

A3 COURSE CATALOG

Physics (*Full Year*)

Guide: Sheila Sullivan

This is an advanced course in high school physics designed to prepare students for success in college course work. This course assumes knowledge of basic algebra and trigonometry concepts. Students must have completed algebra II or receive consent from the instructor to enroll in the course. Although large group instruction is part of this course, students are expected to be able to design and carry out lab procedures, determine steps in problem solving and carry out research independently and in small groups. Semester one topics are focused largely on mechanics. Semester two topics include optics, electricity and magnetism.

Theory of Knowledge I (*Semester*)

Guide: Andrea Christensen

(*Required in junior year for IB Diploma*)

This is an introductory course, offered each spring, that is based in questions of philosophy and epistemology. Course readings and discussions encourage critical thinking about knowledge itself to help students make sense of what they encounter in the world. Students will attempt to answer questions about the nature of knowers, areas of knowledge, and ways of knowing. The class centers on seminar discussion and written reflection in addition to an oral assessment. This class is open to all high school students.

Theory of Knowledge II (*Semester*)

Guides: Andrea Christensen-Fall

(*Required in senior year for IB Diploma*)

Nelson Inz-Spring

This is a capstone course, offered each autumn, that pushes questions of philosophy and epistemology beyond the introductory level. Course readings and discussions require higher-level critical thinking about knowledge issues and their contributing factors. Students will write a culminating essay about the nature of knowers, areas of knowledge, and ways of knowing. The class centers on seminar discussion and written reflection in addition to the written assessment. This class is open to anyone who has already taken TOK I.

IB English HL I (*Full Year*)

Guide: Andrea Christensen

This is a year-long college preparatory course that will attempt to provide parallels to the content presented in the IB History class as much as possible. First semester will focus on novels that touch on the issues of colonialism and slavery, and includes titles such as *Their Eyes Were Watching God* by Zora Neale Hurston, *Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe, *Heart of Darkness* by Joseph Conrad, and *The Bluest Eye* by Toni Morrison. Second semester will focus on how the history of the Americas connects with Shakespeare's *Othello*, Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*, and selections from American poets such as Langston Hughes and Emily Dickinson. Major assessments will focus on oral presentations of literature analysis.

IB English HL II (*Full Year*)

Guide: Andrea Christensen

This is a year-long college preparatory course that will attempt to provide parallels to the content presented in the IB History class as much as possible, while focusing on written literature analysis. The course will start with world literature and end with a drama genre study. World literature studied includes Isabel Allende's *The House of the Spirits*, Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's *A Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*, and Ferdinand Oyono's *Houseboy*. Drama studied includes Miller's *Death of a Salesman*, O'Neill's *The Iceman Cometh*, Williams' *A Streetcar Named Desire*, and Ibsen's *A Doll's House*. Major assessments will include two prepared world literature papers and two timed essay exams on the genre study.

Writing Lab *(Semester)***Guide: Andrea Christensen**

Let your creative juices flow! Are you interested in creative writing? Possible areas of focus include (but are not limited to!): fiction/short stories, poetry, playwriting/screenwriting, creative non-fiction and satire, the possibilities are endless! This is a writing course that is designed to give you an opportunity to develop your unique goals as a writer. Throughout the course, you will receive support and guidance in a small group/workshop setting to work on your individualized writing project.

Playwriting/One-Act *(Semester)***Guide: Nelson Inz**

Students will study and practice playwriting working towards the goal of creating a piece of dramatic writing for production. The playwright creatively and critically employs character, narrative strategies, organizing principles of form, poetic images and language, political and aesthetic manifestos, and the abstract flexibility of the stage to convey and challenge our private and public dreams. Students will be expected to contribute written work and significant commitment to the process of revision. This course culminates in an evening of theater at the end of the semester.

World Language*Beginning Spanish (Full Year)**Guide: Enrique Garita*

¡Bienvenidos! 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.

*Intermediate Spanish (Full Year)**Guide: New Spanish Teacher*

¡Bienvenidos! 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; you will have ample opportunities to interact in Spanish on a variety of topics.

*IB Spanish SL I and II (Full Year)**Guides: Enrique Garita (SL-II)
and New Spanish Teacher (SL-I)*

¡Bienvenidos! The Spanish IB course is designed for students with aspirations above and beyond the typical student. They will accomplish a higher competence level in foreign language. Also, they will have the tremendous opportunity to explore a different culture throughout the international Spanish-speaking community. Language, as part of culture, is continually changing and plays an essential role in the community. Through the learning process of this course, the student will be aware of these changes and will know how to react in different situations. In order to develop the 4 areas of this IB course the student must speak Spanish during the class in different situations—debate, formal and informal sceneries, and focus on daily routines, among others. The student will be asked to take into consideration the Spanish-speaking culture in forming their answers. For instance, the students might be asked to pretend they are at a street market in a Latin-American country shopping for food. The student needs to know that bargaining is part of the culture and he or she will demonstrate this ability. Another example has students using pictures or videos to

create descriptions and tell short stories. This requires the student to use language at a higher level and be prepared to respond to spontaneous questions made from the audience.

IB Music (*Full Year*)

Guide: Zachary Scott

Offers the opportunity to study music as an academic discipline. Over the course of a year (or two years), students will learn the essentials of theory and music history, and apply a specialized vocabulary to the analysis of music from around the world. Students will compose, complete listening, and analyze scores. Seniors planning to test in IB music in a single year should complete an online theory course during the summer. Information is available from Caroline.

Advanced Recording Arts (*Full Year*)

Guide: Zachary Scott

Advanced Recording Arts is a hand-on class designed to give students a recording studio experience. We will study important groundbreaking recordings and many related topics including the history of recording, acoustics, and microphone choice and placement. Students will experience every part of the recording process from choosing the music, arranging, rehearsing, planning the recording, engineering, and mixing. The class will also be responsible for recording school events as needed. The goal of the class is to create a high-quality CD of their music.

Concert Choir (*Full Year*)

Guide: Caroline Miesle

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.

Ceramics & Sculpture (*Semester*)

Guide: Sam O'Brien

In this class, we'll make things that live in three dimensions. A majority of our time will be spent learning the craft of ceramics, both hand building and wheel throwing. We will also study how to draw three-dimensional forms, how to use wire, plaster, metal, wood, *and* clay to make the forms in space. 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!

IB Art (*Full Year*)

Guide: Sam O'Brien

(IB certificate and diploma testing priority enrollment)

IB Art is an advanced course in which the process is equal to the product. Emphasis is placed on the research of art history, research of ideas, and production of studio work. The student artist will explore sculpture, drawing, painting, ceramics, photography and mixed media work. The courses link the core elements of art concepts, criticism and analysis, acquisition of technical skills, and the relationship of art to social, cultural and historical context. This is a research-based class where we analyze ideas and experiment with representing ideas. Our focus will be on the development and in-depth use of the student independent research sketchbook. You will maintain notes and documentation detailing your ideas, observations, interests, plans, problems, successes and critiques.

Drawing and Painting *(Semester)***Guide: Sam O'Brien**

Representing what we see—inside and out—will be the goal of this class. We will aim to develop our technical skills in regard to making a mark on the page. We will use both traditional and experimental media, working our way through dry materials into watercolor, oil pastels and acrylic paint. Our work will prepare us to create paintings and drawings that express not only what we see, but *how* we see the world around us. Our last project of the class will be spent on collaborative murals.

Painting with Acrylics *(Semester)***Guide: Randi McClure**

Note: This class is offered during core time and requires Registrar approval.

In this class we will explore the versatile nature of acrylic paint. We will learn how to build canvases, mix pigments and create compelling compositions. We will study form, perspective, balance and color theory with a focus on building technical painting skills. Types of projects will include still life, portrait, and expressionist landscape. We will study different artists weekly to gain insight into the very personal, evocative nature of painting and help each student find his/her own individual style on the canvas.

Drawing: A Sense of Self *(Semester)***Guide: Randi McClure**

A3 students will delve into the art of the psyche. Using artists such as Wassily Kandinsky, Chuck Close and Jerry Uelsmann as inspiration, we will practice putting ourselves into our work, both figuratively and literally. Using pencil, paint, collage and more, we will learn to use drawing as a means of communication and creative expression.

Food and Culture *(Semester)***Guide: Nelson Inz****An exploration of the meaning, history, and culture of food**

Students will explore how food is an expression of culture throughout history. Through research, writing, discussion, and project work students will examine the different ways food has, and continues to, connect people throughout different cultures. Topics range from “the caveman diet”, and eating habits of early hunter/gathering society, to the modern global agri-food business. Students will question the way food is viewed in different social and cultural contexts, learn to prepare meals in this context, and keep a daily journal about food in their lives, among other assignments.

Wilderness First Aid**Guides: Caroline Miesle and Aaron Shackle**

Wilderness First Aid is a hands-on course that teaches the skills necessary for survival in the wilderness. You will study a wide variety of topics, from plant identification and first aid to building fires, axe and saw skills, navigating with map and compass, and creating temporary shelters. No previous experience with outdoor skills necessary!