Wheeler School

Course Description Book 2026-2027

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Requirements For Graduation

Students are required to be enrolled in five major courses each semester. Any exception to this requirement must be approved by the Head of Upper School. The School recognizes and supports accommodations for students with documented learning disabilities. School policy requires that a Senior must pass all courses in which he or she is enrolled during the Senior year, regardless of any prior fulfillment of the distribution requirements or other factors. Seniors who have failed a one-semester or a year course will be granted a certificate of attendance in June and be given the opportunity to earn the diploma within a specified time subsequent to June of the Senior year.

Visual Arts: Two semesters required, including Foundation Art for one semester in grades nine or ten.

English: Four credits. English 9 & 10 (full year) , English 11 & 12 (Fall semester) and one core elective in the Spring semester of each year.

Modern Language: Through level 3 in one language, or through level 2 in two languages.

History: Three credits, including one year of United States history.

Mathematics: Three credits, including two credits in algebra and one in geometry.

Performing Arts: Two semesters.

Science: Three credits, including one credit each of environmental science and chemistry, and one credit of either biology or physics.

Physical Education: Four years, 100 minutes per week required.

Whole Life Seminar: Four years.

Note: One semester major course equals 0.5 credit; one year-long major course equals 1.0 credit.

Policies Governing Academic Study

Course Load

All students carry a minimum of five major courses. Although some students' interests compel them to consider taking seven courses, we urge students and families to make this decision cautiously as students must create a balance between academic study and co-curricular commitments for a healthy life. Students wishing to take seven courses must petition the Head of the Upper School and Program Planning Committee of the Upper School.

Students have an exploration period of the first two weeks of each semester to consider changing their program. Only students enrolled in six major courses can drop a major course after the last day of the second week of school as others will have missed too substantial a portion of a class to enroll in a fifth course. If a student has been misplaced, that student will be moved to the appropriate level with the advice of the teacher and the Department Head. Only under special circumstances are students allowed to drop a year-long course after the first semester. In these cases the first semester grade, W, will stand on the transcript, which will reflect a "Withdraw."

Advanced Placement Policies

Students are admitted to AP courses with the permission of the department. Students in these courses necessarily take on a course load with high work demands and often must use vacations and long weekends to cover material. All students in AP courses are required to take the AP examination.

In an effort to sustain a healthy balance between academic, co-curricular, and athletic commitments, no student will be allowed to enroll in more than four AP classes. Students who meet the criteria to enroll in four AP classes and who wish to do so will need to petition the Program Planning Committee of the Upper School. We urge students and parents to make this decision only after careful thought and with an eye toward preserving time for activities outside of school.

Semester and Year Away Programs

Wheeler recognizes the value of non-traditional educational programs and enthusiastically supports five programs that offer an experience complementary to ours to interested Juniors. These programs involve an application process with the hosting schools, and Wheeler works closely with them to ensure a good experience for our students. Students at Wheeler may apply to the following semester and year away programs for the JUNIOR YEAR ONLY: The Mountain School in Vershire, Vermont; CITYTerm in New York City; The High Mountain Institute in Colorado; The Island School, Eleuthera Island in the Bahamas; and School Year Abroad, sponsored by Phillips Academy. Seniors are expected to spend the entirety of the year on our campus.

Supplemental Courses

Students with a particular passion or expertise in an area may choose to pursue independent study in that area with a faculty member. These opportunities require initiative, independence, and responsibility on the part of the student. In most instances, these supplemental courses are minor courses, and students and the instructor must be able to meet for five periods in the eight day cycle. Students must submit a supplemental course application to the registrar which must also be approved by the student's advisor, the Director of the Aerie program, the Head of the Upper School, and college counseling (for second semester juniors and all seniors).

Visual Arts

The study of art affects all areas of learning. The development of perceptual skills is vitally important as these skills improve cognition. The Upper School Visual Art curriculum is designed to encourage students to be receptive to new ideas, ways of working and thinking, taking risks, and challenging themselves. Students learn the value of experimentation and discovery without fear. Process and growth are valued over product. Program goals include broadening awareness through the art-making process and aim to help students value their ideas, growth, and work as well as the ideas of others.

Requirements: Art is foundational to the Wheeler Education.
Students are required to take **two** art courses in the Upper School: Foundation Art and one additional elective of their choosing (Introduction to Wheel Throwing, Introduction to Photography, Drawing, Painting, Two-Dimensional Design or Three-Dimensional Design) before they graduate.
Students interested in pursuing art at an advanced level should request to take Foundation Art in the ninth grade when possible, and

- complete the necessary application process to be considered for acceptance in the Studio Art program if they are committed to a three-year Studio Art Program in Drawing and Painting.

  OR

- complete **two** electives in one of the following paths
  - 2D: Drawing, Painting, Two-Dimensional Design
  - 3D: Three-Dimensional Design, Introduction to Wheel Throwing, Advanced Wheel Throwing
  - Photography: Introduction to Photography, Advanced Photography

  If they are committed to enrolling in Advanced Art Seminar in their senior year

For an overview of the Upper School Art offerings and their sequences see Appendix 6.

Students new to Wheeler in the 11th grade are required to take either Foundation Art or one art elective, depending on previous art experiences.

Foundation Art

Foundation Art provides the basis for all art courses that follow in the Upper School. This studio-based course covers the Elements and Principles of Design. Projects explore a variety of media and materials that include; drawing, painting, collage, photography, printmaking and ceramics. Gallery visits and critiques are also an essential component of this curriculum, encouraging students to analyze art in addition to creating art. This single-semester course is required at the 9th or 10th-grade level and is a pre-requisite for all other art courses. Offered fall and spring semesters. (Minor course)

Introduction to Wheel Throwing

This course introduces students to the fundamental techniques of creating clay forms on the potter's wheel. Students begin by developing essential skills such as centering clay, pulling walls, and forming simple vessels. As the semester progresses, they advance toward more complex forms and refined craftsmanship. Projects focus primarily on utilitarian objects, with opportunities to explore sculptural approaches as well. Glazing and surface decoration techniques are introduced and practiced throughout the semester. (Prerequisite: Foundation Art) Offered fall and spring semesters. (Major course)

Advanced Wheel Throwing

This course is designed for students who have completed Introduction to Wheel Throwing and wish to further develop their technical skills and personal expression in ceramics. Projects include wheel-thrown forms such as plates, stacked forms, and tea sets, along with studies of artists and cultural traditions in ceramics. Emphasis is placed on decorative techniques, texture, surface design, and intentional craftsmanship. Students may enroll for one or two semesters; preferences should be indicated during course sign-ups. (Prerequisite: Foundation Art and Introduction to Wheel Throwing) (Major course)

Three-Dimensional Design

This course offers an exploration of sculptural techniques to create three-dimensional forms working with a variety of media including wire, paper, plaster, and clay. Projects will draw inspiration from nature, architecture, and creations from industry. As students learn techniques and gain the ability to communicate their ideas in three-dimensions, more complex processes will be introduced. Offered

fall and/or spring semesters. (Prerequisite: Foundation Art) (Minor course)

Drawing

This course is designed for students to develop their skills in drawing with an emphasis on creative exploration and personal expression using a wide range of drawing surfaces and materials. Subjects may include spontaneous and responsive mark-making, self-portraits, and still-lives. Each student will be given a sketchbook for their own personal visual journaling. In-class assignments are supplemented by walking field trips to nearby museums and galleries. Offered fall and spring semesters. (Prerequisite: Foundation Art) (Minor course)

Painting

This course focuses on daily in-class painting as a way to explore techniques as well as to experiment with a variety of painting media. In addition to learning the basics of painting, students will continue to develop drawing skills for accuracy and expression. Students will also learn about value, color-mixing, and color-relationships. Through an exploration of different styles and materials, the aim of this course is for each student to find the best means for personal expression. We will visit shows in our own Chazan Gallery and when possible take field trips to local galleries and museums. (Prerequisite: Foundation Art) (Minor course)

Two-Dimensional Design

This course creates opportunities for students to apply the Elements and Principles of Design while combining words and images to create effective visual statements and powerful messages in a variety of media such as: collage, printmaking and digital design media. Students will explore technical skills of traditional and contemporary printmaking. The skills learned in this course offer a solid foundation for students interested in pursuing design work in commercial art, advertising, printmaking while strengthening compositions in all media. Coursework will be supplemented with field trips to local studios when possible. Offered fall or spring semesters. (Prerequisite: Foundation Art) (Minor course)

Introduction to Photography

An introduction to black and white photography, this course will cover the basic operations of a digital camera, image-capture, downloading, formatting, image adjustments in Adobe Photoshop, and printing. A digital camera is required for the course and will be provided if needed. No phone cameras. Offered fall and spring semesters. (Prerequisite: Foundation Art) (Minor course)

Advanced Photography

This course is a continuation of the skills and concepts learned in Introduction to Photography. Students will be introduced to color digital photography, learning color theory, and applying various color combinations and palettes to image capture. Advanced techniques in Photoshop will be covered to further enhance image manipulation possibilities and to create photo collages. A digital camera is required for the course and will be provided if needed. No phone cameras. Offered fall and/or spring semesters. (Prerequisite: Foundation Art and Digital Photography 1) (Minor course)

Advanced Art Seminar (2D, 3D and Photography)

Art Seminar is a rigorous course of study for advanced Art Elective students to continue exploration in…

- 2D: Drawing, Painting, Two-Dimensional Design
- 3D: Introduction to Wheel Throwing, Advanced Wheel Throwing, Three-Dimensional Design
- Photography: Introduction to Photography, Advanced Photography

First semester studio time is structured around conceptually based assignments to which students respond within their medium of expertise. Class time also includes demonstrations, critiques, visits from professional artists as well as trips to museums and local studios. Second semester is devoted to producing a body of artwork around a personally selected theme, culminating in a senior art show in the Chazan Gallery. This is a year-long major academic course. Prerequisites: successful completion of two art electives within a path (2D, 3D and Photography) (Major course)

Studio Art 1

Studio Art One is a rigorous course designed for students with a strong interest in drawing and painting and a commitment to advanced study in visual art. Through a series of structured assignments, students develop the observational and rendering skills necessary to make powerful visual statements through their art. The first semester focuses entirely on black-and-white compositions and designs. Subject matter include both representational and non-representational imagery, figure drawing, landscape and portraiture.

The second semester provides a thorough introduction to color theory and painting. Studio Art 1 is a year-long major academic course with a weekly five-hour out-of-class assignment. Prerequisite: Foundation Art/Departmental Recommendation/Application requires submission of three assigned drawings and a written statement. Full-year. (Major course)

Studio Art 2

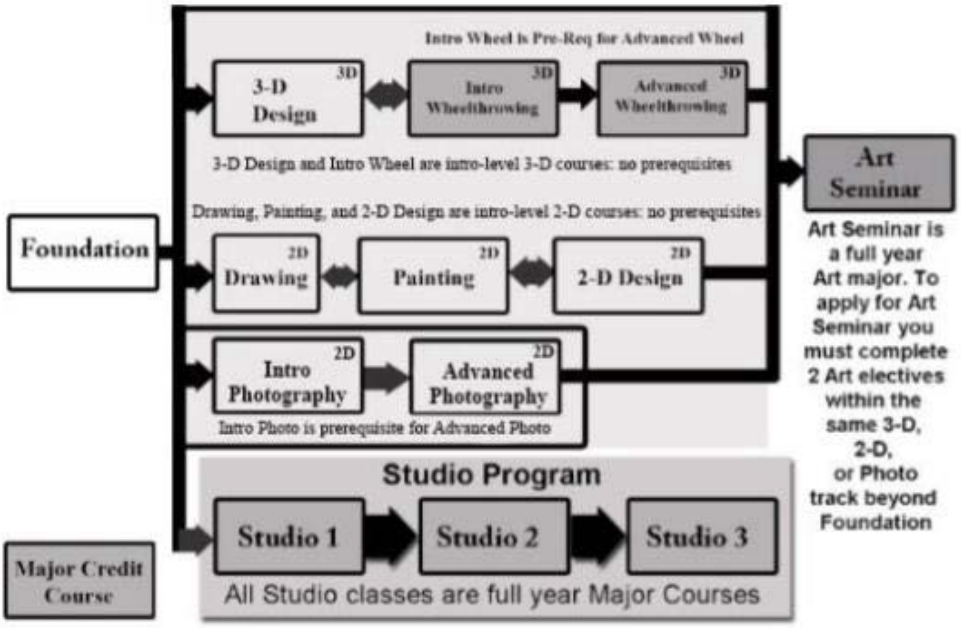
This course builds upon the skills developed in Studio Art 1 through continued exploration of drawing, painting, and design. The course emphasizes visual expression as a way to communicate ideas, with a strong focus on conceptual development and experimentation with a variety of materials and techniques. Students work to strengthen technical skills, artistic confidence, and individual voice in order to create personal and expressive artworks. Instruction includes figure drawing, group critiques, gallery and museum visits, and artist lectures. Students also have the opportunity to prepare and submit a portfolio for the AP 2D Art and Design exam. Studio Art is a year-long major academic course with a weekly five-hour out-of-class assignment. Prerequisite: Studio Art 1. Department recommendation is required. Full-year (Major course)

Studio Art 3

This course is a continuation and culmination of the Studio program. The first semester focuses on genres of art including landscape, still life and portraiture, while exploring a variety of drawing and painting media and further developing personal artistic style. The second semester of Studio Art 3 is devoted to producing a body of artwork around a personally selected theme for a senior art show in the Chazan Gallery.

Studio Art is a year-long major academic course with a weekly five-hour out-of-class assignment. Prerequisite: Studio Art 1&2. Department recommendation is required. Full-year (Major course)

Visual Arts Department Course Sequence



Note: All Art Electives are single semester, minor courses except where indicated in dark gray.
Students may take the following Art Electives in any order:
Drawing, Painting, 2-D Design, 3-D Design, Intro to Wheelthrowing, Intro to Photography

Computer Science

Introduction to Computer Science: Data & Cybersecurity

Designed for students with no prior programming experience, Introduction to CS: Data & Cybersecurity offers a big picture exploration of the digital world beyond just writing code. This course builds a broad foundation in computer science, starting with the physical components of computers, essentials of computational thinking, and logic based problem-solving. Students will investigate how data is represented and processed through data compression and binary conversion, learning the ethical implications behind Big Data algorithms, before diving into the infrastructure of the internet, cybersecurity, and digital privacy. The semester concludes with a critical look at the societal impact of computing, including the rise of Artificial Intelligence. One semester. Offered Fall semester. (Major course)

Introduction to Computer Science: Programming Foundations

Designed for students with no prior programming experience, Introduction to CS: Programming Foundations, is an introduction to programming concepts, including program design and development, algorithms, and coding. We evaluate programming methodologies and the use of structured, problem-solving logic. Students are introduced to fundamental concepts of computer science, including computer programming terminology, standard data types,variables, loops, conditionals, and class and object concepts, through the programming languages Javascript and Java. A significant amount of time in class is devoted to learning how to design, code, compile, and debug programs. This course does not require any previous programming experience and is intended for students who want to gain a foundation in standard programming concepts and techniques. Students interested in this course should have completed Honors Math 1, or Algebra 2, or received the teacher's permission. This course is a prerequisite to AP Computer Science. One semester. Offered Spring semester. (Major course)

Advanced Placement Computer Science A

This course emphasizes advanced programming methodologies and Object Oriented Programming concepts. Students will become proficient in advanced class and object design, arrays/array lists, text files, data sets, artificial intelligence, searching/sorting algorithms, recursive techniques, and other algorithms, among other fundamental concepts in computer science. The curriculum is based on the College Board Advanced Placement Computer Science syllabus and taking the Advanced Placement Computer Science Examination in the Spring is a course requirement. The course uses hands-on projects to help students acquire the skills and understanding necessary to be successful programmers. Prerequisite: completion of the Introduction to CS: Programming Foundations class (offered in Spring) with an A- or better or with the teacher's permission. Before beginning the course, students should have completed HM2 or Algebra 2 / Trigonometry. Students starting the class with a math aptitude and a strong foundational understanding of Java syntax and computer logic are in the best position for success. Full year. (Major course)

English

The English department encourages students to become sophisticated readers and confident writers. Through in-depth analysis of texts of increasing complexity chosen from various literary forms (autobiographies, essays, novels, short stories, plays, and poetry), our students develop their ability to understand and to explain an author's style, voice, background, and historical period. We strive for a balance between classic and contemporary texts and look to expose our students to a diverse selection of perspectives and subjects.

Writing is at the heart of all levels of the English curriculum. The department emphasizes both analytical and creative writing assignments in order to enhance students' understanding of literature and their own place in the world. Students at each grade level can expect to write a variety of expository and personal essays, poems, short stories, and one act plays. Students hone their writing through a revision process that involves thorough teacher commentary, peer editing in class, and the use of appointed student writing mentors. We encourage students to showcase their work in student publications and various writing contests.

All students must complete four full years of English study.

N-12 English & Language Arts Department Mission Statement

Stories and storytelling, as ongoing expressions of the full human experience, are at the heart of our work as an English department. Our students will better know themselves, their fellow citizens, and the world we all share through the attentive examination of these stories as well as the thoughtful reflection on their own emerging voices. In our classrooms, when we are committed and willing to engage in each other's narratives, when we create a culture of inquiry and empathy, we can more effectively and meaningfully realize literature's highest purpose as a collective call to action, justice, and compassion. We acknowledge the role of education as a tool for the liberation of all people, that our mission as an English department is to equip students with the voices and the authority to question, challenge, and transform themselves and the world around them.

English 9

In the freshman year, students are exposed to great works of fiction, poetry, and drama. As they read, students will also learn to ask important questions about how the words on the page might help them better understand human experience. In many cases, the texts in this course have, as their protagonists, young people who are struggling with choices about falling in love, finding an identity, or defying cultural expectations. Students in ninth grade are expected to generate ideas for writing, to revise drafts with care, and to spend time identifying their own strengths and weaknesses as readers and writers. In addition to critical essays, students will also write creative responses to the texts in such forms as poetry, fiction and personal narrative. Students will study vocabulary and grammar in conjunction with their reading and writing. Texts used in recent years have included *The Story and Its Writer*; *Small Odysseys*; *Twelfth Night*; *Sing, Unburied, Sing*; *Oceanic, The Norton Introduction to Poetry*; and *The Book Thief*. (Major course)

English 10

Sophomore English is designed to develop and refine students' critical reading and writing skills. Our study of international literature will identify the common ground between texts of different cultural origins and literary genres. More thematically, this curriculum explores what shapes and makes us who we are as well as who we are perceived to be. Our texts explore the boundaries we face, perceived and unknown, some constructed by others, and some we ourselves have built. What defines who we are? How do these multiple identities intersect? What determines our path? What borders, literal and metaphorical, are crossable, which are impassable, and in what contexts? Writing assignments will focus on synthesizing information, concepts, and approaches from various literary sources, including works in translation. In addition to writing analytical essays, students have opportunities to write creative responses to the texts. Texts used in recent years have included *The Namesake*, *The Classic Fairy Tales*, *The Elephant Vanishes*, *Exit West*, *How Long 'til Black Future Month?,* and a unit on poetry. (Major course)

English 11, Fall Semester

The fall semester of junior year is devoted to the study of American literature. Students examine such topics as the pursuit of the American Dream, philosophies of freedom and democracy, the examination of gender dynamics, the relationship between narrative voice and identity, and the intersections of race, culture, and class. Students interrogate these themes in personal and critical essays and various forms of creative projects. Authors studied in recent years have included Zora Neale Hurston, Walt Whitman, Emily Dickinson, Langston Hughes, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Jimmy Santiago Baca, and Chen Chen. Juniors in good standing may be invited by their English teachers to take either one or both of the Advanced Placement exams in English in the spring. (Major course)

English 12, Fall Semester

The fall semester of English 12 introduces students to challenging texts that explore important existential questions; the complex, often fraught interplay between social constructs, communities, and individuals; the blurry lines between memory, history, and reality; the precarious relationship between justice and forgiveness; and the tensions between responsibility to self and accountability to others. The class will collectively perform a close study of a play by William Shakespeare and a novel by Toni Morrison. In responding to these texts, students are encouraged to challenge themselves to articulate a more nuanced and complex engagement in their own writing than they have taken on in the past. Such efforts have taken these forms: experimenting with form and voice in creative and reflective writing; designing, blocking, and novelizing a scene from Shakespeare's play; and crafting a comparative retrospective that synthesizes a set of texts across their high school English career. (Major course)

English 11 and 12, Spring Semester Core Electives

Each spring the English Department offers core elective choices for 11th and 12th graders. Students rank their preferences from this list of the specific course descriptions during course sign ups.

Epic Poetry

In this course, we will read Homer's *Odyssey* and Derek Walcott's *Omeros*. As we study these poems, we will focus, primarily, on the evolution of the epic poem as a form. We will consider, too, the evolution of the epic hero—as a character and as a representative of certain cultural ideals. Our study of the epic hero and his moral make-up will also cause us to think about the role of women in epic poetry, the necessity of civic piety, the interference of the gods, the power of fate, and the potential effects of travel on the individual and their character.

The Female Protagonist

This course will focus on the development of strong female characters in a range of literary works. We will begin by considering the female characters students have already encountered in their reading since childhood before shifting to assigned texts, focusing on 19th and 20th century novels. Students will write critically in response to the literature and will also explore those qualities which distinguish strong women in their own experience. Novels considered in the past have included: *Pride and Prejudice, Emma, Jane Eyre, To the Lighthouse, The Bell Jar, The Color Purple, The Bluest Eye,* and *Americanah.*

Fiction & Film

In 1936, art historian Erwin Panofsky wrote, "If all the serious lyrical poets, composers, painters and sculptors were forced by law to stop their activities, a rather small fraction of the general public would become aware of the fact and still a smaller fraction would seriously regret it. If the same thing were to happen with the movies, the social consequences would be catastrophic." Film is arguably the most powerful and popular art form of the past hundred years. So what happens to a novel when it gets adapted to film? How can the two mediums communicate? While studying cinematic elements (mise-en-scène, cinematography, and editing) to better understand the significance of what becomes "invisible" when viewers lose themselves within a film's "illusion of realism," we will consider each text as an independent work of fiction as well as a source that inspired adaptation/ translation, asking how each film remains faithful to or alters the original's plot, style, and message. Works may include *The Children of Men* (by PD James, dir. Alfonso Cuaron), *The Silver Linings Playbook* (by Matthew Quick, dir. David O. Russell), *Slumdog Millionaire* (by Vikas Swarup, dir. Danny Boyle), *Bee Season* (by Myla Goldberg, dir. Scott McGehee and David Siegel), *No Country for Old Men* (by Cormac McCarthy, dir. Joel and Ethan Coen), *Million Dollar Baby* (by FX Toole, dir. Clint Eastwood), and *Where the Wild Things Are* (by Maurice Sendak, dir. Spike Jonze).

Horror in Literature and Culture

Horror is among the most important genres in all of literature and culture. Our societies have used horror since before they could use writing in order to teach, warn, and entertain. Horror is integral to folk traditions, and even to religious traditions, throughout the world. Today, we also use horror to innovate our technical approaches to art and meaning, and to articulate our anxieties about the world in which we live. In this course, we will look at an array of texts by authors including Washington Irving, Shirley Jackson, Stephen King, Tananarive Due, Victor Lavalle, and Carmen Maria Machado. We will also look at films in order to see the many ways in which horror has necessitated and produced critical innovations in filmmaking and visual language. We will consider how horror

appears in or influences music, media, and even the news. Throughout the course, we will examine the ways in which horror makes claims not only about our own personal experiences, but also about the world, including the echoes of history in the spaces where we reside, the ambivalent meaning of the uncanny, and the anxious nature of existence. We will look at narratives that explore the nature of violence, cannibalism, monsters, ghosts, and murder. We will compose major analyses of fiction from the course, making use of primary and secondary critical texts. At the end of the course, we will have the opportunity to write our own horror fiction. This course is meant to offer a rigorous approach to a topic we often take for granted as frivolous. We will work from the assumption that there is no genre that better helps us to understand the world than the one about zombies and monsters and people eating people.

The Literature of Immigrant Communities

A city, a map, a text, and the human heart—all are spaces we try to understand and define. For immigrants, these spaces come with a paradox: they demand boundaries, forcing us to navigate the lines between who we were, where we come from, and where we are now. This course invites us to explore questions of home, nation, and identity while reflecting on our intersecting identities and the experience of living in *Nepantla*—the in-between space of transition and transformation.

Course readings in recent years have included *White Dogs* by Fred Lafortune, *Floating in a Most Peculiar Way* by Louis Chude-Sokei, and *Americanah* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie. Through these and other powerful texts, we'll delve into the complexities of migration, belonging, and the ways diverse communities reshape themselves and the world around them.

Literature of Power and Protest

Addressing such topics as reality media, war (and its portrayal in media), orders of reality (simulation and the hyperreal), self-sacrifice, ethics/ morality/ integrity, mimesis, and schadenfreude, this course uses Suzanne Collins' *Hunger Games* trilogy to provide students with an introduction to critical theory and Continental philosophy. Employing secondary and tertiary sources to investigate diverse means of interpreting the novels, students will pair Collins' dystopia with excerpts from Foucault, Hegel, Beaudrillard, Kierkegaard, Euripides, Kant, Machiavelli, and Locke to examine the role of the individual in society and one's moral responsibility to one's self and one's communities, thereby fulfilling Collins' goal to "[force] readers to contemplate their own roles as desensitized voyeurs" and think critically about the popular culture they consume.

Love, Desire, and Power in Literature

Love is often treated as private, intimate, and apolitical. Literature insists otherwise. This course explores how love and desire function as forces that both reveal and produce power, shaping identities, governing relationships, and structuring social worlds. Through close reading and sustained discussion, students will examine how literary texts portray love not merely as an emotion, but as a site of negotiation between self and other, freedom and obligation, vulnerability and control. Across genres, historical moments, and cultural contexts, the course asks how desire operates, who is allowed to desire, whose desire is disciplined or punished, and how longing can become a mechanism of domination or resistance. We will consider romantic love alongside other forms of attachment, including obsession, loyalty, devotion, care, dependency, and refusal. Particular attention will be paid to how narratives of love intersect with systems of power related to gender, race, class, religion, empire, and the body.

Students will interrogate enduring questions: What does it mean to want someone, or to be wanted? When does love become a form of power, and when does power masquerade as love? How do literary representations of intimacy expose hidden hierarchies, moral contradictions, and social norms? Can desire be liberating without becoming destructive? Writing assignments and discussions will emphasize intellectual risk-taking, literary analysis, and the development of an independent critical voice.

The course will be grounded in sustained close readings of James Baldwin's *Giovanni's Room*, Toni Morrison's *Jazz*, and bell hooks' *All About Love*. These core texts will be complemented by carefully selected excerpts from philosophical, critical, and literary works on love and power, including writings by Simone de Beauvoir, Audre Lorde, and contemporary theorists of desire, ethics, and relationality, to deepen and complicate our engagement with the primary readings.

Loving Criticism: The Art of Review

Some say everybody's a critic. Our immediate, digitized world suggests everyone *could* be. Both because and in spite of this era of instant pronouncements on the value of anything and everything, this course aims to shed light on the virtue of patient deliberation and avid exploration in crafting assessments of art, no matter the medium or forum. Whether adoring tribute or lamenting critique,

evaluating an artwork–and our experience of it–demands from us openness of mind *as much as* keenness of attention. To understand these demands, we will examine what the role, responsibility, and purpose of "critics" are–what their criticism and reviews can and hope to reveal. We must navigate and synthesize what necessarily binds us in the present to what's past and what's to come: questions of "the classics," of "good taste" or "bad" in art, of critique's democratization through sites like *Letterboxd*, of moral tensions between art and artist and audience. Alongside a groundwork of readings about the craft and theory of criticism and review, students will watch and listen and read voraciously as they settle on the artists and artworks which will demand their sustained focus and contemplation. Why? To add themselves to the discourse; to see where their perspective fits; to articulate that voice and vision.

Most of the criticism students read will be informed by the art and artists they choose to scrutinize. The following voices will provide texts to guide and complicate our collective thinking: Michel Chaouli, Rita Felski, A. O. Scott, Oscar Wilde, Susan Sontag, Maggie Nelson, Merve Emre, Namwali Serpell, Christine Smallwood, Hilton Als, Lester Bangs, Linda Nochlin, bell hooks, John Dewey, Andrea Long Chu, Jessica Hopper, Pauline Kael, Toni Morrison, Anthony Fantano, Ellen Willis, Robert Christgau, Phillipa K. Chong, Alex Ross, Roger Ebert, Richard Brody, Robert Hughes, Peter Schjeldahl, *The Quietus, Pitchfork, Senses of Cinema,* and others.

Lyric Poetry

Lyric poetry is arguably the genre that most people think of when they hear the word "poetry," but what differentiates the lyric poem from narrative poetry or didactic poetry? And what makes this genre so much more popular than the others? In the class, we will examine what we might call the *lyric impulse* in poetry as a way of highlighting those things that this genre of poetry has in common with music. We will study the ways in which lyric poets use the rhythms of language to make us feel what they are feeling—just as singer-songwriters do. We will write our own poetry as a way of engaging with this lyric impulse, as a way to understand this genre of poetry as practitioners as well as appreciators. We will also write critical essays and give presentations to help us communicate what we've each learned about this genre to an audience of peers.

Reading and Writing the Personal Narrative

In this course, students will read several complete memoirs in addition to a collection of excerpts and personal essays as inspiration for telling their own stories. We will also be exploring the growing genre of graphic memoirs and will experiment with visual projects ranging from digital storytelling to graphic journaling. Though students will write critically on the assigned reading in class, papers will be creative nonfiction pieces. We will read work by authors like: Tobias Wolff, Mary Karr, David Eggers, Annie Dillard, Tim O'Brien, David Sedaris, Roald Dahl, Amy Krouse Rosenthal, Allison Bechdel, Lynda Barry, and Allie Brosh.

The Short Story

In this class, we will read, analyze, and discuss the short story as a genre. Our shared study will lead us to ask deep and prolonged questions about the nature and purpose of this literary form. We will examine how it differs practically and aesthetically from our experiences with the novel, and we will consider the many ways in which the short story's concentrated narrative affects its treatment of human behavior and even the very act of storytelling itself. We will examine an array of authors who write in different periods, in different genres, and from very different points of view. They include Edgar Allan Poe, Susan Glaspell, Edith Wharton, Herman Melville, Henry James, Jorge Luis Borges, Philip K. Dick, H.P. Lovecraft, Carmen Maria Machado, Octavia Butler, Ryonusoke Akutagawa, Hanif Abdurraqib, Benjamin Labatut, Marlon James, Breece D'J Pancake, Richard Wright, and Ted Chiang. Students will also explore other, related narrative modes, such as songwriting and flash-fiction. Over the semester, students will write critical essays as well as original short fiction. They will workshop one major piece of short fiction across the term, at the end of which they will stage a public reading among peers. Students will also engage in regular analytical assignments. In this way, students will gain a comprehensive understanding of how to use this form to craft narratives and communicate meaning, and will gain exposure to some of the most significant historical and contemporary writers in the format.

Twenty-First Century Literary Rebels: Wit, Wonder, and the New Sincerity

David Foster Wallace wrote in his essay "E Unibus Pluram: Television and U.S. Fiction": "The next real literary 'rebels' in this country might well emerge as some weird bunch of anti-rebels, born oglers who dare somehow to back away from ironic watching, who have the childish gall actually to endorse and instantiate single-entendre principles... The new rebels might be artists willing to risk the yawn, the rolled eyes, the cool smile, the nudged ribs, the parody of gifted ironists, the 'Oh how banal.' To risk accusations of sentimentality, melodrama. Of overcredulity." His essay is a challenge for writers to embrace what Nick Carraway describes as Gatsby's "romantic readiness," to transcend irony. In our self-conscious social networking world in which we wait for "likes" and

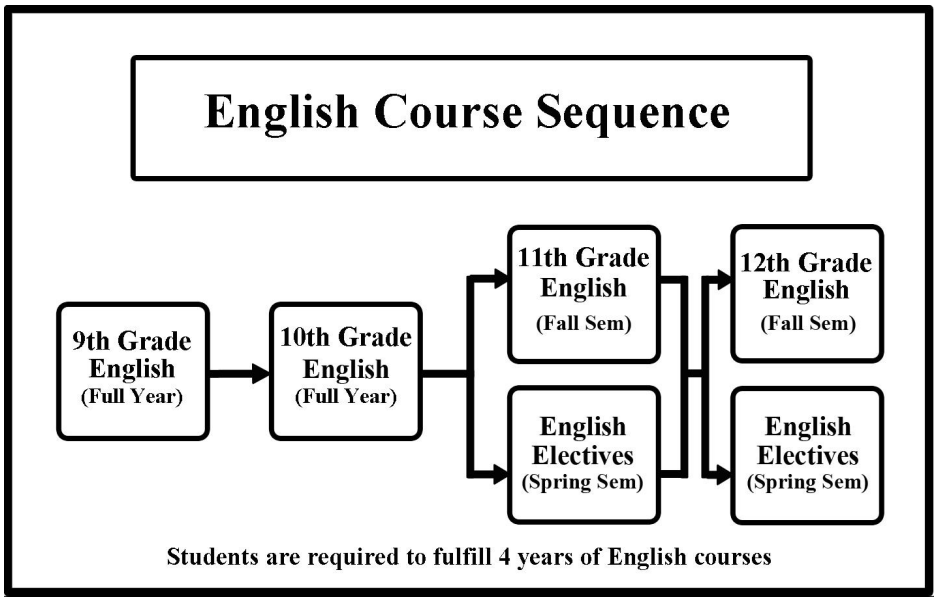
share ironic memes, how do we face the tension between cool detachment and straightforward sincerity? How do we balance comedy with vulnerability, style with authenticity, and performance with privacy?

Weird Worlds in Literature

In this elective, we will explore the fantastical, the scientifically not-here, the perplexing, the unsettling, and the horrific. We will investigate other worlds that authors have created, and one of the course's central hopes is that such excursions will help us to witness and comprehend more fully our own world and its wonders, chaos, mysteries, beauties, and terrors. As we traverse the otherworldly, we must strive to glean new wisdom. We should challenge what we think we know and what we say we believe. The course readings will be drawn from the following list: Ursula K. Le Guin's *The Left Hand of Darkness*, Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale*, Octavia E. Butler's *Kindred,* Becky Chambers's *A Psalm for the Wild-Built*, Alan Moore and Dave Gibbons' *WATCHMEN*, Cormac McCarthy's *The Road,* Jacqueline Harpman's *I Who Have Never Known Men,* and Olga Ravn's *The Employees*. Please note that Weird Worlds is not a creative writing course.

Writing in a Public Voice: Modes of Journalism

Writer, philosopher, and humorist Kurt Vonnegut famously advised writers to "use the time of a total stranger in such a way that he or she will not feel the time was wasted." Writing in a Public Voice introduces students to the art of informed engagement in an era of distraction. We will read op-eds, reviews, profiles, columns, and opinion pieces from publications such as *The New York Times, The Atlantic, Rolling Stone, Wired, The Washington Post* and *The New Yorker*, with an eye toward studying the essential skills and hallmarks of style required by each genre. Students will generate story ideas, develop research strategies, learn to engage readers, and submit queries for publication in print and online formats. They will write, review, and revise several works of their own and learn how to connect to their respective audience through informed storytelling. Texts studied will include a curated selection of articles accessed through the Prescott Library's Flipster account; any other required readings to complement the articles will be provided digitally.



History

The History Department trains students to understand the foundations of the contemporary world. By the time students graduate (when many of them have reached voting age), they should be able to make informed decisions about the people, issues, and events around them.

To that end, students develop the skills needed to become successful citizens in today's rapidly changing world. Students learn to think critically by examining both primary and secondary sources, by weighing different sides of arguments, and by evaluating options and judging outcomes. Such critical thinking is encouraged through a variety of means: essays, tests, presentations, research projects, debates, role-plays, class discussions, and a variety of types of writing assignments. Critical writing is stressed throughout the curriculum. History courses are structured to build skills over a three-year span of secondary school. The skills and the knowledge acquired in the year-long courses are designed to prepare students for the following year, therefore taking courses out of sequence is discouraged.

Students are required to take three years of History that include Topics in World History, Modern World History, and United States History, however the Department strongly encourages students to take a fourth year of History through the electives we offer each year. For an overview of the Upper School History offerings and their sequences see Appendix 2.

Grade 9

Topics in World History

In this course, students build the skills of historical inquiry by examining the ways cultures and societies in the Middle East, Europe, Africa and the Americas evolved over centuries of contact and conflict. Our study proceeds chronologically, from "medieval" to "modern," but with a thematic focus. For instance, the course compares patterns of colonization, including assimilation and conquest, and considers the roles of race, religion, gender, sexuality and ethnicity in the process. Students study how ideas are circulated and how intellectual developments impact social and political history (e.g. the Enlightenment and the French and Haitian Revolutions). We also consider how economic circumstances inspire new cultural movements (e.g. the Industrial Revolution and socialism). We foster skills needed for historical analysis: discerning cause and effect connections, recognizing patterns, and evaluating perspectives. In the process, we analyze a number of primary sources, use library and web resources for research, and build analytical writing skills. We cultivate study skills including note-taking, time management, and organization in order to prepare students for success in this and future history courses. (Major course)

Grade 10

Modern World History

The tenth-grade year is designed to complete the chronological sequence begun in the ninth grade by examining major developments in the making of the modern world from the late 19th century to the present. Although the format of the course is chronological, it will emphasize in-depth study of major topics and themes such as colonialism and imperialism, global economic development, revolution, world war, technological innovation, competing political and economic ideologies, decolonization, and contemporary issues. Students will build upon skills developed in the ninth grade as they closely analyze a variety of primary sources, complete a number of research projects, and continue to refine their analytical writing skills. (Major course)

Grade 11

United States History

This course examines major developments in the United States from the colonial era to the present, emphasizing significant cultural, constitutional, political, economic and social developments. Themes such as race, gender, foreign policy, and migration will be emphasized, and students will be exposed to key ideas, debates, institutions and documents of United States history. Students will continue to develop critical reading and thinking skills over the course of the year, and assessments will include several research projects and presentations at appropriate points during the year. (Major course)

Honors United States History

The expectations of this course are set at the level of a first-year college seminar. With a focus on the craft of history, the course proceeds chronologically through United States history and aims to help students see current events in the United States through a historical lens. Students in this class are expected to engage in independent inquiry and collaborate well with their peers, read and

annotate academic journals and historical monographs, demonstrate their mastery of class material through in-depth analyses of primary sources, and display a high level of engagement in all areas of the course. This is a writing and reading-intensive course; students can expect an increased homework load and frequent analytical writing assignments as well as group and individual projects that will require strong research and writing skills. Admission to this course is selective; students must be recommended for Honors US History by their tenth-grade History teacher. (Major course)

Note: *Students completing this course who wish to take the College Board Advanced Placement (AP) exam should check with their teachers, since the extensive out-of-class review and independent preparation required is not provided in this class.*

Advanced Placement courses

Advanced Placement Economics

The AP Economics course offers an in-depth introduction to the fundamental theories and concepts of economics. Students are expected to take the Macroeconomics AP exam in May, as preparation for this exam is one of the primary goals of the course. We will begin the year working on basic economic concepts of opportunity costs and supply and demand before examining macroeconomic topics including economic indicators, fiscal and monetary policy, as well as international trade. During this process, abstract economic theories will be related to everyday items and current events. (Major course)

Advanced Placement Government and Politics

Do you wish you knew more about politics, government and the law? This full-year course examines the structure and function of the United States government, the political process, and civic engagement. We will study the Declaration of Independence, the U.S. Constitution, the Federalist Papers, and key Supreme Court decisions to understand the interactions among political institutions. The units included are: the Foundations of American Democracy, Interactions among Branches of Government, Civil Liberties and Civil Rights, American Political Ideologies and Beliefs, and Political Participation. Students will draft their own constitutional amendments, engage in mock caucuses, Zoom with political leaders, and give current events presentations. In May, students are expected to take the AP Government and Politics exam. (Major Course)

Advanced Placement Art History

The AP Art History course is an exploration of the nature of art, its function, meaning, processes, traditions, responses to and its impact upon societies and cultures from prehistory to present, caves to contemporary. The course engages students in the investigation of collective themes that connect people cross-culturally and throughout time. Students gain the skills of visual analysis necessary to the in depth work of Art Historians. Whether you're an artist, musician, anthropologist, visual learner or simply interested in looking at the world through a different lens, this course will interest and enlighten you while also encouraging you to develop a strong sense of self-awareness. A January exam will be given and students are required to take the College Board's AP Examination. Students should expect approximately 30 minutes daily of outside-of-class reading, videos, journal writing and project preparation. Enrollment is open to juniors and seniors (with preference given to seniors). Students wishing to enroll in this class must submit an application during the Spring course enrollment period. (Major course)

History Seminars

History Seminars are open to Juniors and Seniors. Sophomores wishing to enroll in seminars must receive written permission from the Department. History seminars are one semester majors.

American Cultural History

American life reflects an ongoing relationship between the nation's stated philosophical ideals, and the cultural representations that advance, reflect, or challenge them. We use film to construct visions of American democracy or American might that we communicate to ourselves and to the world. We use television and, before that, the stage, to articulate or contest a story of individual and collective identities and experiences. Today, we use social media and technology to argue for state power, or to actively organize against it. make art, to talk, to carry on political debates, even to date and marry. In this course we will examine these ubiquitous mediums and consider how they both produce and reflect American identity, history, and political philosophy. We will discuss how they have accelerated or responded to changing notions of generational, political, regional, national, gender, sexual, and racial identities. We will

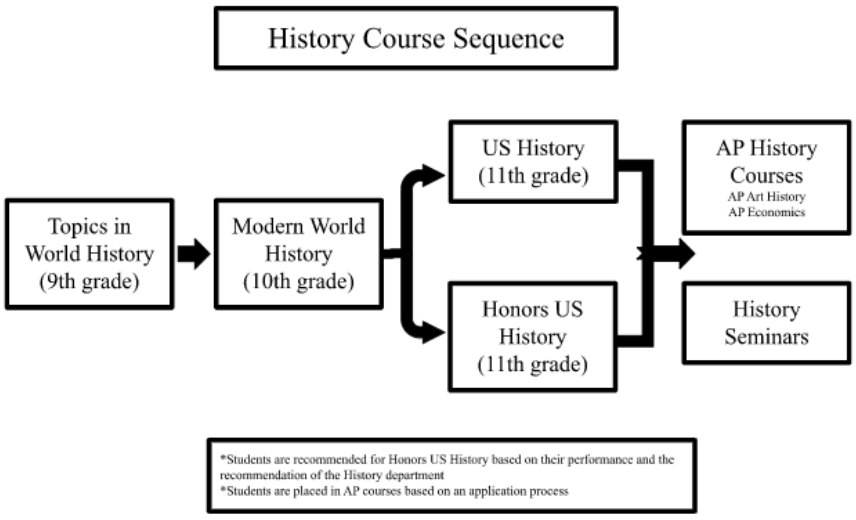
discuss the role that media has played in national and international political events. We will compare the notion of spectacle in entertainment, such as P.T. Barnum's American Museum, and in journalism, such as in the media's framing of military action. Even as we explore significant political and ethical theories, including topics like the social contract, tolerance in a diverse society, realist international relations, or the imperial presidency, the course will contain regular weekly screenings of film and television from sources as diverse as Spongebob Squarepants, Buster Keaton, Twin Peaks, Law & Order, Yellowstone, The Office, and cable news. Students will produce regular historical analytical writing assignments. They will prepare and offer one major presentation on contemporary media. (One semester)

Economics

Did you know the price of Coca-Cola did not change for nearly 70 years? Or that you can compare the strength of currencies using Big Macs? What happens to our money when we put it in the bank? Why are car prices increasing so much? Economics can offer insights into our everyday world, as it's the study of how we make the most out of what we have. Often, this means we face tradeoffs and need to make tough decisions in order to maximize our resources, our time or our happiness. The goal of this course is to provide the tools to become a more informed decision-maker when considering prices, costs, trade, and market structures. It will also help you make your own assessments about the economy, with knowledge of economic indicators, policy tools and your own personal finances. This year-long course is open to juniors and seniors. Juniors will have the option to apply for AP Economics after successfully completing this course; however, this course is not a prerequisite for AP Economics. (Full year course)

Topics in US History

The United States has always communicated itself--both to itself and to the world--through song. It has worked either naturally or self-consciously to produce anthems, genres, technologies, and subcultures. Songs, therefore, allow us to experience the historical moments and cultural events that inspired or were inspired by that music. In this course, we will use a selection of American songs to understand moments in American cultural history, and vice versa. For example, we will discuss the American plantation as a cultural center, from which emerged jazz, country music, rock and roll, and hip-hop. We will talk about country music as a site of contested identity politics. We talk about the veneration of capital in certain subgenres of rap. We will explore how technology, from the gramophone to streaming, and laws, from the copyright to sampling, have impacted how we interact with our culture. Students will engage with one ongoing major act of "musicology," which will involve a thesis and significant archival research. They will also produce a number of smaller analytical pieces. In class we will listen to and regularly analyze music, including works by George Gershwin, Duke Ellington, Johnny Cash, Bob Dylan, Joni Mitchell, The Isley Brothers, Suicide and Alan Vega, Talking Heads, Pixies, Nirvana, Public Enemy, Madonna, The Wu-Tang Clan, Britney Spears, Kendrick Lamar, SZA, Migos, Frank Ocean, and many others. Students will learn to approach music they like and music they do not like with the same sense of rigor, curiosity, openness, and interest.



Mathematics

The objective of the Mathematics department is to give students the tools and problem-solving skills to face the challenges of a changing world. We believe in a balanced approach, where students learn to explore conceptually rigorous material with the mathematical skills and fluency that will set them up for success in future pursuits. We encourage students to work both individually and collectively in finding solutions. We want each student to build confidence in their ability to think critically and logically now and in the future, to see connections among the concepts covered in our curriculum, and to reach their potential through understanding and appreciation of the subject.

Students are required to take at least three years of math in Upper School, including Geometry and Algebra 2. Almost all students study mathematics for all four years. Students who have a particularly strong interest in mathematics or in another field which relies on advanced mathematical ideas may, if qualified, undertake an accelerated sequence.

Integrated Algebra and Geometry

This course covers Algebra 1 and Geometry topics in an integrated fashion and is intended for students who have not taken Algebra 1 or who need further solidification of their algebra skills. Topics include properties of numbers, linear and quadratic functions, rational expressions, plane and solid geometry, and data analysis as time permits. The curriculum places particular emphasis on skills relating to the interpretation of concepts through word problems. Successful completion of this course fulfills the departmental Geometry requirement. Department recommendation only. (Major Course)

Geometry & Data Analysis

For the first two-thirds of the year, this course covers the major topics of Euclidean geometry. Concepts are explored through conjectures, constructions, and computer use. The course begins with a thorough review of analytical geometry including midpoint, slopes, linear equations, and intersections. The major geometry topics covered are congruence, similarity, parallel lines, polygons, circles, area and volume, and further development of coordinate geometry. The remainder of the year is devoted to the study of descriptive statistics and probability. Topics include measures of central tendency, standard deviation, graphical displays of data in two variables, regression, probability, and combinatorics. Algebra 1 topics are used, reviewed, and assessed throughout the year to make the transition to the second year of algebra a smooth one. (Major course)

Intermediate Algebra

This course reviews the essential concepts and techniques of Algebra 1, including the real number system and its properties, mathematical symbols and notation, solving equations, factoring, and graphing. Based on Algebra 1 skills assessment in Geometry, this course is designed for students who need further solidification of their skills to be successful in Algebra 2. Emphasis is given to mastery of basic algebraic skills, but Algebra 2 topics are introduced as time permits. Department recommendation only. (Major course)

Algebra 2

The goals of this course are to establish mastery of basic algebraic skills and enhance mathematical maturity. Basic skills are developed around the following families of functions: linear, exponential and logarithmic, quadratic, rational, radical, and polynomial, with a special focus on graphs and their transformations. Emphasis is placed on exploring functions in symbolic, graphical, and tabular form. Within this framework, topics include solving equations and inequalities, factoring, simplifying higher radicals, and complex numbers. Trigonometric concepts, sequences and series and probability topics are also introduced and developed as time allows. (Major course)

Algebra 2 and Trigonometry

One distinction between this course and Algebra 2 is the pacing and depth at which the content is covered. The other is in the additional topics covered and the expectation that students are comfortable working through more challenging problems. Algebra 2 and Trigonometry is organized around the study of families of functions including linear, quadratic, polynomial, rational, exponential, logarithmic and trigonometric functions with increased emphasis on mathematical modeling. Sequences and series and sigma notation will also be covered. Students will simplify expressions with exponents and radicals and solve equations involving the function families studied. Both a grade of B+ or better in Geometry and departmental approval are required for this course. (Major course)

Algebra 3 and Trigonometry

This course is designed for students from either Algebra 2 or Algebra 2 and Trigonometry who need an extra year to solidify their skills and understanding of algebraic and trigonometric functions in preparation for Precalculus. This course covers a vast array of topics intended to both strengthen each student's algebraic foundations, as well as preview potential material covered in future classes. There is a major emphasis on using technology to help foster a better understanding of mathematical applications. Topics will include functional analysis, graphing, exponents and logarithms, complex numbers, trigonometry, and descriptive statistics. (Major course)

Precalculus

Precalculus is designed for students who plan to study calculus at Wheeler or in college and who are ready for a fast-paced, conceptually driven mathematics course. Students deepen their understanding of functions, the central idea of the course, by exploring composite and inverse functions and analyzing quadratic, polynomial, rational, exponential, logarithmic, and trigonometric functions in depth. Throughout the year, students focus not only on computation, but also on reasoning, modeling, and problem-solving. Topics such as mathematical modeling, regression, probability, and sequences and series help students connect abstract concepts to real-world situations. Emphasis is placed on interpreting graphs, explaining reasoning, and making connections across topics, all of which are essential skills for success in calculus. A grade of B or better in Algebra 2 & Trigonometry and departmental approval are required. Students enrolled in Algebra 3 & Trigonometry must earn a grade of A- or better and receive departmental approval. (Major course)

Calculus

This course covers the key concepts related to differential and integral calculus, as well as the main techniques and applications that relate to these concepts. It strives to provide students with an introduction to calculus topics they may see again in a college level course. It is open only to seniors who have earned a grade of B- or better in Precalculus or juniors who have successfully completed Honors Precalculus, or to those students who have departmental approval. (Major course)

Statistics

This course is an introduction to statistical methods, concepts, and literacy with an emphasis on understanding the methods and applying them confidently to real issues and data sets. Topics include techniques of descriptive and exploratory data analysis, the use of software to analyze real data sets and produce convincing graphical displays, and the design of random sample surveys and experiments. Probability concepts and techniques are introduced and inferential methods such as confidence intervals and hypothesis tests are explored through in-class and computer simulations. Statistics is open to seniors only. (Major course)

Honors Geometry

This course begins the sequence of accelerated study leading to Advanced Placement Calculus BC. Enrollees must have completed Algebra 1 by grade 8 and have a thorough knowledge of Algebra 1 topics, including equations of lines, factoring, solving quadratic equations, solving systems of equations, and work with square roots. This course covers the standard topics of Euclidean geometry in detail, with special attention to the proof-writing process and solving geometry problems using the algebraic techniques listed above. Two- and three-dimensional applications and trigonometric concepts are introduced along with in-depth work on analytic geometry. A departmental recommendation is required for admission to this course. (Major course)

Honors Precalculus

This is a fast-paced honors course, designed for students with proven exceptional interest and background in mathematics. Topics covered include sequences and series, systems of equations and matrices, and an in-depth examination of functions including polynomials and rational functions, exponential and logarithmic functions, and trigonometric functions. Students who are successful in this course may enroll in AP Calculus AB the following year. Only students who have a strong interest in mathematics, have a grade of B or better in Honors Geometry or a grade of A or better in Algebra 2/trigonometry, and who are recommended by the department may enroll. (Major course)

Advanced Placement Calculus AB

This course covers the syllabus outlined by the Advanced Placement Program of the College Board. Topics include limits, derivatives and integrals of functions of a single variable, and selected applications. Students enrolled in this course are required to take the AP Calculus AB examination in the spring. This course requires a high level of mathematical maturity and a strong level of commitment

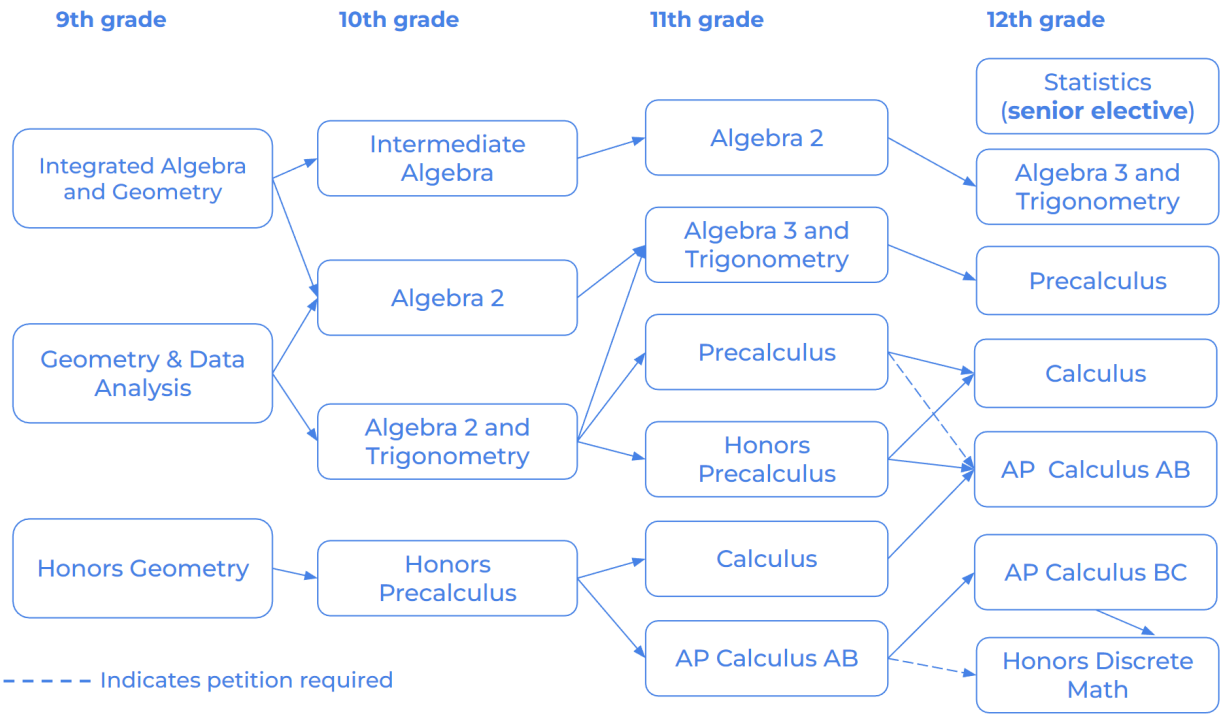
to, and interest in, mathematics. Either a grade of A or better in Precalculus or B- or better in Honors Precalculus and departmental approval are required for enrollment in this course. (Major course)

Advanced Placement Calculus BC

This yearlong course is the continuation of AP Calculus AB and covers topics that separate the AB and BC curricula. Advanced techniques of evaluating integrals, applications of calculus to polar and parametric systems, differential equations, and power series approximations are covered. Satisfactory performance in AP Calculus AB and departmental approval are required for enrollment in this course. Students enrolled in this course are required to take the AP Calculus BC examination in the spring. (Major course)

Honors Discrete Math

An introduction to creative problem-solving and proof-writing via a variety of mathematical topics that do not involve calculus--including puzzles, mathematical logic, sets, induction, number theory, combinatorics, and graph theory. Available to students who have completed AP Calculus BC with a B+ or higher, and to students who are concurrently taking AP Calculus BC. Students concurrently enrolled in BC must submit an application. Full year. (Major course)



Modern Languages

N-12 Modern Language Department mission statement

We strive for our students to become active global citizens. To achieve this goal, we provide opportunities to investigate the world, communicate ideas, recognize diverse perspectives, and build meaningful relationships. Our challenging curriculum empowers students to be curious, use their voice, collaborate, and develop a joy for language-learning. This language journey begins in our Early Childhood Program.

To become proficient in a modern language, students must learn to speak, to listen and understand, to read, and to write in the target language. Teachers, therefore, choose activities to address these four skills. At each level, students learn grammar and vocabulary, study cultural units, read selected literary texts or news articles, watch video clips or films, write in journals or prepare more formal compositions, and converse in groups or speak in front of the class. Since we encourage students to become independent speakers, the higher-level courses place greater demands on self-generated conversation. In each class, the mid-year examination is oral and requires the student to meet individually with the teacher to converse in the target language.*

Wheeler offers course work in Chinese, French, and Spanish. Students normally begin studying any one of these three languages in the sixth or ninth grades. Modern language students must earn a C- or better in level 1 language study to continue to level 2. Those students who earn a D+ or below must either repeat level 1 at Wheeler the following year or satisfactorily complete an approved summer school course and pass the department's qualifying exam prior to continuing to level 2 at Wheeler. Students with accepted documentation of a language waiver can opt to take the language Pass/Fail.

Students who wish to continue beyond the required level 3 of modern language study must be willing to speak the language extensively and to approach their work with a high degree of commitment and motivation. Students must earn a C to continue beyond level 3 or have the consent of their current instructor. Students who do not pursue the study of a modern language beyond the third year are strongly advised to enroll in the introductory sequence of a second modern language.

Chinese

Elementary Courses (Chinese 1, 2, 3)

This sequence of courses is intended to promote basic competence in all aspects of the language.

Chinese 1

This course serves as an introduction to Mandarin, also known as Putonghua, Guoyu, or Hanyu, the official national language of China. Students will commence their journey with the Pinyin system of romanization, enabling them to grasp the pronunciation of Mandarin. Subsequently, they will delve into recognizing, reading, and writing simplified characters. Throughout the course, students will develop communication skills across various topics, including introductions, family, emotions, hobbies, dates, times, expressions, locations, and daily routines. Additionally, the curriculum integrates Chinese culture and history into language lessons, providing students with a vibrant understanding of the language. (Major course)

Chinese 2

In this course, students continue to develop the basic level skills in speaking, listening, reading and writing. While working on character writing, students also use the Pinyin system to build pronunciation skills. This course emphasizes grammatical structures, vocabulary building and greater fluency in utilizing communication skills in familiar, everyday situations at school and at home. Topics include studying Chinese, shopping, making appointments, and transportation. Students begin to learn different strategies and methods of expressing similar ideas, feelings and concepts, thereby gaining a greater flexibility of expression. Additionally, students will read a short novel about an American high school student who spends a year in Taiwan. (Major course)

Chinese 3

This course introduces more complicated grammatical concepts and vocabulary from daily life situations in greater depth. Students will learn to speak about subjects such as dining out, the weather, getting and giving directions, going to the doctor, and celebrating birthdays. The course also emphasizes the critical transition from thinking in English and translating into Chinese to thinking on your feet in Chinese. To this end, a series of activities will be proposed to help students develop flexibility and fluidity of expression. These

include debates, scavenger hunts, presentations, and a movie project. Students will also read a short novel about a detective in Beijing investigating a crime. (Major course)

Advanced Courses

Courses are designed for students who wish to pursue the study of the language beyond level 3 required by Wheeler. Ability and willingness to speak Chinese extensively in the classroom are prerequisites. Mandarin is primarily used in the following courses. The other requirements are listed in the introductory section.

Honors Chinese 4

This course enhances students' proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing, with a focus on mastering complex grammatical concepts. Students will participate in discussions on topics relevant to starting college life, including travel experiences, moving into dormitories, critiquing food—particularly Chinese cuisine—and expressing personal dietary preferences. To support their learning, students will use various methods such as storytelling, debates, presentations, skits, and video projects. Additionally, the course features the reading of a Chinese novel and an exploration of contemporary Chinese pop culture. (Major course)

Honors Chinese 5

This course begins with a review of grammar, characters, and idiomatic expressions to prepare students for the transition to post-secondary Chinese programs. The course will emphasize topics relevant to college, such as shopping, choosing classes, relationships, the internet, finding a part time job, and education. Students will be exposed to authentic language materials including documentaries and website articles about these subjects. Students will use short essays, debates, and presentations to express their opinions about these issues. Additionally, students will read a short novel based on a traditional folktale. (Major course)

French

Elementary Courses (French 1, 2, 3)

This sequence of courses is intended to promote basic competence in all aspects of the language.

French 1

This course is an introduction to basic grammatical structures, elementary vocabulary, and the sounds of French, with extensive practice in speaking. By the end of French 1, students will be able to have conversations in the present and past tenses about topics such as food, families, travel, sports and weather. They will also be familiar with the geography of France and Europe. (Major course)

French 2

This course is a continuation of French l. It includes vocabulary building with increased emphasis on creative use of the language, both spoken and written. Themes for vocabulary include holidays, daily life, travel, sports and leisure and health and nutrition. By the end of French 2, students will be able to use several tenses, including the present, the passé compose and the imperfect. Students will also study the geography and culture of the Francophone world, concentrating mainly on France, Africa and Canada. This class is mostly conducted in French. (Major course)

Honors French 2

Honors French 2 covers the grammar and vocabulary review of French 2 at an accelerated pace including themes on holidays, daily life, travel, sports and leisure and health and nutrition. By the end of Honors French 2, students will also be able to use several tenses, including the present, the passé compose, the imperfect, the future, and the subjunctive. In addition, students will read more short stories, poems and current events. This class is mostly conducted in French. Requires departmental recommendation. (Major course)

French 3

In this course, students continue to develop their language skills by reviewing basic grammar, learning more complex grammatical concepts and expanding their vocabulary. They study vocabulary topics such as education, employment, technology, the environment and contemporary world issues. Students read and write about the history, the culture and everyday life in Francophone communities in Europe, Africa and Canada. This course is mostly conducted in French. (Major course)

Advanced Courses

Courses are designed for students who wish to pursue the study of the language beyond level 3 required by Wheeler. Ability and willingness to speak French extensively in the classroom are prerequisites. French is primarily spoken in all the following courses. The other requirements are listed in the introductory section. Depending on enrollment, some courses may be taught in a combined setting.

Honors French 3

In this course the emphasis is on authentic language and practical vocabulary for communicating in real life situations. Using this vocabulary and more advanced grammar, students complete contextualized activities, communicative group-work, and written compositions. Literary excerpts and short films from the francophone world are studied to enhance students' understanding of culture and current events, which are intrinsically woven into the course work. There is a strong on-line component to this class. Students have access to all audio and video components on-line. They complete on-line activities on a daily basis and receive instant feedback on their performance. The course is conducted in French. (Major course)

French 4

A thematic study of vocabulary is combined with an in-depth review of grammatical structures to allow students to further develop their skills in speaking, writing, reading and listening. Literary excerpts and short films from the francophone world are studied to enhance students' understanding of culture and current events, which are intrinsically woven into the course work. There is a strong on-line component to this class. Students have access to all audio and video components on-line. They complete on-line activities on a daily basis and receive instant feedback on their performance. The course is conducted in French. (Major course)

Honors French 4

In this course students develop greater comprehension by reading works by authors such as Maupassant, Saint-Exupery, Zola and others. They also explore short films and newspaper and magazine articles. Students are exposed to more extensive thematic vocabulary in various ways which enable them to gain greater confidence with spoken French. Grammar is reviewed and expanded to include important linguistic subtleties. Students learn how to write exposés and compositions on a variety of topics in French. This class will prepare the students for AP French language and culture course. (Major course)

French 5

In this course students develop greater comprehension by reading works by authors such as Maupassant, Saint-Exupery, Zola and others. They also explore short films and newspaper and magazine articles. Students are exposed to more extensive thematic vocabulary in various ways which enable them to gain greater confidence with spoken French. Grammar is reviewed and expanded to include important linguistic subtleties. Students learn how to write exposés and compositions on a variety of topics in French. (Major course)

AP French Language & Culture

The AP French Language and Culture course is designed as the culmination of students' studies in Upper School. Students enrolled in this course should already have a good command of French grammar and considerable competence in listening, speaking, reading and writing. In AP French, students refine those skills while learning new vocabulary to communicate in French on a variety of topics. The course aims at enriching the students' cultural knowledge and experience with the Francophone world through a comparison with their own cultural experience of the six course themes: Global Challenges, Science and Technology, Contemporary Life, Personal and Public Identities, Families and Communities, and Beauty and Aesthetics. These themes, explored from a variety of authentic written and audio resources, serve as springboards for the practice of interpersonal, interpretive and presentational communication within relevant contexts. The second semester prepares students even more intensively for the AP Language Examination by introducing material that closely duplicates the test experience. In addition to in-class work, students use AP Classroom to practice advanced communication skills with a focus on synthesis in writing and speaking. Students are required to take the AP Language examination. AP French Language and Culture is conducted exclusively in French. (Major course)

Spanish

Elementary Courses (Spanish 1, 2, 3)

This sequence of courses is intended to promote basic competence in all aspects of the language.

Spanish 1

This course enables students to converse in basic Spanish in the present tense by introducing topics such as getting to know others, family relationships, daily activities at school and home, pastimes, feelings, the weather, likes and dislikes, shopping, vacations, and travel. Students learn about daily life and cultural activities in the Hispanic world, watch videos, and listen to tapes featuring native speakers. Spanish 1 emphasizes the essentials of Spanish grammar by introducing practical vocabulary, stressing accurate pronunciation, and including reading, writing, and conversation drills. (Major course)

Spanish 2

This course offers students the opportunity to continue to build a strong grammar and vocabulary foundation in Spanish. Students will take what they learned from their first year(s) of Spanish and move forward to build more complex sentences and expressions with new grammar, such as reflexive verbs, object pronouns, command forms, and present and past tenses (preterite vs. imperfect). Some of the vocabulary, with which students will explore grammar and cultural identities, include daily routines, holidays and cultural celebrations, food, technology, health, and household chores. Students will work on their speaking, reading and writing skills to speak about their own lives and activities. Additionally, students will learn about some aspects of Latin American culture and history. (Major course)

Honors Spanish 2

Spanish 2 Honors incorporates a weekly focus on the four skills of second language acquisition: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Students continue to develop their language by reviewing intermediate grammar concepts and expanding their vocabulary with a strong emphasis on oral expression. This course presents the grammar and vocabulary of Spanish 2 and part of Spanish 3 at an accelerated pace. This accelerated pace and breadth of content requires a willingness to engage readily and to take risks, speaking often in Spanish. The course is conducted in Spanish. (Major course)

Honors Spanish as a Heritage Language

Heritage language speakers belong to a specific ethno-cultural community that links their cultural and linguistic heritage. A heritage language refers to the language of one's ancestry or culture and is second to another primary language. Heritage Spanish students are those who have been raised in Spanish-speaking homes in the United States and schooled, for the most part, in English. Spanish as a Heritage Language is an honors course that explores and reinforces students' particular strengths as well as areas for growth in a cooperative learning environment.

Students' individual cultural identity along with literature, music, film, media, and personal research will enhance the aspects studied. This course is designed to improve students' communication skills in Spanish (listening comprehension, speaking, reading, and writing). Students will be given ample opportunity to build and demonstrate proficiency in the three modes of communication as offered by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL): the interpretive, the interpersonal, and the presentational. This course is structured so that a majority of class time is dedicated to collaborative activities. Upon successful completion of this course students will be recommended for either Spanish 2 Honors, 3 Honors, 4 Honors, or AP. (Major course)

Spanish 3

This course prepares students to express their opinions and engage in meaningful conversations in Spanish about their community and the broader world. Throughout the year, students build toward a mid-year oral exam where they demonstrate their ability to communicate effectively about topics such as the environment, urban life, and personal wellbeing. Students also strengthen their reading, listening, and speaking skills through a wide range of cultural materials from Central America, South America, and Spain. The course also includes a film that explores themes such as the legacies of colonialism reflected in Bolivia's water privatization. New grammar structures include the future and conditional tenses, the present perfect and pluperfect, and the uses of the present subjunctive. The class is conducted primarily in Spanish, encouraging confident and effective communication.

Advanced Courses

These courses are designed for students who wish to pursue the study of the language beyond level 3 required by Wheeler. Ability and willingness to speak Spanish extensively in the classroom are prerequisites. Spanish is primarily spoken in all the following courses.

The other requirements are listed in the introductory comments to this section.

Honors Spanish 3

This course incorporates the four skills of second language acquisition: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Students continue to develop their language by reviewing complex grammar concepts and expanding their vocabulary with a strong emphasis on oral expression and comprehensive input. Culture from various regions in the Spanish-speaking world is presented through music, readings, a year-long television program, films, and class speakers. Students participate in virtual exchanges with global and local partners to cultivate relationships, gain global competence, increase empathy, and investigate the world, all while using the language. The course is conducted in Spanish. (Major course)

Spanish 4

A thematic review of vocabulary is combined with the study of grammar to facilitate self-expression. In this course, we expose the students to authentic materials that encourage students to read and listen for total comprehension. In addition to grammar and vocabulary units, students read poetry, watch short film series, analyze a year-long authentic television series, and explore art and other cultural topics. Oral participation is essential. (Major course)

Honors Spanish 4

This course takes advantage of the students' strong foundation in grammar and expression to explore the literature, contemporary issues, and art of Hispanic cultures. This class is conducted entirely in Spanish and students learn the nuances of spoken and written language while discussing and writing about global themes such as technology, education, global challenges, and contemporary life. This course is focused heavily on oral participation in both interpretive and presentational modes. Final grade of A- or above in Spanish 4 Honors is required to move on to AP Spanish Language and Culture. (Major course)

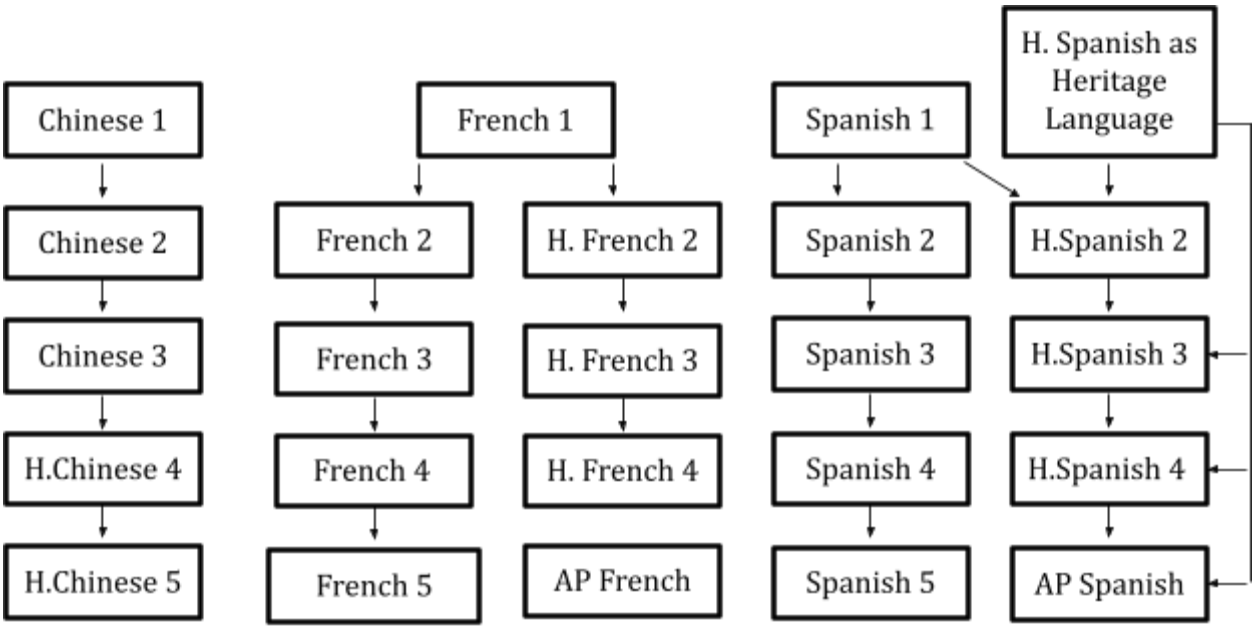
Spanish 5

Do you love films, streaming series, and exploring new cuisines? Are you inspired by the stories of real-life heroes? If so, Spanish 5 is for you. This course focuses on building advanced language skills through film analysis, global topics, and relationship building. The class builds advanced vocabulary and grammar through film analysis while investigating global challenges like sustainability and social justice. Students venture beyond the classroom to engage with the local Rhode Island community, connecting with community members while enjoying culinary tastings and cultural exchanges. Students participate in monthly virtual exchanges with global partners to build empathy and global competence. Through music, current events, and a yearlong television program, students will investigate history and culture in a dynamic, immersive environment. (Major course conducted in Spanish)

AP Spanish Language

This course is entirely focused on and organized around preparation for the AP Language exam in May. The first semester curriculum draws on literary works and contemporary and cultural topics as a basis for developing more confidence with spoken and written Spanish. Readings are selected from a variety of Latin American and Spanish prose, poetry and narrative. A general review of grammar principles will accompany literary study. Films, newspapers, and websites provide additional supplement to the core curriculum. The second semester prepares students even more intensively for the AP Language Examination by introducing material that closely duplicates the test experience. In addition to in-class work, students use AP Classroom to practice advanced communication skills with a focus on synthesis in writing and speaking. Students are required to take the AP Language examination. **Prerequisite**: Final grade of A- or above in Spanish 4 Honors or permission from instructor. (Major Course)

Modern Language Course Flow Chart



Performing Arts

Courses in the Performing Arts curriculum involve students in a process, which includes creativity, sharing, performance, and critical analysis. Courses designated Ensemble develop fundamental skills while exploring history, form and theory. Courses designated as Performance emphasize repertoire, technique, and hands-on applications. Performance courses require an audition to determine appropriate placement. Specific audition criteria are available from individual instructors.

Every student is required to successfully complete one full year of Performing Arts. This may be fulfilled with either major or minor elective courses. The department strongly recommends that every student complete at least one semester by the end of the sophomore year. Students new to Wheeler may enroll in any non-performance class or contact the department for entrance into a performance level course. Eleventh graders new to Wheeler need take only one semester of Performing Arts.

Theatre Company: *The Axle*

This theatre course can be taken as either a full year or one-semester experience. It will bring together an ensemble of students to create and perform theatre for the community. Developing the skills students have built in prior theatre courses and/or productions, the work will focus on performing, writing, directing, and design techniques, culminating in performances throughout the school year. Open to sophomores thru seniors by recommendation of the instructor. (Full year or one semester, major course)

Acting

Acting is about living truthfully under imaginary circumstances. This course begins with basic exercises to develop the actors' tools, beginning with focus, energy, and imagination. As we dive more deeply into the work of the performer, we learn the importance of goals, action, and tactics. Students learn to rehearse and perform scenes and plays, bringing the words on the page to life in exciting and dynamic ways, and experimenting with a variety of performance styles. Continued skill development in voice, movement, and improvisation builds a strong foundation of tools for the actor. No prior experience necessary! (Fall semester minor elective)

Improvisation

This incredibly fun, challenging, and unpredictable course asks students to focus on listening, responding honestly, and making strong and truthful actor choices. Improvisation is acting without a script...or a net! Students develop a foundation of acting techniques and work to solve problems collaboratively during spontaneous performances. Activities include theatre games, storytelling, character development, and scene building. The ultimate goal of the work is to hone students' ability to be truly alive and playful, paying attention to the moment they are in, so the value of this work is clearly wide-ranging. No prior experience necessary! (One semester minor elective, offered Fall and Spring semesters)

Page to the Stage

This is an introductory course in which students will pull back the curtain to explore the collaborative machinery of live theatre—from the first read-through of the play to the final curtain call. Students will study and practice the core elements of theatre-making, including the reading and analysis of scripts, and the basics of acting, directing, and design (sets, costumes, lights, sound). Through a series of active projects, students will learn how each role contributes to storytelling onstage. By collaborating creatively and thinking critically, students build the skills needed to turn words on a page into a fully realized theatrical experience. No prior theatre experience is required. (Spring semester minor elective)

Introduction to Technical Theatre

This course provides an opportunity for students to explore the many aspects of stage-craft for theater. The class will address stage structures, lighting, carpentry, and scenic painting through hands-on projects and workshops. The main focus of the class will be to construct, light and run the major theater productions successfully during a semester. The course requires a number of lab hours on designated weekends during the semester. Students may take this course only once. (Minor elective, offered Fall and Spring semesters)

Advanced Technical Theatre

This course is designed as a continuation of the technical theater sequence. The class will focus on in depth development of the skills in stagecraft which were introduced in the introduction class. Students will be expected to work independently on long term projects based around the spring theater productions. Opportunities will be offered for students to focus on a particular area of interest and

more deeply explore that area. This course requires a number of lab hours on designated weekends throughout the semester. Prerequisite: Introduction to Technical Theater or permission from the instructor. (Minor elective, Spring semester of odd years, offered spring 2027)

Design for the Theater

This course will provide an opportunity for students to pursue and understand skills in the many design areas involved in theatrical productions. This class will explore scenic, lighting and costume design through workshops and projects. It will cover all stages of the design process from concept development to final design presentations. Students will be given a chance to develop skills in rendering, drafting, and model making as well as gain a firm understanding of the basic principles and techniques for theatrical design. (Minor elective offered Fall semester)

Sound Exploration

This course presents an opportunity for experienced and non-experienced musicians alike to explore music as a language. By "speaking" (playing) in an ensemble-based setting, students gain the courage and confidence to ignite their inner musician. Principles and foundations of sound and music are discovered through mediums such as videos, sound clips, student performances and other interactive assignments. (One semester minor elective, offered Fall and/or Spring semesters)

Vocal Study

This class is open to anyone who has a love of music and a desire to unlock the power of their singing voice. We will explore the anatomy of the human voice as we use techniques that will develop vocal range, harness breath control and build confidence. We will study a wide range of repertoire, allowing each student to discover their own voice and musical style. Listening to and analyzing recordings of current and past artists will also be a large part of class, as we work toward creating our own recordings. Due to the nature of vocal study and your ever-changing voice, this course can be taken for one semester only or throughout High School. (One semester minor elective, offered Fall Semester)

Vocal Performance

This select ensemble focuses on the performance of vocal jazz, pop, rock, and a cappella arrangements. Students explore modern vocal production, microphone technique, and stylistic interpretation. The course emphasizes tight vocal harmonies, rhythmic precision, and blending in small group settings. The semester culminates in public performances and potentially a recorded project documenting the repertoire. (Prerequisite: Vocal Study, Sound Exploration or with an audition. One semester major course. Can be taken both semesters).

Performance Chorale: 18 Wheelers

The 18 Wheelers is an ensemble for advanced singers and performers. While the repertoire focuses primarily on contemporary a cappella, we will explore a wide variety of musical genres as we cultivate our musical and technical skills. This is a mixed voice ensemble (SSAATBB) and auditions are competitive. Singers will be expected to develop specific skills including sight-singing, intonation, diction, blend, vocal techniques, and an understanding of music theory. Experienced music readers are encouraged to write choral arrangements. Members are required to participate in the ensemble's efforts and meet all performance commitments on and off campus. Prerequisite: Audition. (Full year major course)

Handbell Ensemble

Learning to ring handbells is fun, accessible, and an excellent way to develop musical skills. Using contemporary hits and classical favorites, students will explore the wide range of sounds that can be produced using handbells and handchimes. The course will cover basic music theory including how to read and interpret musical notation. The handbell ensemble is open to all students regardless of previous musical experience. (One semester minor elective, offered both Fall and Spring semesters)

Music Production and Engineering

This course explores the art of the recording, editing and production of music. It offers students hands-on experience with both live and recorded sound. Participants will develop technical skills in recording, microphone usage, and sound production while building a foundational understanding of the tools and software essential for capturing live and editing recorded audio. Topics covered include digital audio workstations (DAWs), stereo mixing techniques, recording setup, and audio workflow. (Spring Semester Minor Elective)

Jazz Ensemble

This course emphasizes the development of individual facility on a chosen instrument and provides the ensemble structure in which the student must play and improvise daily. Theory includes scales, modes and chord progressions. The repertoire includes jazz, blues, rock, and other improvisational music. Prerequisite: permission of the instructor. (Full year minor course)

Jazz Performance

This course emphasizes mastery of the student's chosen instrument via performance, improvisation, composition and arranging. Students will be expected to play all scales, modes and rhythmic figures in varying styles. Repertoire includes jazz, blues, folk, rock, and other improvisational music forms. Each student will have the opportunity to compose and arrange for his/her instrument. Students must participate in regular ensemble rehearsals, individual tutorial sessions when needed, and all performances. Prerequisite: Jazz Ensemble and permission from the instructor. (Full year major course)

Dance Ensemble

Dancers of all skill levels are encouraged to take this course and every student will be given opportunities for personal growth. This is a semester-long class where students will explore Ballet and Contemporary dance techniques through a set of warm-ups followed by memorization of teacher lead Choreography. This class will focus on dance technique fundamentals as well as Dance History and the development of dance vocabulary and body placement. The Dance Ensemble class will culminate at the end of the semester with a piece in the Dance Company showcase. No Prerequisite. This class can be taken more than once. (One semester minor elective, offered both Fall and Spring semesters)

Dance Performance

This class will explore Ballet, Modern, and Contemporary Dance through class study and performance opportunities at an intermediate and advanced level. Coursework will be heavily focused on the development of technical skills and artistry, memorization of teacher-led choreography, and the study of Ballet variations. There will be two main stage performances in which all students are required to participate. Dancers with prior dance experience are encouraged to take this course to continue to grow as a dancer and artist. This class can be taken more than once. Prerequisite: Prior dance experience and audition. (Full year major course)

Independent Study in Performing Arts

This program provides an opportunity for motivated students to pursue special topics in the Performing Arts after their requirement has been fulfilled. Admission to this program is by departmental permission. The project must include research, written documentation and conclude with a major presentation. Candidates should submit a detailed project proposal including the subject and scope of the project, specific resources, and deadlines for various interim presentations. Students are responsible for securing the support of a faculty advisor from the Performing Arts Department for any independent study. (Minor elective, semester or full year)

Science

The Upper School science curriculum is designed to ensure that all Wheeler graduates are scientifically literate citizens. Our students engage with the fundamental methods and concepts of both physical and biological sciences. Each course emphasizes critical observation, logical reasoning, quantitative experimentation, problem-solving skills, and scientific literacy. To graduate, students must earn a minimum of three science credits (three years of study), including Environmental Science, Chemistry, and a full-year course in either Biology or Physics. All students are encouraged to take at least one course in each of the scientific disciplines. After completing courses in Environmental Science (ninth grade) and Chemistry (tenth grade), students may take courses in Biology and Physics in either order. This sequence of courses is considered to be our core curriculum. Students who join Wheeler after ninth grade are not required to take Environmental Science.

Environmental Science

In Environmental Science, ninth graders consider environmental issues within the sciences in general, and within ecology specifically. Course material focuses on becoming responsible citizens in a global ecosystem, with a goal of developing sustainable solutions to issues which impact our planet like climate change and environmental justice. After setting an ecological foundation, students explore human-constructed systems which affect populations, resources and pollutants. Seasonal field trips to Wheeler Farm provide students with field research opportunities most notably, ecosystem comparison studies. Projects include individual and group research presentations, assays of soil, water and other resources, an introduction to GIS and a final exhibition through which students address and attempt to solve an environmental problem currently affecting a National Park. Full Year. (Major Course)

Advanced Placement Environmental Science

Ninth grade students will follow an AP environmental science (APES) curriculum by reading an entire college level text, taking weekly reading quizzes, writing thorough and coherent essays, as well as completing recommended laboratories and field trips in preparation for the AP exam in May. Students study the sustainability of both ecosystems and human constructed systems, throughout the year. Prerequisites: APES candidates should have excellent command of Algebra 1, receive recommendations from all of their 8th grade teachers, demonstrate strong reading and writing skills, have a strong independent work ethic and complete a placement test. Course completion satisfies the Environmental Science requirement for graduation. All students are required to take the AP examination in May. Full year. (Major course)

Principles of Chemistry

This course explores the fundamental principles and laws of chemistry, covering topics such as measurement, atomic and molecular structure, the periodic table, chemical reactions, bonding, states of matter, solutions, acids and bases, and organic chemistry. Emphasizing the "language of chemistry," students will develop the ability to visualize atomic and molecular processes. Through laboratory experiments and inquiry-based activities, students will reinforce key concepts and gain practical, hands-on experience. Problem-solving sessions will strengthen their algebraic skills and deepen their understanding of applied mathematics in chemistry. By the end of the course, students will be able to demonstrate a strong grasp of fundamental chemical laws and concepts. Corequisite: Intermediate Algebra or Algebra 2. Full Year. (Major course)

Chemistry

Chemistry is the study of matter and the interactions it undergoes. Strong emphasis is placed on the development of the fundamental ideas and concepts of chemistry, and their application to everyday life, technology and related fields in science. Topics include measurement, atomic and molecular structure, the periodic table, chemical reactions, chemical bonding, states of matter, solutions, acids and bases, and organic chemistry. Hands-on laboratory experiences and inquiry-based learning are integral components of this course, allowing students to engage with real-world data, refine their analytical and problem-solving skills, and develop scientific reasoning. Through experimental investigations, students will learn proper lab techniques, data collection and analysis, and how to draw meaningful conclusions based on evidence. These experiences will not only reinforce theoretical knowledge but also cultivate essential skills in observation, precision, and logical reasoning. Corequisite: Intermediate Algebra (with permission from the science department), Algebra 2 or Algebra 2 Trig. Full Year. (Major course)

Honors Chemistry

This course is designed for students who have a strong interest in science and mathematics. Topics studied will include atomic

structure, nuclear reactions, electron configuration of atoms, the periodic table, chemical reactions, chemical bonding, states of matter, chemical equilibrium, thermodynamics, and oxidation & reduction. This course emphasizes hands-on laboratory inquiries to develop the students' understanding of chemical principles and to develop their ability to employ analytical thinking skills in solving complex problems and working with real data. Honors Chemistry offers less scaffolding in its approach to problem-solving than the other 10th-grade chemistry courses. As such, students are expected to be proactive and prepared for a challenging and rewarding experience. Corequisite: Algebra 2 Trig or Honors Math 2, and recommendation by the science department. Full year. (Major course)

Advanced Placement Chemistry

This course is intended for juniors and seniors who wish to further their understanding of chemistry beyond the first year. It is designed to be the equivalent of a typical general chemistry course offered by most colleges; students will prepare for and take the AP exam in chemistry at the conclusion of the course in May. The curriculum includes detailed studies of the following broad topics: structure of matter, states of matter, chemical reactions, chemical equilibrium, thermodynamics, and descriptive chemistry. Laboratory work is emphasized throughout the course in all topics. Prerequisites: Honors Chemistry or Chemistry, concurrent enrollment in Precalculus or beyond, and recommendation by the science department. Full year. (Major course)

Principles of Biology

This course introduces students to the major branches of biology. These include molecular and cell biology, energy, genetics, evolution, anatomy and physiology. Throughout the year, students conduct hands-on laboratory exercises and research projects that are tightly coordinated with lectures and other classroom activities. This course emphasizes biological principles in a conceptual way and aims to help students visualize biological processes. Time is dedicated to learning important concepts through multiple learning approaches, flexible pacing, use of hands-on models, structured notes templates, and a variety of assessment approaches. Prerequisite: Principles of Chemistry or Chemistry. Full Year. (Major course)

Biology

This course introduces students to the major branches of biology. These include molecular and cell biology, energy, genetics, evolution, anatomy and physiology. Students will conduct coordinated laboratory exercises and activities throughout the year that will serve to answer questions about living things. Prerequisite: one year of Chemistry. Full year. (Major course)

Advanced Placement Biology

AP Biology is an introductory college-level biology course. Students cultivate their understanding of biology through inquiry-based investigations as they explore the following topics: chemistry of life, cells, cellular energetics, cell communication and cell cycle, heredity, gene expression and regulation, natural selection/evolution, and ecology. A strong emphasis is placed on laboratory experimentation and data analysis. All students are required to take the AP examination. Prerequisites: completion of one year of Chemistry and recommendation by the science department. Full year. (Major course - open to seniors only)

Molecular Biology

Molecular Biology is a rigorous course specifically for students interested in pursuing research in the biological sciences. This full year science department course will introduce students to the structural and functional roles of nucleic acids and proteins. This laboratory-intensive course is designed to expose students to basic laboratory research, current topics, and techniques in molecular biology. Students will carry out a wide array of classical and advanced molecular biology techniques, including the isolation, analysis and manipulation of DNA and proteins. Prerequisite: one year of Chemistry. Prerequisite or corequisite: Biology or AP Biology, in addition to written application and approval by the science department. Rising juniors interested in taking Molecular Biology may be granted permission by the department to take the AP Biology corequisite in their senior year. Full year. (Major course)

Principles of Physics

In this course, students will perform laboratory investigations to explore the inner workings of our physical universe, in the process developing an understanding of the fundamental laws of classical physics. Topics include motion, forces, momentum, energy, light and sound waves, electricity and magnetism, and a selection of modern physics topics (possibly including nuclear physics, particle physics, general relativity, and special relativity). Throughout the course, there will be an emphasis on designing experiments, making measurements, and working with data mathematically, to draw conclusions about nature and to connect physics to our daily lives. Prerequisites: one year of Chemistry, Intermediate Algebra, or Algebra 2. Full Year. (Major course)

Physics

In this course we will study topics in physics, including motion, energy, electricity and magnetism, sound, light and optics. The goal of the course is to gain understanding of the fundamental ways that the universe works. Students will learn by analyzing practical applications in daily life and imagining future applications in technology. Students will perform laboratory experiments to predict, discover, and/or verify concepts and mathematical laws. Laws of physics will be examined through algebra, and minimal trigonometry will be used. Projects will be used to practice conceptual understanding and real world applications of Physics. Prerequisites: one year of Chemistry, Algebra 2 Trig or Honors Math 2, and permission of the science department. Full year. (Major course)

Honors Physics

Honors Physics is a fast paced and highly quantitative study of major topics in Physics, including motion, energy, electricity and magnetism, sound, light, and optics. The goal of the course is to gain understanding of the fundamental ways that the universe works. It is designed for students interested in pursuing STEM in their college years. Students will learn by analyzing practical applications in daily life and imagining future applications in technology. Students will perform laboratory experiments to predict, discover, and/or verify concepts and mathematical laws. Mastery of algebra and trigonometry skills are required for this course. Prerequisites: one year of Chemistry, Honors Math 2 or Precalculus, and permission of the science department. Full year. (Major course)

Honors Physics C: Mechanics

Honors Physics C: Mechanics is a second-year physics course designed for seniors who wish to further develop advanced problem-solving skills through the study of calculus-based mechanics and its applications to modern physics. Students will study mechanics using calculus, making this course especially well suited for those intending to major in the physical sciences or engineering at the college level. Although the course is not officially designated as AP, it provides strong preparation for the AP Physics C: Mechanics Exam. In addition to mathematical and conceptual mastery, students will strengthen their scientific writing, reading, and discussion skills through laboratory investigations, research assignments, and project-based learning. Students may elect to take the AP Physics C: Mechanics exam in May. Prerequisite: one year of Physics, one year of Calculus, and recommendation by the science department. Full year. (Major course)

Science Electives

Science electives are one semester-long major courses. For 2026–2027, the courses described below will be offered.

Forensic Science

This integrated course will focus on critical thinking and lab skills as well as problem-solving techniques to learn more about the fascinating field of forensics. We will learn how scientists gather crucial information at the scene of the crime and then carefully analyze evidence such as fingerprints, fibers, and blood. We will investigate how skulls and bones can provide clues to help medical artists in their attempt to reconstruct faces. The forensic science field includes a wide range of specialized jobs and we will familiarize ourselves with the many opportunities that exist throughout the course. Our final project will be a complicated crime scene in which students will apply the skills they have learned during the semester. We will have two guest speakers and take at least one field trip during the semester. Open to Juniors and Seniors. (Major course)

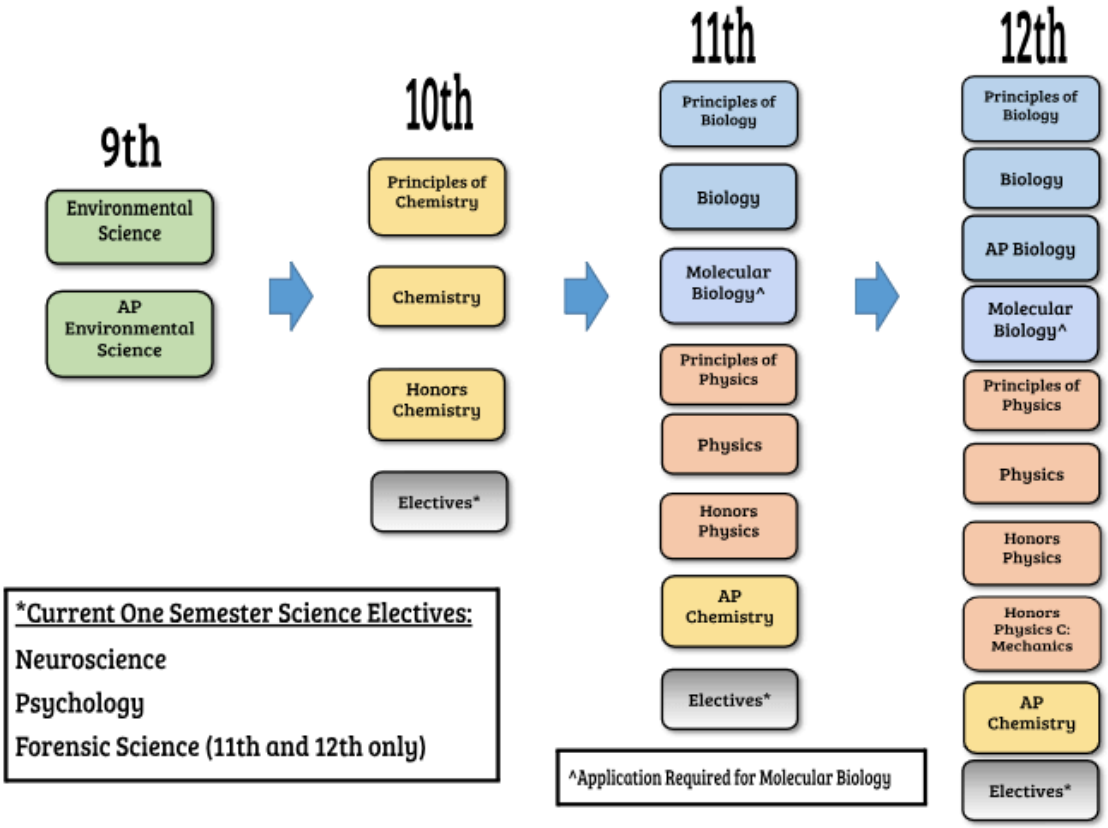
Neuroscience

In this course, students will learn the basics alongside cutting edge research in Neuroscience. Topics include, but are not limited to: “How do rhythms in the brain give rise to simple and complex behavior?”; “How does the brain create a sense of self-other identity?”; “Why is it that some people taste colors and see sounds?”; “What is the future of humans interfacing with computers?” Students will be required to write a brief research report after each unit on a topic of their choice (Major course).

Psychology

In this course, students will learn how to think like psychological researchers. Topics include, “How are theories generated?” “Why are we attracted to some people and repulsed by others?” “How does psychology affect our everyday lives?” “How do crowds make collective decisions?” “Why do people believe in supernatural entities, such as gods and spirits?” “How does memory work?” Students will be required to complete collaborative multimedia projects and study experimental designs. (Major course) *Note: although Psychology is considered a science department elective at Wheeler, most colleges and universities classify the discipline as a social science and do not count it toward a science requirement.*

Wheeler Upper School Science Sequence



*Current One Semester Science Electives:

Neuroscience

Psychology

Forensic Science (11th and 12th only)

^Application Required for Molecular Biology

Athletics & Physical Education Program

Physical education and athletics are an integral part of the Upper School Program. Participation in both areas encourages physical fitness, reinforces positive health and wellness habits, builds meaningful peer relationships, and provides fun through physical activity. Athletics specifically develops values such as commitment, self-discipline, and teamwork. Participation in athletics is highly encouraged and fulfills the physical education requirement for a specific term. Physical education instruction and athletics participation are divided into three seasonal terms: Fall, Winter, and Spring. Requirements for the Athletic and Physical Education Program in the Upper School are as follows:

1. Rhode Island requires all students to participate in a minimum of 100 minutes of physical education activities per week.
    a. Students must sign up for their elective activities at the beginning of each term. Students will be enrolled in upper school PE classes, which will meet during Enrichment twice per week until they make arrangements with the PE Dept.
    b. Most physical education activities will meet after school one or two times per week, depending on the activity. Weight Room participants may work out after school from 3:30 pm - 5:00 pm in Madden Gymnasium (Providence Campus).
    c. Playing on an interscholastic team fulfills the physical education requirement for that season.
    d. Student performance in the play and musical will satisfy the Physical Education requirement for the trimester during which they are offered.
    e. As usual, we will offer physical education classes after school, as well as honor independent contracts for students doing outside activities. Students are required to participate in physical education for all 3 terms.
2. Students will receive a grade of "Appropriately Engaged (AE)" or "Insufficiently Engaged (IE)" in physical education and athletics based on attendance, knowledge, skill performance, improvement, and effort.
3. Independent contracts are allowed for students who participate in an outside-of-school activity that meets the weekly time requirement and is supervised by either a coach or certified instructor.
4. The only students exempt from the physical education requirement are those with physical injury/disabilities and those who provide a physician's letter of explanation to the School Nurse.
5. Activity possibilities are listed below. Activities will be revised according to student interest and facility availability.

Examples of Physical Education Offerings

Athletic Teams	*P.E. Classes*
Boys' Teams Fall: Cross Country, Golf (Co-Ed), Soccer Winter: Basketball, Squash, Indoor Track, Swimming & Diving, Wrestling Spring: Baseball, Lacrosse, Sailing (Co-Ed), Tennis, Track & Field	**After School Offerings - Co-Educational** The Weight Room is offered every term. Additional options such as Yoga, Rock Climbing, Archery, and Ultimate Frisbee are available with student interest and enough participation numbers.
Girls' Teams Fall: Cross Country, Field Hockey, Golf (Co-Ed), Soccer, Volleyball Winter: Basketball, Squash, Indoor Track, Swimming & Diving, Wrestling Spring: Lacrosse, Softball, Sailing (Co-ed), Tennis, Track & Field	**Enrichment Offerings** Yoga, Physical Education Classes, Dance, Volleyball
Athletic Co-operative Teams Boys Ice Hockey w/ Mt. St. Charles Academy*	Please note that this program is run primarily through Mt. St. Charles, and there is limited flexibility with practice/game adjustments.

Aerie Program Courses

Supplemental Course Offerings

The Aerie Program provides courses individualized to a student's particular passion, beyond what is offered within Wheeler's curriculum. Seminars and tutorials with adjunct instructors can be arranged in consultation with advisors, department heads, and Aerie staff. In order for Aerie Supplemental Courses to appear on a student's transcript (and thus receive course credit), a Supplemental Course Offering must meet the school's minor course requirement of meeting five days per eight day school cycle. *Students may apply through Mr. Harris, the Director of the Aerie Program.*

2025-2026 for credit courses included:

- Ancient Greek, Advanced Conversational French, Japanese Language
- Neuroscience, Intro to Public Health, Advanced Writing Seminar
- Data Analysis & Algorithms, Multivariable Calculus, Mechanical Engineering

Enrichment Courses Program

The Upper School schedule provides a daily Enrichment block from 10:35 a.m. – 11:20 a.m. during which time students may enroll in semester-long, once (sometimes twice) weekly, not-for-credit offerings that are presented in the Aerie Enrichment Course Catalog (released twice per year in September and February) and cater to individual interests. Most students take at least one Enrichment course, and many take more. This block is also when some academic teams meet, including: Academic Decathlon, Math Team, Model UN, Mock Trial, Envirothon, Science Olympiad, and Robotics.

2025-2026 Enrichment offerings included:

- American Sign Language, Japanese, Russian
- Improvisational Comedy, Intro to Law, Film Studies
- Performance Rock Band, Hip-Hop Dance, AI Vibe Coding

Media Program

Video Broadcasting

Video Broadcasting provides an introduction to the foundational principles of video production from inception to completion via creative writing, storyboarding, camera shooting, and editing footage with state of the art software. Projects come in the form of documentaries, music videos, creative works, or on-campus recordings that the student produces for use on our multimedia site: www.wheelerschoolbroadcasting.org. (Major one semester course, Performing Arts Credit.)

Video Broadcasting 2

In Video Broadcasting 2, students will take the skills they acquired from Video Broadcasting 1 and utilize them to create long form media projects such as video essays, documentaries, and music videos as well use in live production. Students will utilize more advanced software for media production from the Adobe Creative Cloud Suite and be a part of live broadcasting for school events such as Holiday Festival, sporting events, and concerts. (Major one semester course, does **not** earn Performing Arts Credit)

In addition to the Video Broadcasting majors, there are a number of ways to get involved with the Broadcast Program. In recent years, these have included Advanced Video Production, Sound Production, Radio Broadcasting, and Podcasting.

Supplemental Language Offerings

Students who wish to explore foreign languages in addition to their Modern Language requirements do so through the Aerie Program. In the last few years Wheeler students have been enrolled in classes in different levels of Japanese, Arabic, Italian, Russian, and German. Other students have studied Ancient Greek, Modern Greek, Modern Hebrew, Korean, Urdu, Amharic, Turkish, Persian, Swedish, and Dutch. Some students do advanced work in preparation for AP exams not offered within the regular curriculum, or continue their language studies past the AP level. As an example of the breadth of Aerie's Supplemental Language offerings, in the year 2022-2023, a peak year for SLOs, Wheeler students took nineteen different languages.

Latin Program

Upper School students who wish to pursue language studies beyond the scope and requirements of the Modern Language Program may pursue instruction in Latin 1, 2, 3, 4, and Advanced Latin Literature. Students in the Polaris Program or with language waivers may enroll in the Fundamentals of Latin sequence. New students who come to Wheeler in the Upper School and took Latin as their primary language before they arrived may also continue Latin to satisfy their language requirement.

Latin I

Latin I focuses on morphology, syntax, and vocabulary acquisition. Students learn the present indicative system of the four plus verb conjugations and all five noun declensions. There is a focus on learning how to read Latin effectively as well as a perusal of Roman history and culture. (Major course)

Latin II

Latin II is a continuation of Latin I: it reintroduces students to an in-depth study of the language in a reading context. Students spend the first three quarters finishing the study of basic morphology, syntax, and vocabulary. In the final quarter, students begin to read selections Latin authors.(Major Course)

Latin III

Latin III is a transitional course in which students will begin to read extended works in Latin. We will start the year with Ritchie's *Fabulae Faciles* before moving on to unadapted Latin authors, particularly Caesar and Catullus. Grammar topics that weren't covered in Latin I/II will be discussed as they come up in the readings. (Major course)

Latin IV

Latin IV is a literature course focusing on epic poetry, namely *The Aeneid* and *The Metamorphoses*. Students will apply all they've learned in previous courses to analyze and appreciate these works. (Major course)

Advanced Latin Literature

Advanced Latin Literature can be taken after Latin IV; the curriculum changes with the interests of students but always includes reading, interpretation, and translation of prose and poetry at a deep and high level. Students can take this course more than once. (Major course)

Fundamentals of Language: Latin

This course serves as an introduction to Latin language acquisition. Students learn the nuts and bolts of both English and Latin. This course pays particular attention to the manner in which English and Latin establish meaning: word order and word inflection (changes in verbs, nouns, pronouns, and adjectives) are considered on a daily basis to help students gain understanding of how precisely English and Latin convey meaning. Students may continue the following year with Fundamentals of Latin II. (Major course)

Fundamentals of Latin II

In this course students build on their work from Fundamentals with continuing intensive focus on the morphology, vocabulary, and syntax of both English and Latin. Students begin to translate more complex Latin as the course unfolds and their linguistic facility deepens. Roman History and Mythology are incorporated into the class as well. (Major course)

Fundamentals of Latin III & IV

The Fundamentals course sequence continues for interested Polaris students and Upper Schoolers with Modern Language waivers. Translation of original texts, archeology, and the culture of Ancient Rome are explored. (Major course)

Inquiry and Design

The Department of Inquiry & Design supports students to expand their curiosity and creativity through asking essential questions for authentic problem-solving in our labs, shops, and studios.

We believe everyone is curious and creative and that inquiry and design live in the mind and the hands, in ideas and materials.

We collaborate with teachers and learners across academic disciplines and grade levels to develop sequential curricula that support common learning goals using inquiry and design methods and models.

Courses within the Inquiry and Design Department are developed to prepare students with the complex problem-solving and critical thinking skills necessary for post-secondary studies and the workforce, while both aligning with and propelling the Wheeler School mission.

Next Lab

In the Next Lab, students work on a variety of projects related to science and storytelling. Within the lab, students create video games, immersive experiences, and design and develop scientific studies and philosophical ideas. The lab is highly interactive and experimental, focusing on developing a collaborative and intellectually engaging environment, using modern tools, theories, and technologies. The goal of the Next Lab is to amplify student passion and help them see it through to fruition.

Introduction to 3D Animation and Game Design

In this course, we explore what makes a compelling story through 3D animation and game design. Students have created stop-motion animations, prison escape video games, and 3D shorts while exploring themes of family reconciliation through photography. The course consists of discussions, projects, and critiques, where students will hone skills in a chosen medium of interest. This course is for students who want to take their narrative visions and make them a reality through collaboration and instructor support. No prior computer skills are necessary, making this class accessible to all. Students will gain experience with 3D animation, game design, and storytelling. (Minor course)

US Design Shop

In the Design Shop, students incorporate concepts from the fields of design, architecture, engineering, and craft through building material projects. Students apply design methods and skills to solve contemporary and future challenges. The Design Shop provides the resources and instruction in craft, sewing, woodworking, electronics, digital fabrication, and the production of soft goods. Within Design Shop courses, students employ modes of visual communication and the design process, such as diagramming and photographic/video documentation to convey ideas, process, and learning. All work is geared towards practicing skills of creativity-including observation, abstraction, and synthesis -with a foundation in craft and spatial reasoning.

Introduction to Engineering

This course provides students with an engaging introduction to the foundational practices of engineering through a diverse range of project-based learning experiences. Emphasizing creativity and critical thinking, the course connects students to real-world challenges across various fields of engineering design, such as mechanical, electrical, structural, and environmental engineering. Students will actively participate in hands-on activities that guide them through the entire design process and gain practical experience in applying engineering principles to solve complex problems while honing their teamwork, communication, and project management skills. (One-semester Major Course, offered fall and spring semesters)

Industrial Design

This course invites students to explore the art of creating with various materials while developing skills in spatial, visual, and abstract thinking. Through guided projects, students will learn to safely and effectively use the tools and equipment available in the Design Shop. These include tools for craft, sewing, woodworking, soft goods production, electronics, and digital fabrication, along with

computer-aided technologies such as laser cutters, 3D printers, and rapid prototyping methods. Projects will emphasize key skills such as spatial reasoning, mechanical principles, artistic observation, critical analysis and feedback, synthesis of ideas, and abstract communication. By the end of the course, students will have developed a strong foundation in both technical and creative design practices, preparing them for future endeavors in design and fabrication. (One-semester Major Course, offered fall and/or spring semesters)

Design and Entrepreneurship

This course empowers students to explore their curiosities and transform their ideas into impactful projects. By integrating and applying principles from industry and the business world, students will develop essential skills for success in a dynamic, evolving environment. Through self-directed, reflective learning, they will design and execute a project of personal significance. Students will gain a clearer understanding of their purpose, identify their unique value, and refine their work through meaningful feedback from their community. (One-semester Major Course, offered fall and/or spring semesters)

College Counseling

The College Counseling Office serves as a resource for students, families, and the Wheeler faculty regarding all aspects of the college application process. For some students, attending a large college on the West Coast might be ideal, while others may hope to attend a small college in New England, and some may even want to study abroad. Not all students may choose to attend college right away; opportunities like a post-graduate year or a gap year can be the perfect next step. What is key is that the College Counseling Office works together with students, families, and faculty to guide (rather than direct) students in the post-Wheeler planning process.

Wheeler's course requirements are the minimum requirements for the Wheeler diploma. When planning a program for a given year or semester, students should consider their curricular and co-curricular interests, the ability to manage demanding courses, and future goals. Most colleges are interested in students who choose to exceed the graduation requirements; highly selective colleges are looking for students who can excel in the most demanding courses offered at Wheeler. Seniors must continue with or exceed previous years' curricular challenges to be the most competitive applicants.

College Counseling encourages students to develop co-curricular/extracurricular interests at Wheeler and in the greater community. These interests may be academic, athletic, artistic, or altruistic. The depth and quality of a student's commitment to any activity are far more important than the number of activities in which they participate.

The Wheeler College Counseling Office will work with students and families as they navigate the following steps:

- Exploration: Helping students explore the range of options available using a wide variety of resources.
- Evaluation: Helping students and families to understand the criteria that colleges and universities use to evaluate applicants, and then suggesting the potential range of college options based on the entirety of the student's record.
- Application: Helping students with their applications, providing technological and personal advice and support to make their applications as authentic and strong as possible.
- Financial Aid: Helping families access the resources available to learn about and apply for financial aid.
- Matriculation: Helping students to decide amongst their options to determine their post-Wheeler path.

Ultimately, our goal is to help students make good choices through a process that celebrates self-discovery, self-evaluation, and prepares them for a healthy transition to a new environment.

Whole Life Seminar

The Whole Life Seminar (WHeeLS) is a K-12 program that supports and facilitates social emotional learning, identity development, health and wellness, community service learning and global citizenship. For students in the Upper School the Whole Life Seminar also facilitates inquiry learning, specifically for students in their senior year.

The Whole Life Seminar is taught by a combination of wheeler faculty, community partners, and outside professional providers. Students develop skills in the four content areas of the program, with the goal of sending empathetic, globally aware and critical thinkers into the world.

Identity development and social emotional learning often happen in tandem in our WHeeLS Program. In 9th grade students focus on self identity, in 10th grade students focus on their identity in relation to others and their community and we work to build an awareness of intersectionality and allyship. Once a student enters their 11th and 12th grade years at Wheeler they are able to lead and facilitate discussions and workshops rooted in identity, community and belonging. Additionally they become leaders in building relationships and fostering community through student leadership opportunities, community service and senior free inquiry projects.

Community Service learning is introduced to our 9th graders through our Founder's Day allowing students to take on a leadership role with younger students and projects at the site they are assigned in the community. By 10th grade students are engaging in research of non profit organizations to connect with for their junior year. During 11th and 12th grade students are required to complete a total of 20 hours of service at a local 501(c)(3) organization over the school year (5 hours per quarter), and 12th-grade students are required to complete 15 hours of service (5 hours per quarter during quarters 1, 2, and 3). Hours may be submitted earlier than the quarterly deadlines if a student chooses to complete their hours early. In addition, the senior year experience of WHLS dovetails with the Senior Free Inquiry Project.

Our health and wellness component includes education around the following topics: disease prevention, stress, sleep, mindfulness, nutrition and exercise, body image, sexual education, decision making, substance abuse, digital citizenship, social-emotional learning, and public health. These topics vary based on the needs of the students and staying ahead of medical and psychological trends that adolescents in our region might be experiencing. This learning happens in collaboration, guidance and support of the members of our health team.