

UPPER SCHOOL COURSES

ELECTIVE COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

Debate (0.5 Credits)

Debate is a one semester course. Students will gain confidence as they learn and practice argument and debate skills in a congenial setting. Independent work and group work on assignments such as in-class debates, mock trials, analysis of current controversies, and persuasive communication will be an integral part of this course. Students will use specialized research skills, assigned readings, and writings to investigate different types of arguments and apply critical thinking skills.

Prerequisite: Open to all students.

Text: none

Debate II: (0.5 Credits)

Debate II is for students interested in developing advanced argumentation skills. Students engage in in-depth research of debate topics, as well as participate in substantial practice of arguments and positions developed as necessary to prepare them to speak among groups successfully. Students will participate in historical debates, as well as, address current issues facing the world through the extensive practice of debate.

Prerequisite: Debate (preferred)

Text: none

Global Issues: (0.5 Credits)

Global Issues will be a one semester course aimed at introducing students to the events, trends, and issues/challenges that citizens and leaders are facing in an increasingly global world.

Prerequisite: Open to all students.

Text: High Noon, ISBN # 978-0465070091 (used)

Maker Tech: Tier I-III (0.5 Credits)

In this semester course, students will learn about basic electronics, soldering skills, and simple circuits. From this foundation, students will then begin projects utilizing either Arduino or Raspberry Pi as a platform. Projects will include aspects of planning, design, build, coding, and application of a final product.

To encourage advancement within the course, multiple tiers can be offered, enabling a student to take the course more than once and to continue the development of their skills and knowledge. Students in Tier 2 and Tier 3 will be designated as project managers and take on the added role

of coordinating and assisting those students in a lower tier toward excellence. Project ideas will also reflect the advancing knowledge of the students with more complex projects for them to choose from.

Prerequisite: Open to all students.

Text: Students may be required to purchase specialized materials for individual projects.

History Through Film and Literature Honors: (0.5 Credits)

This semester course will examine important people, places, and events in World History by looking at accounts of them as they appear in literature and film. We will look at historical accounts, newspaper articles, short stories, poems, and novels, some fictional and some not, to glean an understanding of time and place. We will also look at film treatments, some documentaries, some newscasts, and some feature films, to get an appreciation of people, places, and events. Periods to be studied will include the students' personal interests and several events in the 20th century.

Prerequisite: Open to all students that meet the academic requirements.

Text: Students may be required to purchase specialized materials for individual projects.

Mythology & Fairy Tales (0.5 Credit) Honors

Study the mythology from a variety of world civilizations through their festivals, art, and literature. Topics to be covered are: Classical, Chinese, and Norse mythology, folklore from Native Americans and India, fairy tales, and modern urban legends. Even those who are familiar with mythology will find something new of interest because we will emphasize the common themes found in tales across cultures, and students will recognize these common tropes that are still used in storytelling today.

Prerequisite: none

Text: World Mythology (ISBN 9780844257679)

Advanced Placement Human Geography: (1.0 Credit)

Human Geography is designed to prepare students for geographic analysis. To be more geoliterate, students will study charts and maps to figure out why people choose to live in certain areas and how they modify those areas to make them into a useful home. Using problem-solving and decision-making skills, they will analyze the following geographic themes: population and migration, urban and rural land use, religion, language, architecture, political and economic development, and globalization. Students will take the AP exam in May for college credit.

Prerequisite: Open to all students that meet the academic requirements.

Texts: *The Cultural Landscape: An Introduction to Human Geography* by James M. Rubenstein. 11th edition. ISBN # 9780321831583

Cracking the AP Human Geography Exam by The Princeton Review. 2019. ISBN # 9781524758073. ** The newer 2020 edition is also acceptable

Advanced Placement (AP) Psychology (1.0 Credits)

This advanced college level survey course for juniors and seniors is designed to introduce students to the systematic and scientific study of the behavior and mental processes of human beings and other animals. Students are exposed to the psychological facts, principles, and phenomena associated with each of the major subfields within psychology. They also learn about the ethics and methods psychologists use in their science and practice. Topics include sensation and perception, learning, consciousness, and abnormal and social psychology.

Prerequisite: Open to all students that meet the academic requirements.

Textbook: *Myers' Psychology for the AP Course* by David G. Myers and C. Nathan DeWall. Third Edition. ISBN #978-1319070502

Psychology (0.5 Credits)

This elective introduces students to the study of human behavior and mental processes. Students are challenged to relate psychological concepts to their own lives and to evaluate various methods of research. Topics include biology of behavior, learning, consciousness, personality, and abnormal psychology and therapy.

Textbook: *Understanding Psychology*, ISBN: 9780076631940

Sociology (0.5 Credits)

This elective illustrates how the groups, or social structures, that one belongs to have a profound influence on the way you think, feel, and act. While psychology focuses on individual behavior, sociology focuses on the behavior of groups. Major themes include culture and subcultures, inequalities of gender and age, race and ethnicity, family and marriage, government and politics, and unique social issues surrounding the 21st century and technology.

Textbook: Free online PDF version - <https://openstax.org/details/books/introduction-sociology-2e>

Print Design (Yearbook)

This course creates an opportunity for students to record Houston Academy memories in an annual yearbook. Students develop the following skills in order to design the yearbook: layout design, theme development, copywriting, editing, and photography. Students collaborate to develop a theme for each yearbook. Students then use tools on Yearbook Avenue or other programs to create images and elements which reflect the theme in each layout design throughout the yearbook. Copywriting is a necessary skill students practice when summarizing interviews and describing events on pages throughout the yearbook. Students learn basic photography skills and learn to consider ISO, aperture, shutter speed, and lighting in various

settings in order to improve the quality of the images. Every student is responsible for editing sections throughout the book in time to meet a deadline schedule.

Textbook: none

Digital Media and Marketing (0.5 Credits)

This course covers the principles, tools, and best practices for Marketing, Business, Graphic Design, Video and Audio Production, Storyboarding and Storytelling, and Editing. This course is open to students in rising grades 9-12. This course **will be offered during the second semester** of the 2021-2022 school year.

Prerequisite: Open to students in rising grades 9-12

Text: No text required.

Advanced Digital Media and Marketing (0.5 Credits)

This course is offered for students that have passed Digital Media I and will be expected to plan and execute social media strategies along with video editing and design for Houston Academy projects. For those that have not taken Digital Media I, there will be a special authorization required to be considered. This course is open to students in rising grades 9-12. This course **will be offered during the second semester** of the 2021-2022 school year.

Prerequisite: Open to students that have taken Digital Media Production in the past two years. For students that are in rising grades 9-12 that have not taken Digital Media in the past, but would like to take Advanced Digital Media, there will be an application form to fill out for consideration. Please contact Mr. Jackson to receive the form.

Text: No text required.

Computer Programming Honors (1.0 Credit)

This course teaches basic coding skills using the Java language. Other topics covered are computer history, binary and hexadecimal number systems, Windows OS, advanced Mac OS, DOS, and flowcharting.

Prerequisite: Completion of or current enrollment in Algebra II

Text: Java Software Solutions for AP Computer Science-Third Edition by Lewis/Loftus/Cocking. Publisher: Addison Wesley. Copyright 2010. ISBN-13: 9780131374690, ISBN-10: 0131374699

Advanced Placement (AP) Computer Science (1.0 Credit)

This programming course, a continuation of the Computer Programming Honors course, teaches both basic and advanced coding skills using the Java language. The AP exam is required. (CP AP)

Prerequisite: Computer Programming Honors

Text: This course uses the same text as Computer Programming Honors