proficiency in four areas of Spanish language skills: speaking, listening, reading and writing, through a review of grammar, mastering new and more complex grammar concepts and tenses, vocabulary-building exercises, culturally relevant dialogues, and readings regarding Hispanic civilization. The emphasis of the course is on communication, and you will have ample opportunities to interact in Spanish on a variety of topics. Guide: Enrique Garita

Concert Choir: Is open to women in grades 10-12 and men with changed voices in all grades upon completion of an application. Anyone who enjoys singing and would like to learn or improve music skills in an ensemble setting is welcome, regardless of level or ability. The majority of class time will be spent learning a wide variety of music and preparing for concerts, but students will also have the opportunity to learn and perform a solo/small ensemble piece each semester. Guide: Caroline Miesle

Treble Choir: Is open to treble voices (girls, boys with unchanged voices) in grades 7-9 upon completion of an application. Anyone who enjoys singing and would like to learn or improve music skills in an ensemble setting is welcome, regardless of level or ability. The majority of class time will be spent learning a wide variety of music and preparing for concerts, but students will also have the opportunity to learn and perform a solo/small ensemble piece each semester. Guide: Caroline Miesle

Chemistry: With the astounding variety of life we have around us, it is amazing to know that only 92 naturally occurring elements make up all the substances of our world. Chemistry is about studying these elements, their combinations and what happens when they interact. Unraveling mysteries, predicting outcomes, creating solutions and solving puzzles are all part of the study of chemistry. Guide: Sheila Sullivan

* * SEMESTER 2 ELECTIVES * *

Musicianship II: Continue to study and develop the skills introduced in Musicianship I including ear training, arranging, practice techniques, effective rehearsal strategies, performance, and music theory (scales, inversions, chord voicing, notation). Students will also write original compositions in any style for any instruments. Students are welcome to play any of the available instruments (guitar, bass, keyboards, drums) or may bring their own as well. All students are encouraged to participate in performances throughout the semester (i.e. Coffee House, Spring Concert). Guide: Zack Scott

Shakespearean Literature: The course is for grades 10-12 and will cover the history of Elizabethan theater and Shakespeare's world, as well as a deep analysis of several important works. Written work will include research, literary and character analysis in papers four to five pages in length. Memorization and scene work will round out the course and your grade! Guide: Mary Gantenbein

Health and Fitness: In this health class we will cover a variety of topics relevant to the students' lives. We will hold group discussions, lectures, and provide time for individual work, which will promote personal growth and development. We will build on health topics by using the media, statistics, Internet, and guest speakers, and piggyback this with the students' firsthand knowledge and experiences. We will also develop a Personal Fitness Plan so the students can track and monitor their progress. 75% of the class time will be designated to our health topics, and the other 25% will be the real life application of these health and fitness topics. Here we try to develop lifetime activities and habits to help the students determine what works best for them on an individual basis. With limited space available we will be utilizing our surrounding areas by going on health walks, playing games outside, and using health promoting videos such as Pilates and Tae Bo. The main focus of this class is to engage the students and set them on the path to living a healthy lifestyle. Guide: Aaron Shackle

News & Yearbook: This course will focus on documenting the year at Great River through a newspaper or online journal and a yearbook. Emphasis will be on both design/layout and writing. Students will develop a vision of what they want in a newspaper and yearbook, work out a plan to accomplish that vision, and execute it. Guide: Kate Diehn

Macintosh Service/Technology: The Macintosh Service Occupation is a one-semester class familiarizing students with software and hardware associated with Macintosh computers in general, and Great River School's computer system. The Occupation will include a unit on Mac OS X and the software aspect of Macintosh as well as a piece on hardware and the different terms used for servicing and replacing parts. The goal of the occupation is to prepare students for 2 certification tests: one on hardware and the other on software. Once both of these tests have been passed, the student will receive an embossed Apple Certified Macintosh Technician certificate in the mail, gain access to Apple Service Source full of service guides and technician resources and be half way to the certification level required to be a technician or other repair assistant at the Apple Store as well as have the ability to take apart or service any Apple product without voiding the warranty. Guide: Kate Diehn

Sculpture: In this class, we'll make things that live in three dimensions. This will include how to draw three-dimensional forms, how to use wire, plaster, metal, wood, and clay to make the forms that your imagination dreams up. We'll study artists that use sculpture to express their ideas, and we'll make at least one permanent installation at the school to beautify the campus of Great River. There will be two research assignments; a 3-5 page paper on an artist, and a presentation on a style of art - come prepared and excited to learn about 3d art and expression! Guide: Sam O'Brien

Scientific Discoveries and Biographies: *"If I have seen further it is only by standing on the shoulders of giants." Sir Isaac Newton*

No one acts alone in great scientific discovery but rather, one builds on the ideas of others. In this semester long course students will hear stories of the lives of scientists and the cultural context in which they began their scientific careers. As a micro teaching venture, students will investigate the path of a scientific discovery and that of the individuals involved. Students will also work in small groups to come up with an original invention of their own. Guide: Shelia Sullivan

MCA Math Prep: Need help prepping/passing the 11th grade MCA mathematics test? This is the class for you. I will help you gain competency in the content areas you need to pass. Passing the MCA test is a graduation requirement and the goal of this class is to for every student who takes it to pass on the next try. General topics will be covered, but instruction is individualized. Guide: Zach Schlutz

****Classes for grades 7 -9 ****

Philosophy - Ethics: This is an introductory course to philosophy. The course is centered on class discussions concerning issues and topics brought out through the reading of a text about young adults and their thoughts, feelings and experiences. Central ideas of the course include: ethics, values, inductive and deductive reasoning, fairness, rules, consequences, freedom, truth, and existence. It is a course where students practice and experience philosophy more than read about it. The objectives of the class are to: address topics that are meaningful to young people through philosophical inquiry; enjoy challenging concepts together; develop their inner voice as well as critical thinking, reading, and writing skills. It is an active and engaging course, which often has students continuing the conversations outside of class. Guide: Nelson Inz or Molly Keenan

Seeing with the Mind: "Seeing with the Mind" is a seminar format which uses discussion and writing to analyze, explicate, deconstruct and describe the world around us: art, architecture, artifacts and nature. Designed to open up your inquiring mind and give flight to your budding philosophical wings! Guide: Ms. G

Idea Lab: Idea Lab: bring your ideas to life. In the Idea Lab, you will work with your hands and your mind, learning to take a dream and build the reality. Part design, part engineering, part construction, part presentation, you'll work in a variety of mediums to explore design, engineering, and production. This is a two-hour class from 1:00 – 3:00. Guide: Michael Flood

Eco Education - Urban Garden: This class will run in conjunction with *Environmental Art - Urban Garden*. The class will study issues in urban agriculture, and contribute to the Great River Garden. We will also learn the basics of seed starting, composting and garden care. *Eco-Education* will investigate environmental and food justice as a community, state or global issue. Students will learn about the many aspects of the issue, decide on solutions, and take action. The class is entirely student driven as the issues and solutions will be determined entirely by students. Students will also decide on and complete smaller hands on community projects. The class will spend two days a week working on these community based projects with *Environmental Art - Urban Garden* and two days a week working on the issue of their choosing. Students should be ready to delve into an environmental or food justice issues, investigate and evaluate complex real world problems, write a grant, and carry out a solution. Be prepared to be empowered! Guide: Tami Limberg

Environmental Art - Urban Garden: This class will run in conjunction with *Eco Education - Urban Garden*. The class will study issues in urban agriculture, and contribute to the Great River Garden. We will also learn the basics of seed starting, composting and garden care. *Environmental Art* will study the ways in which art and the environment interact. Skills learned will include drawing, watercolor painting, and building techniques with wood and tile mosaic. We will study artists who focus on environmental issues, use materials from the environment, and use the environment as an essential element in their work. Such artists include Georgia O'Keefe, Herman de Vries, Andy Goldsworthy, Rosalie Gascoigne and Patrice Stellest. We will focus our work on drawing and painting the natural world, sculpture that uses materials from the environment, and installations that include the garden and the school. Guide: Sam O'Brien

Bike Shop: In the GRS Bike Shop, students will learn the craft of bike maintenance and repair. The course work is centered on doing real work on student and staff bicycles. There will also be material presented on the history of bicycling, bicycle racing, and on some facets of how a small business is run. Work is done primarily in support of the A1 spring bike trip, but also extends to repair and maintenance of staff bicycles and equipment of student families. Because fees are charged for work, and because of the safety issues involved, students who apply for bike shop must be serious about the work, and should have a strong interest in cycling. Working on bicycles can be messy, and participants in the shop will get their hands dirty! Students must submit a written statement to Mike prior to acceptance into the class describing their cycling experience (or the desire for cycling experience) and stating why they want to be considered for the class. Guide: Mike Sweet