PROGRAM OF STUDY

Upper School | 2021-22

OUR MISSION

The New Community School empowers bright, talented students who are challenged by dyslexia and related learning differences. The innovative and research-based college preparatory curriculum uses a customized educational approach to build skills in language and math to foster academic and personal strengths - igniting the passions and gifts of unique minds.

OUR VISION

The New Community School launches students with the knowledge, skills, and resilience to pursue their passions, navigate the opportunities and challenges of their world, and live their lives with courage, compassion, and purpose.

CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

The students who come to The New Community School enter with specific language skill deficits. These deficits impact their ability to acquire knowledge and their ability to demonstrate what they know. Standardized testing often reveals deficits in reading, spelling, and math computation skills. Deficits in written expression, organizational skills, and study skills are more difficult to quantify, but are no less crucial for academic success at the secondary level. All the academic departments have built-in structures and strategies that are designed not only to help our students compensate for their skill deficits, but to help them develop reliable and effective organizational and study techniques. As students develop the skills needed to succeed in future educational settings, supports and structures are gradually adjusted and students are expected to exercise greater independence.

UPPER SCHOOL

A typical upper school student's schedule includes daily classes in English, math, history, science, and Language Fundamentals. Academic and Language Fundamentals classes carry one unit of credit per year. Upper school students have the opportunity to explore a variety of elective offerings including health and wellness, practical arts and fine arts, and technology.

Each full-credit academic course meets for approximately 140 clock hours and requires a significant amount of out-of-class preparation. The average class size in upper school academic classes is approximately eight students. Elective and physical education classes may be somewhat larger. Language Fundamentals classes in the upper school typically have two to four students. Upper school students are required to bring a Mac computer to class each day.

EXTRA HELP & STUDY HALL

A non-credit study hall (Extra Help) is provided for all students each day. During the Extra Help period, students may see teachers for help, begin assignments due the next day, or complete tests. Middle school students and some upper school students have the option of an additional study hall during the school day in place of one of their classes.

All academic departments employ similar organizational structures and study skills strategies to help students develop necessary skills to be successful. Teachers of all academic classes distribute weekly assignment sheets so that students know what their assignments are and can plan their study time. Each assignment sheet is also posted on Schoology, so that students who have misplaced a sheet can obtain their assignments. Additionally, a system of color-coded binders and folders keeps materials organized for each subject separate. Each subject's notebook has its' own organizational system, since the disciplines do not always lend themselves to identical organizational patterns.

TECHNOLOGY VISION STATEMENT

Technology is a tool that provides added value to teaching and learning. Technology enriches the materials, methods, and assessments our teachers use to inspire young minds, making learning more interactive and engaging. Technology also allows for a more individualized educational experience for each learner.

Furthermore, The New Community School addresses the specific language-related learning differences of its students by selecting technological tools that help students communicate ideas effectively and access materials and information that would be otherwise inaccessible. Technology levels the playing field in communication and helps students overcome the barriers they face in learning and content production. The New Community School provides direct instruction, when necessary, in these technologies and encourages students to see technology, including assistive technology, as a lifelong learning and communication tool.

In order to maximize the value technology adds to teaching and learning, professional development at TNCS promotes and enables successful technology integration. Every teacher is constantly growing in their technological expertise through school-endorsed professional development. Through constant learning and sharing, the faculty at The New Community School is knowledgeable about new technologies, including assistive technology, even as the technology landscape constantly changes.

GRADES & ASSESSMENT

The New Community School subscribes to a standards-based learning model. Under this model, a course grade reflects a student's mastery of the stated course objectives as measured on summative assessments. Rubrics or learning scales are utilized to communicate outcomes, guide instruction, and provide feedback. Learning scales demonstrate a continuum of learning. Reassessment at times is necessary, especially when student performance is below proficient, or the teacher believes the original assessment did not accurately match what the student knows and can do. Students who wish to reassess are encouraged to work with their course teacher.

Student progress reports are issued four times a year at the end of each quarter. Letter grades are given for all courses in grades 9-12 except Language Fundamentals.

Although assessment practices may differ slightly among departments and across grade levels, all teachers share certain beliefs. A brief description of grades as interpreted by our teachers is as follows:

A	3.5 - 4.0	=	**Excelling** - demonstrates in-depth inferences and applications beyond what was taught in class.
B+	3.2 - 3.4	=	**Advanced Proficient** - applies the concepts, vocabulary, and skills independently
B	2.7 - 3.1	=	**Proficient** - demonstrates understanding of the concepts, vocabulary, and skills consistently and independently
C+	2.3 - 2.6	=	**Approaching Proficient** - some minor inconsistencies and gaps exist
C	1.7 - 2.2	=	**Developing** - demonstrates basic understanding; omissions, errors, and misconceptions exist
D+	1.3 - 1.6	=	**Emerging** - ability to identify concepts and skills, needs support to make connections or to use skills
D	.06 - 1.2	=	**Beginning** - demonstrates limited understanding of the learning outcome, needs instructor assistance in order to complete work
F	0.5 & below	=	**Minimal** - demonstrates slight progress on the learning outcome assessed

Letter grades are given for all courses in grades 9-12 except LF classes. Grade point average (GPA) is cumulative beginning with ninth grade. The grade point average is the average of grades in all attempted courses. It includes courses taken at other schools, high school level courses (i.e. Algebra I) taken in middle school, as well as dual enrollment courses. A failed course is included in a student's GPA. However, if a student repeats a course only the higher of the two grades is counted. Because most colleges seem to prefer a GPA that is expressed on a four-point scale, we translate our letter grades to a four-point scale.

SUPPLEMENTAL COURSEWORK

TNCS students often wish to supplement their course of study through coursework offered by an outside provider. In order to receive transfer credit the student must get approval from the Director of the Upper School and the Director of Teaching, Learning, and Research prior to enrolling in the course.

ADDING OR DROPPING COURSES

ADD:

- Year-long courses may not be added after the third week of the school year.
- Semester courses may not be added after the second week of the semester.

DROP:

- Any year-long course dropped on or before the end of the first quarter will not appear on the high school transcript.
- Any semester course dropped on or before the first Friday in October for first semester courses OR the first Friday in March for second semester courses will not appear on the high school transcript.
- Any year-long courses dropped after the first quarter OR after the first Friday in October for first semester courses or the first Friday in March for second semester courses will result in one of the following:
  - WP = (Withdrawn Passing)
  - WF = (Withdrawn Failing)
  - WM = (Withdraw Medical)
- Year-long courses may not be dropped after the first Friday in March. Semester courses may not be dropped after completion of the first quarter of either semester.

POST-GRADUATION PLANNING

During the upper high school years (grades 10-12), the school works with students and their families to help make post-graduation plans. Annual meetings for parents of sophomores, juniors, and seniors provide them with information about the college search process and the programs that have been effective for our graduates.

Juniors take the PSAT each October and take the SAT at least once. Seniors may take the SAT during any of the national testing periods. The school administers College Board tests each year following the guidelines established by the Services for Students with Disabilities program, which allows students with documented learning disabilities to take the SAT with individualized accommodations approved by the College Board. In order to qualify for College Board accommodations, students must have up-to-date psychoeducational testing. We recommend that this testing is completed after the student turns 16. The college counselor works with families and teachers to gather the documentation needed to submit the request.

Occasionally, students opt to take the ACT in addition to the SAT. The ACT has a separate accommodation process. Students and parents are encouraged to work closely with the College & Career Counselor in order to make sure they can complete this process in time for the testing date they prefer.

While most (85-90%) graduates go on to college or other post-secondary instruction, some graduates choose to enter the work force directly from high school. Although TNCS does not provide specific vocational training, we do work with non-college bound seniors to identify career interests, personal strengths, and ways to obtain information about their options.

NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY

In July 2005, the TNCS Chapter of The National Honor Society received its first charter from NHS. The object of the chapter is to create an enthusiasm for scholarship, to stimulate a desire to render service, to promote worthy leadership, and to encourage the development of character in students at TNCS.

The criteria for membership are:

- status as a junior or senior,
- attendance at TNCS for at least one semester,
- a cumulative GPA of 3.15 or higher,
- involvement in at least two current extra-curricular activities, and
- exemplary character and citizenship.

During the fourth quarter each year, sophomores and juniors who meet the grade point average requirement as described will be invited to apply and describe their extra-curricular activities. Qualifying activities include clubs, athletic teams, and other significant activities at school, such as the Student Advisory Board, as well as community-based activities like Scouts, youth groups, choir, or outside classes. For purposes of NHS membership, "current" is defined as during the current school year. A member of the chapter shall be expected to serve as an example to others by his or her attitude, cooperative spirit, and reliability. Serious disciplinary infractions or frequent after school study hall assignments would be examples of failing to set a good example.

Members are selected by a five-person Faculty Council, named by the Director of Teaching, Learning, and Research. The Faculty Council meets during the fourth quarter to discuss academically eligible candidates to determine their eligibility as to service, character, and leadership. All sophomores with a cumulative GPA of 3.15 or higher and juniors whose cumulative GPA is at least 3.15 are eligible for consideration. Other members of the faculty may also be consulted as part of this discussion.

Members are expected to maintain a grade point average of at least 3.0 or better and to continue their record of character, service, and leadership. Members who fail to do so may be given a warning or, in the case of flagrant violations, may be dismissed. In lieu of dismissal, the Faculty Council may impose disciplinary sanctions upon a member as deemed appropriate. Violators of the school's rules of conduct or the Honor Code will receive notification in the form of a written warning, except that in the case of flagrant violations of school rules, expulsion, or violation of the law a warning does not have to be given. If a warning is given then a conference may be requested by either party (Faculty Council or student/parent). If a member continues in violation, the member may be dismissed. Decisions of the Faculty Council may be appealed to the Head of School.

The chapter meets weekly and conducts one or more service projects each year. All chapter members are expected to participate. These projects have the following characteristics: they fulfill a need within the school or community, have the support of the school administration and the faculty, are appropriate and educationally defensible, and are well planned, organized, and executed. A faculty advisor, who is appointed by the Head of School, works with the members of the chapter.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

• English	4 credits
• Mathematics	3 credits (to include Algebra I and Geometry)
• History and Social Studies	3 credits (to include World History, American History 1, and Government)
• Science	3 credits (to include 2 lab sciences)
• Health and Wellness*	2 credits (to include 1 semester of health)
• Fine and Performing Arts	1 credit
• Career and Technology Exploration	1 credit (to include Personal Finance)
Total Needed for Graduation	**24 credits**

*Students in the Class of 2021 – 2023 are required to have 1.75 credits of Health and Wellness. The Class of 2024 and beyond are required to have two credits for graduation.

**All courses taken above the Program Requirements are considered Electives.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADUATION

- Students shall successfully complete at least one online course.
- Students shall successfully complete 10 hours of community service each year.
- Seniors are required to successfully complete a senior speech.

Modifications of these specific course requirements may be made by the Head of the School. These modifications may impact a student's college options.

Diplomas are awarded once each year in June. Seniors who fail to meet diploma requirements by graduation day may, at the discretion of the Head of School, participate in the graduation ceremony. Typically, should the student complete their required work by July 1, they will receive their diploma at that time. A student who completes diploma requirements after July 1 would receive a diploma the following June and would be included on the roll of alumni as a member of the class for the year in which the diploma was awarded. Once a student has completed diploma requirements the school will confirm that fact in writing for colleges or employers. Only seniors who are enrolled at the school for the entire senior year may participate in the graduation ceremony. Students must take part in the June Commencement ceremony in order to be awarded a diploma, unless permission is given by the Head of School.

Upper school students typically carry a course load of 6 to 7 credits per year.

Students are classified according to the following standard:

- In order to be classified as a sophomore, a student must have at least 5 credits.
- In order to be classified as a junior, a student must have at least 10.5 credits.
- In order to be classified as a senior, a student must have at least 17.5 credits.

Credits earned at The New Community School are accepted for transfer by both public and independent schools.

TNCS IS ACCREDITED BY

Southern Association of Independent Schools
Virginia Association of Independent Schools
Virginia Council for Private Education

AND IS A MEMBER OF

The Dyslexia Foundation
International Dyslexia Association
National Association of Independent Schools
Southern Association of Independent Schools
Virginia Association of Independent Schools

LANGUAGE FUNDAMENTALS

LEARNING SKILLS AND STRATEGIES

The broad goal of Upper School Learning Skills and Strategies classes is to increase each student's ability to read strategically, write effectively, and think critically. Skill classes range from remediating basic language skills, focused on improving decoding and encoding words, to teaching reading comprehension, writing, study, and executive functioning strategies. In small groups and pairs, students develop skills while acquiring knowledge of how they learn and an increasing awareness of their individual challenges. Each learns personal strategies to improve academic performance and foster greater independence. As students become aware of how to leverage their strengths and minimize weaknesses, they are empowered to be effective self-advocates and more confident, resilient, and strategic learners.

Teachers use a diagnostic-prescriptive approach to instruction and structured, systematic, and multi-sensory methods to build skill proficiency. Informed by annual standardized tests and frequent informal assessments, teachers write customized plans which outline goals and objectives for growth in language and learning skills. Regular communication with classroom teachers and individual conferences with students and parents provide each with frequent feedback on student progress.

ENGLISH

ENGLISH 9

The ninth-grade English curriculum focuses on structures of academic composition and analysis of literature and other texts. Literature study includes units on short stories and novels. Close reading and annotation strategies are used to enhance comprehension and students' understanding of the writer's craft. Additionally, students study standard literary vocabulary to analyze and evaluate these texts. Articles, speeches, essays, and other works of nonfiction are also read to improve critical thinking and writing skills. The composition component includes the review of basic parts of speech and sentence structures and emphasizes the use of increasingly complex sentences in writing. Students engage in a variety of writing assignments including narrative, descriptive, and persuasive writing.

ENGLISH 10

In this course, students will study myths, folktales, and fairy tales from around the world, as well as literary adaptations of traditional stories. We will explore the themes that are common across time and cultures, as well as the symbols and archetypes that repeatedly appear. Students will improve their academic writing skills by first developing original inferences that are based on their reading of texts, related research, background knowledge, and personal insights. They will then learn to build cogent, interesting thesis statements that can carry an essay. Further, students will participate in the tradition of storytelling by constructing their own Hero's Journey, and by researching and re-telling a folktale from their own family or culture. Each day we will also practice grammatical constructs and apply those lessons to our writing. Visual, audio, and kinesthetic approaches will be used throughout the course to deepen understanding.

ENGLISH 11

The eleventh-grade English curriculum develops students' composition proficiency, critical thinking, literary analysis, research skills, and oral communication in a seminar setting. In the literature curriculum, students will read a variety of fiction and non-fiction texts including plays, novels, and numerous short stories by American authors. Students are encouraged to use audio versions of the literature as they follow along in their texts. Students also employ a discipline-specific vocabulary to analyze and evaluate these texts. In composition, students follow a structured writing process to complete all lengthy assignments including a research paper and a persuasive essay. Additionally, they practice self-evaluation of writing tasks. Throughout the year, students demonstrate increased independence in writing, research, digital communication, and studying. Students will be introduced to the more rigorous demands they are likely to encounter as they pursue their education beyond high school.

ENGLISH 12

The twelfth grade English curriculum strengthens students' composition proficiency, critical thinking, literary analysis, research skills, and oral communication in a seminar setting. In the literature curriculum, students read non-fiction, novels, and dramas. Selections include *Never Let Me Go*, *Kindred*, *Hamlet*, and selected short stories and essays. Students also employ a discipline-specific vocabulary to analyze and evaluate these texts. In composition, students develop skills preparatory for first-year college writing courses. Students develop an individually effective writing process. Major writing assignments, including the research paper, are self-directed. They refine their ability to self-evaluate their written work. Throughout the year, students practice independence in reading assigned texts and studying. Students are expected to use audio support as needed. In final preparation for college English composition classes, students will learn to transfer their composition skills and understanding into the more rigorous demands they are likely to encounter as they pursue their education beyond high school.

ENGLISH 111: COLLEGE COMPOSITION I

Prerequisite: Cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher

Dual Enrollment College Composition I introduces students to critical thinking and the fundamentals of academic writing. Through the writing process, students refine topics; develop and support ideas; investigate, evaluate, and incorporate appropriate resources; edit for effective style and usage; and determine appropriate approaches for a variety of contexts, audiences, and purposes. Writing activities will include exposition and argumentation with at least one researched essay. English 111 has been designated as a "writing intensive" course. Students will produce texts that reflect critical thinking and knowledge of writing processes, rhetoric, and digital technologies.

CREATIVE WRITING

Creative Writing is semester long course, students will experiment with different forms of writing in order to find their voices as writers and storytellers. We begin with memory—composing quick sketches and vignettes of early memories, and then a longer memoir. Next, students will try their hands at fiction—using many of the same skills as for the memoir, but with the added challenge of imaging plot and perspective. Students are first tasked with creating an adaptation of a fairy tale, and next with creating a plot based on a story from the news. Lastly, student will experiment with poetry. Working with metaphor and abstraction, students will loosen up their use of language, only to be asked to write completely proper English sonnet afterward.

FILM STUDY

Film Study is a semester long course and offers students the opportunity to analyze, discuss, and write about movies. Students will learn about film techniques, equipping themselves with the relevant history, vocabulary, and analytical skills that they'll employ while viewing and discussing movies from a variety of genres. By analyzing the themes, artwork, and narratives of the selected films, students will have the opportunity to expand and enrich their own perspectives.

MATHEMATICS

ALGEBRA I: PART 1

The Algebra I: Part 1 curriculum offers an opportunity to work on algebraic concepts such as integer operations, algebraic expressions, graphing in the coordinate plane, functions, and solving one, two and multi-step equations. Students learn to use tools such as the TI 84 graphing calculator to more effectively solve problems and prepare for the second part of Algebra 1. This course allows for deep understanding as well as multiple levels and methods of practice and prepares students for Algebra 1: Part 2.

ALGEBRA I: PART 2

The Algebra 1: Part 2 curriculum continues to build on prior knowledge of algebraic concepts and completes the standard Algebra 1 course curriculum. Topics include writing and graphing linear equations, the coordinate plane, slope intercept form, polynomial operations, factoring of polynomials, and quadratic equations. Students continue to learn to use tools such as the TI 84 graphing calculator in order to enhance their depth of understanding. This course prepares students for Algebra 2.

ALGEBRA I

The primary focus in Algebra I is instruction on graphing linear equations and problem-solving techniques of various types of equations. Additional topics include operations with integers, systems of equations, operations with polynomials, and factoring. The students will discover how patterns and relationships are incorporated into the real number system.

GEOMETRY

During this course of study, students have the opportunity to explore and experience the concepts of geometry. Students use inductive reasoning to develop theorems about parallel lines, congruent triangles, quadrilaterals, and similar figures. Deductive reasoning skills are developed through solving practical problems and through exercises which require drawing conclusions based only on clues given. There is more opportunity in this course than in traditional geometry courses for students to work with concrete models and drawings and prove to themselves that certain concepts and theorems are true. These skills are developed further through problems requiring informal proof-writing. Throughout the year, students analyze figures and use their understanding of that type of figure to apply appropriate formulas. This requires a thorough understanding of the vocabulary of geometry.

ALGEBRA II

Topics from Algebra I are expanded and built upon in Algebra II. Topics include solving and graphing linear equations and inequalities, determining equations of lines, matrices, and polynomials. In the second semester, students focus on the study factoring polynomials, rational expressions, radicals, the quadratic formula, and parabolas. Throughout the year, students develop and practice problem solving skills.

PRE-CALCULUS

Pre-calculus is offered to students who have successfully completed Algebra I, Algebra II, and Geometry. This course prepares students for calculus by using methods emphasizing technology, real-world applications, and student discovery. Topics include a thorough study of elementary functions including polynomial, exponential, logarithmic, and trigonometric. Trigonometry will be a major focus of this course. The instruction in this course constantly calls on previous math knowledge and often leads to observations of patterns and relationships in math that the students have not noticed before. These observations are enhanced and expanded through the use of technology, including graphing calculators and computer applications.

CALCULUS

Calculus is offered to students who have successfully completed Algebra 1, Algebra 2, Geometry, and Pre-Calculus, or by permission of department. The major topics of this course are limits, derivatives, integrals, and the Fundamental Theorem of Calculus. Students investigate and analyze course topics using equations, graphs, tables, and words. Students will be stretched to give explanations both verbally and in writing. Precise vocabulary and mathematical symbols will be an important aspect of communicating mathematically.

STATISTICS

Statistics is offered to students who have successfully completed Algebra I. The course is designed to allow students to gain a mastery of statistical concepts through the year-long exploration of global issues and the gradual composition of a summative product. Students will learn how to collect, display, and analyze data in several different ways. They will study measures of center and variation, as well as regression and correlation. They will develop an understanding of probability theory, the Binomial Distribution, and the Normal Distribution. The students will study how information about samples relates to information about populations and, by using sample estimates, use sample data to draw conclusions about populations. Throughout the course, students will view their work, and the works of others, through a critical lens as they identify sources of error and bias and take strategic measures to minimize their impact.

HISTORY & SOCIAL STUDIES

WORLD HISTORY 9

In ninth-grade World History, students explore the emergence of the modern world from the Renaissance through early 20th century. Students examine the European Renaissance, the Protestant Reformation, and the exploration that connected Europe with civilizations in other parts of the world. The course continues with a study of the Scientific Revolution and the Enlightenment in Europe and how these changes and discoveries led to the Age of Revolutions. Students also examine how industrialism and nationalism around the world set the stage for the 20th century. The course utilizes a variety of multi-sensory instructional techniques and a wide range of materials. In order to improve research and writing skills, students complete at least one research project about a topic studied over the course of the year.

AMERICAN HISTORY 1

American History 1 is a survey course in American history from Jamestown through the dawn of the twentieth century. Students view American History in terms of our pursuit of five key ideals articulated in the Declaration of Independence: equality, rights, liberty, opportunity, and democracy. In the second half of the course students write a formal research paper. During presidential election years students also spend some time studying campaign issues and the positions the candidates have taken on those issues. Learning strategies include a variety of engaging, multisensory classroom activities. The primary objective of the course is to acquaint students with the major issues and events in American history so that they may develop their own well-reasoned, well-informed opinions and exercise capably their responsibilities as citizens.

AMERICAN HISTORY 2

American History 2 provides students with the opportunity to explore the history of the twentieth century. Students develop several key skills necessary for success in college-level courses: note taking, essay writing, and research. As part of the course, students work as individuals or in groups to prepare National History Day projects. These projects allow students to research a topic related to the annual theme and then present the results of that research in a documentary video, website, paper, or an original performance. Students are encouraged to make wide use of primary source materials in preparing their projects. In order to prepare students for the type of instruction they will encounter in college, students regularly take notes from a lecture-style lesson. Class activities also include group work and a variety of multi-sensory activities.

GOVERNMENT AND ECONOMICS

Government and Economics focuses on basic principles of government and economics in America. Students explore how our political system works and why it works the way it does. They explore both the workings of the three branches of government and the role individual citizens play in the political process. Students also gain an understanding of basic economic principles. In preparation for future education they refine academic skills, including taking notes from lecture and producing formal academic writing. Most importantly, they prepare themselves to take on the rights and responsibilities of citizens in a democracy. Class activities emphasize multi-sensory, interactive strategies and rely heavily on student involvement and initiative.

DUAL ENROLLMENT UNITED STATES HISTORY I

Prerequisite: Cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher

Dual Enrollment United States History is a college-level course offered to students with a strong interest in American history who would benefit from continuing to develop their reading and writing skills through the medium of a challenging academic course. The focus in class is on historical thinking skills rather than on acquisition of facts. Students use a college level textbook, which provides a deeper and richer body of knowledge than students have encountered in previous courses. The course explores the period from pre-Columbian America through Reconstruction. Class activities focus primarily upon reading, writing, and discussion rather than on note taking or information acquisition. Major topics include the Formative Years, Birth of the Republic and the Federalist Era, The Age of Jefferson and Jackson, The House Divided, and the Civil War and Reconstruction.

MODEL GENERAL ASSEMBLY

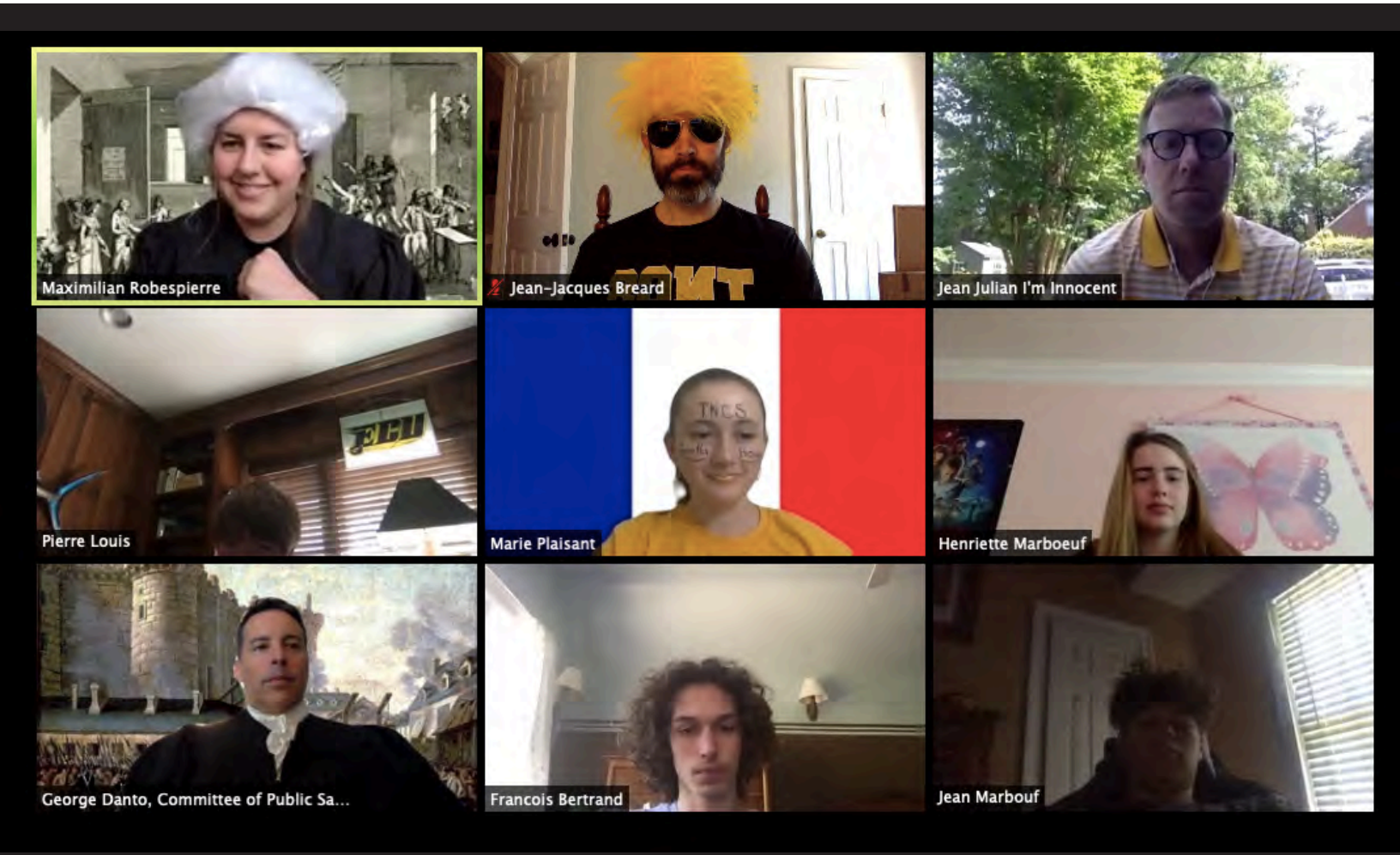
This semester long course explores Virginia's socio-economic and political concerns within the regions of Virginia and how the Commonwealth interacts with the federal government as well as the other states. Students will prepare to attend the Model General Assembly (MGA), sponsored by the Virginia YMCA, usually in March or April. The purpose of the MGA is to give students from all over Virginia a chance to simulate the legislative process by trying to get their legislation passed. The MGA class will come up with their own bill that will be presented to the MGA and hopefully signed by the Youth Governor in the spring. Topics may include media bias, gun control, climate change and global warming, terrorism, tariffs, etc., with a heavy emphasis on communication, writing, and mapping skills.

REACTING TO THE PAST

In this semester long course students explore significant historical events through role play and simulations. Students will learn about a variety of historical topics through gamified scenarios. Take on the role of a historical figure as we explore Athenian Democracy in 403 BCE, the Cuban Missile Crisis, or the July Crisis of 1914 (outbreak of WWI). Work to achieve your secret objectives and win the simulation. Students will also develop public speaking and debate skills while analyzing primary and secondary sources.

EXPLORING THE GREAT WAR

World War I changed the shape of the 20th century more than any other event. In this semester long course, students explore the major causes and consequences of the Great War through a variety of videos, primary and secondary sources, and simulations. Students will develop critical historical thinking skills while getting a closer look at a major event in history. Could WWI have been avoided? Who were the major combatants? Why did the peace treaty fail to prevent a second world war? Practice debates build source analysis skills, and more while exploring the answers to these questions.



SCIENCE

DESIGN THINKING IN STEM

At The New Community School, we want our students to make real world connections and understand how concepts can crossover and integrate between branches of study. Design Thinking in STEM blends science, technology, engineering and mathematics to explore real world problems. As we study the many topics relevant to life in the 21st century, students will be guided by the engineering design process, immerse in hands-on inquiry and open-ended exploration, apply math (relative to individual levels of proficiency), develop an awareness of STEM fields and occupations, and integrate a variety of science topics. The course also focuses on building crucial skills such as problem solving, creativity, communication, collaboration, critical thinking, resilience, metacognition, and research competences. Students use their experience in observation, data gathering, and examining of cause-and-effect relationships to interpret how things work in their daily lives. Major topics include: the engineering process, bridge design, rockets and the space program, digital communication, electricity generation, and combustion engines.

ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE

Environmental science is the study of patterns and processes in the natural world and their modification by human activity. This course will focus on teaching the students to think like an environmental scientist, understand how natural systems are affected by people, and give them an appreciation of their impact on the environment. This course will give students the skills necessary to address the environmental issues we are facing today by examining scientific principles and the application of those principles to natural systems. We will especially focus on the James River and the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. We will participate in activities that will have a positive impact on the environment and focus on how to be good stewards of our environment to sustain it for future generations.

CHEMISTRY

Prerequisite: Students currently enrolled in or who have successfully completed Algebra II

Chemistry is the study of how substances act and interact in the presence of various forms of energy, such as heat or electricity. The purpose of chemistry is to help students realize the role of chemistry in their personal lives, use chemical principles to think more intelligently about current issues that involve science and technology (thus developing decision-making skills), and develop a lifelong awareness of the potential and limitations of science and technology. Each unit in the course centers on a technological issue now confronting our society. The topic serves as a foundation for studying the chemistry needed to understand and analyze the issue. Each unit culminates in an activity designed to help students apply their chemical knowledge in investigating a problem, proposing solutions to the problem, and analyzing the effects of their solutions. This course is designed to help students understand basic chemical principles and master problem-solving skills. Chemical topics covered in the course include basic science concepts, measurements, atomic theory, bonding, stoichiometry, states of matter, solutions, acids and bases, and organic and nuclear chemistry.

BIOLOGY

Prerequisite: Students must have successfully completed Chemistry.

Biology introduces students to increasing levels of complexity in living systems. The course covers the structure and function of organisms and the interdependence of organisms in an ecosystem. Students learn the place of humans in relation to other living things. Specific areas of emphasis include the growth and development of organisms, the cycling of energy and matter in ecosystems, interactions of biotic and abiotic factors in an ecosystem, heredity, and biological evolution. Much of the information covered in class is supplemented with hands-on activities to strengthen understanding of the concepts presented. Lab participation is an integral part of this course and students will develop lab skills throughout the course.

PHYSICS

Prerequisite: Students must have successfully completed Chemistry.

Topics covered in Physics include forces and interactions, energy, and waves and electromagnetic radiation. While studying forces and interactions, students develop their understanding of Newton's Laws of Motion and the gravitational and electrostatic forces between objects. While studying energy, students learn that all energy can be traced to motions of particles or energy associated with the relative positions of particles. Students learn that wave properties and the interactions of electromagnetic radiation with matter can transfer information across long distances, store information, and be used to investigate nature on many scales. Models of electromagnetic radiation as either a wave of changing electric and magnetic fields or as particles are developed and used. Physics focuses on a more complex understanding of experimentation, the analysis of data, and the use of reasoning and logic to evaluate scientific evidence.

ANATOMY AND PHYSIOLOGY

Prerequisite: Students must have successfully completed Biology.

Topics covered include the basic organization of the body, diagnostic techniques and procedures, cellular and biochemical composition, organization of tissues, and several major body systems along with the impact of diseases on those systems. Students engage in topics and competencies related to truly understanding the structure and function of the human body. The students will use case studies, hands-on activities, and lab work to explore the concepts and engage with the material successfully.

HEALTH & WELLNESS

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Health and Wellness for 9th and 10th grade students continues to build on life-enhancing skills and behaviors covered in Middle School Health and Wellness classes. As students continue into adolescence, it becomes even more critical to provide tools that promote health, positive decision making, and self-management. Focusing on the physical, central nervous, and immune systems, we learn how each of these react to forces in the world around us and work to protect us in our daily lives. We will consider strategies to help us create and maintain lifelong habits that positively impact our mental, social, and emotional well-being. Key themes include mental health, addiction/substance abuse, sexual health, and self management.

In an ever-changing world, topics covered in Health and Wellness are flexible to address relevant needs, interests, concerns, and experiences of the individual, the school community, and the community at large. The heart of enhancing our student's health and wellness continues to be strengthening their ability to:

- Access and assess valid information, products and services
- Communicate and advocate effectively and appropriately
- Evaluate, analyze, and apply knowledge for self-management

UPPER SCHOOL PHYSICAL EDUCATION

The Physical Education program at TNCS provides all students the access to standards-based instruction that promotes health literacy and the motivation to engage in health-enhancing physical activity needed to achieve and maintain a balanced, healthy life. Upper School Physical Education recognizes the continuing dramatic changes in physical and social growth. The program focuses on the students' cooperation, open-mindedness, willingness, and self-expression in many activities such as basketball, volleyball, team handball, ultimate frisbee, and soccer.

Emphasis is placed on the understanding of rules of play, proper playing form, and game strategy. Sportsmanship and leadership are also fostered in each activity. In addition, emphasis is placed on acquiring an appreciation for the mastery of each sport/activity at various levels. The course also emphasizes stimulating exposure to other recreational and life sports, such as frisbee golf and yoga. Students develop a respect for healthy physical activity and recognize it as a necessary part of a healthy lifestyle.

FITNESS CONCEPTS

Prerequisite: Upper School Physical Education

This course is designed to give students the opportunity to learn fitness concepts and conditioning techniques used for obtaining optimal physical fitness. Students will benefit from comprehensive weight training and cardiorespiratory endurance activities. Students will learn the fundamentals of strength training, aerobic training, and overall fitness training and conditioning. The course format includes both lecture and activity sessions.

STRENGTH and CONDITIONING TRAINING

Prerequisite: Upper School Physical Education

This course is a continuation of the Be an 11! program presented by Bigger Faster Stronger, Inc. Students will work to achieve personal greatness by setting goals, tracking progress, and coaching each other to reach new heights. Students will learn specialized skills and concepts that lead to confidence and competency in a variety of training movements. Physical activity will include strength training, plyometrics, agility training, and mobility practice.

ADVANCED STRENGTH AND CONDITIONING TRAINING

Prerequisite: Strength and Conditioning Training

For students who have successfully completed the Strength and Conditioning course, Advanced Strength and Conditioning is a high intensity course designed to meet the needs of highly motivated students. Students engage in regular strength training including weight lifting along with other related activities. Expected outcomes include increased flexibility, strength, and overall power.

CARE AND PREVENTION OF ATHLETIC INJURIES

This course is designed to inform students about the basics of prevention, recognition, care, assessment, treatment and rehabilitation for injuries to physically active populations. NOTE: This course also has required practicum hours.

FINE & PERFORMING ARTS

MOVEMENT 101

In this class, students will gain a thorough understanding on the basics of Michael Chekhov techniques while also being able to express and challenge themselves through the art of theatre. Students practice the importance of everyday stretching, characterization, and different movement techniques, which will prepare them for their final project. In this movement course, the class will start every day with a series of warmups for each student to connect with and get into their artistic beings. Throughout this course, students will play fun theatre games, regularly self-evaluate, and stretch performance abilities to new norms. *This class is for students who have never taken theatre AND for those who have taken it before.

MOVEMENT 102

Prerequisite: Movement 101

In this class students will add to their prior knowledge of the Michael Chekhov technique while still being able to express and challenge themselves through the art of theatre. Students practice more advanced stretching, characterization activities, and different movement techniques, which will prepare them for their final project. Students learn how to tell stories through their specific movements rather than verbally presenting their emotions.

THEATRE EXPLORATORY

In this class, students will get a small intro into the basics of drama while also being able to express and challenge themselves through the art of theatre. Students will strengthen their acting and technical abilities by learning about improv, and all technical elements. Since this is an exploratory course, every day starts with a series of warmups for each student to connect with and get into their artistic beings. Throughout this course, students will regularly self-evaluate and stretch their performance abilities to new norms. This course will get students warmed up and prepared for the Upper School Theatre Performance/Tech Class offered in the spring. *This class is for students who have never taken theatre AND for those who have taken it before.

THEATRE PERFORMANCE / TECH

Prerequisite: Theatre Exploratory

In this class, students will get a crash course on the basics of drama while also being able to express and challenge themselves through the art of theatre. Students will gain an understanding of theatre directions, playwrighting, and characterization to help get them prepared for their final production. Students participate through hands-on projects and activities centered around costuming, lighting, time management, and picturization/set building. To tie everything together, students will learn fun theatre games, memorization techniques, show publicity, audition prep, and the art of selling yourself to theatre employers. *This class is for students who have never taken theatre AND for those who have taken it before.

TECH THEATRE

Prerequisite: Theatre Exploratory

In this class, students will get a refresher on the basics of drama while also being able to express and challenge themselves through the technical side of theatre. They will do a series of different projects and activities centered around costuming, lighting, time management, and picturization/set building. This will help prepare them for their final production. Students will work on creating a set for the school play. This will include painting, construction, lighting, wardrobe, and costuming.

MUSIC RECORDING STUDIO

Students will learn the fundamentals of music production and recording. Starting with pre-production, the course will focus on studio design, equipment setup, microphone use, and creating basic demos. Moving into the production phase, students will focus on recording techniques, how to use GarageBand software, applying effects, organizing and arranging tracks, time management, and developing critical listening skills. In the post-production phase, students will learn basic mixing and mastering techniques. In addition, at the heart of any great recording is a great song. Song writing will play a big part in this course. Students must have decent musical ability and be self-directed.

INTRODUCTION TO GUITAR

Introduction to Guitar is a beginner's course of fundamental guitar instruction. Students receive individual and group instruction in tuning, notes, scales, chords, tablature and strum charts, basic song structure, and small group performance. Students can progress at their own rates and are encouraged to focus on music and songs they find most appealing. The emphasis is on contemporary guitar music, not classical guitar nor standard notation. In addition, students have opportunities to try other instruments such as keyboard, percussion, banjo, and bass guitar. Students with more experience or skill can also take the course but will be more self-guided.

DRAWING AND PAINTING I

Drawing and Painting is a semester-long course that is broken into two distinct quarters. Students will spend the first quarter in an introductory drawing workshop. They will develop their skill to see in order to draw. Students will primarily use graphite and create art works from direct observation. They will maintain a sketchbook that will continually track their growth with exercises and assignments specifically designed to engage right brain thinking. The second quarter will focus on painting with an emphasis on acrylic techniques. Students will complete works from direct observation, imagination, and photographic reproduction. Color theory, aesthetics, and famous painters will be discussed in order to guide students towards independent and purposeful creative behaviors.

DRAWING AND PAINTING II

Prerequisite: Drawing and Painting I

Drawing and Painting: Level 2 is a semester-long course that allows students to build upon and grow basic skills previously cultivated in the level 1 course. Students will have the opportunity to choose a specific drawing medium they would like to master at a higher level. Aesthetic understanding and refinement of various techniques will be measured in formative and summative assessments by both student and teacher. Final summative projects will assess student's progression at higher levels of aesthetic and technical understanding within the various art mediums.

CERAMICS

Ceramics is a year-long course that will teach students how to manipulate clay in order to create functional and sculptural works of art. Students will learn essential skills required to make functional and attractive works. The course will primarily focus on hand building methods, plaster molds used for form, and surface design techniques. Students will have the opportunity to try the basics of wheel throwing or grow their existing skills in this area. This course will teach the artistic behaviors necessary to plan and sequence a successful art project.

FIBER ARTS + POLYMER CLAY I

In Fiber Arts + Polymer Clay students will learn how to manipulate a variety of art materials. The class focuses mainly on the fiber art of needle felting in both 2D and 3D form. Needle felting allows an artist to transform wool into a desired form using a special needle. Embroidery, the decorative fiber art of embellishing a fabric with stitches, will also be taught. Lastly, students will learn basic techniques of polymer modeling clay. Polymer modeling clay is a plastic-based clay that can be hardened in a home oven. This course will allow students to explore tactile and unique art materials that are applicable in both in-person and distance-learning formats.

FIBER ARTS + POLYMER CLAY: II

Prerequisite: Fiber Arts + Polymer Clay I

In Fiber Arts + Polymer Clay: Level 2 students will expand and refine the skill sets developed in the Level I course. Student will have the opportunity to choose a specific fiber arts medium covered in the previous course that they would like to master at a higher level. Aesthetic understanding and refinement of various techniques will be measured in formative and summative assessments by both student and teacher. Students will design and execute projects that showcase their individual artistic voice. Students will review and then expand on techniques of polymer modeling clay, moving from basic to intermediate/advanced techniques. Final summative projects will assess student's progression at higher levels of aesthetic and technical understanding within the various art mediums.

DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY I

Students will learn first-hand how to operate a DSLR camera and will be introduced to the fundamentals of photography composition and design elements. We will train our eyes to see the world through a viewfinder and archive fleeting moments of life. Students will understand functions that can alter the meaning and create artistic expression in a photograph. Students will organize and manage a library of photographs and be able to edit their photographs to enhance the quality and be ready to print. Students will be introduced to and use a variety of editing programs.

DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY II

Prerequisite: Digital Photography Part I

Digital Photography II will focus on the creation of individual art works using the camera as the primary tool to capture light although alternative modes of image creation will also be explored. The class will dive deeper into the process of creation of artwork rather than the technicalities of the camera and the technical aspects of the class will focus more on the digital manipulation of images, The student does not need a camera to take digital photography 2, but will be expected to take photos outside of the class time at home. Students will learn standard editing tools, as well as creative ways to alter and combine images. In this class, students will learn to critique both their own and other students' artwork using the describe, interpret, and evaluate model. The study of both art history and photo history will serve as inspiration for a project that concentrates on the students personal passions.

YEARBOOK

The yearbook elective course is designed to instruct students in the fundamentals of graphic design and the processes associated with print production with the ultimate aim of producing *Dimensions*, the TNCS yearbook. Students will take and edit photographs, write headlines and captions, learn the elements of eye-catching design, and fit text and photos into layouts using the yearbook program.

CAREER & TECHNOLOGY

PERSONAL FINANCE

Personal Finance is a quarter-long required course for sophomores designed to improve students' financial literacy. Centered around the theme of understanding the basics of personal finances, it focuses on gaining a better understanding of banking basics, saving and investing, earning income and paying taxes, and the benefits and process of preparing a budget. Students will be educated and motivated to adopt responsible financial habits.

CAREER EXPLORATION

Career Exploration is a quarter-long required course for sophomores. This class is exploratory in nature with the goal of increasing students' self-knowledge, career awareness, and career preparation. Students will develop personal learning plans/career learning plans utilizing current career resources, and hands-on activities.

JUNIOR SEMINAR

The Junior Seminar is a semester-long required course for juniors. Centered around the theme of preparing for post-secondary education, it focuses on SAT preparation and exploration of college and career options. Students work on strategies to improve their performance on the SAT. Students practice questions in the math and evidence-based reading and writing subtests to become familiar with the directions, format, and types of questions. They work with the college counselor to explore college programs and services.

ROBOTICS 9-12

The VEX Robotics elective course provides students opportunities to develop skills in engineering, coding, programming, innovation, and collaboration, with the aim of competing in regional VEX robotics demonstrations and tournaments. Students work as a team to design, build, program, and operate a robot. The course emphasizes use of the engineering design process. Students first identify the important characteristics of the robot to be designed. Then, they ideate, implement, and test ideas to develop the best possible robot design. Some students may choose to "specialize" in robot design, competitive strategy, or coding and programming, however, all students in the class will be expected to participate in all aspects of the program and develop basic skills in designing, building, and programming the robot.

ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING

In this course, students learn about the basics of electricity and electrical components. They also learn the practical skill of soldering safely and effectively. Students then apply their knowledge and skills to a project of their choice. This class encourages collaboration, problem solving, and creativity.

INTRODUCTION TO APP DEVELOPMENT

The Introduction to App Development course introduces students to the world of app development and the basics of Swift and Xcode. Students will get practical experience with the tools, techniques, and concepts needed to build a basic iOS app from scratch. At the end of the course, students will build one of two basic iOS apps.

APP DEVELOPMENT I

Prerequisite: Intro to App Development

App Development 1 is designed for students who want to expand their coding skills. Students will build on their knowledge of Swift and UIKit through hands-on labs and guided projects. By the end of the course they'll be able to build a fully functioning app of their own design. Computer Programming, Introduction to App Development, or teacher approval is required to take this course.

APP DEVELOPMENT II

Prerequisite: App Development I

This course is designed for students with working knowledge of Swift and Xcode to expand their skill set and apply advanced techniques to student-designed projects. Students utilize problem-solving techniques and participate in hands-on activities to learn how to build layouts, create effective user interfaces, and utilize the storage/retrieval process for data. Students will also understand the ethics issues of intellectual property as it relates to mobile application development. By the end of the course, students will effectively create, debug, and test applications for mobile devices and develop a portfolio of student-designed work to share with potential colleges or employers. App Development 1 and teacher approval is required to take this course.

ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY PROJECTS

Advanced Technology Projects is for students who want to plan, create, and display digital projects. Students will learn to plan and execute digital projects that utilize a variety of tools and software. The teacher will serve as a facilitator and provide support for students as they execute projects. Student products will be displayed digitally. This course is open to students who demonstrate a high level of interest in computers.

ONLINE CAREER & TECHNOLOGY OPTIONS

Online coursework will be offered through Global Online Academy (GOA) in partnership with TNCS. Students enrolled in GOA courses have a dedicated instructor and community of peers, just like a traditional course. Courses take place online and mostly asynchronously. This means students can complete their coursework anytime, as long as they meet the deadlines and due dates set by their instructors. Students will have a dedicated time within their school day to complete their online coursework. Using GOA's online platform, they will communicate with their teacher, complete weekly coursework, and participate in discussions with classmates. All GOA courses are led by qualified teachers actively guiding students by interacting in class discussions and private discussions with each student, along with grading assignments. Teachers have synchronous check-ins with students on a regular basis.

ARCHITECTURE

In this course, students build an understanding of and apply skills in various aspects of architectural design. While gaining key insights into the roles of architectural analysis, materials, 3D design, and spatial awareness, students develop proficiency in architectural visual communication. We begin by learning the basic elements of architectural design to help analyze and understand architectural solutions. Through digital and physical media, students develop an understanding of the impact building materials have on design. At each stage of the course, students interact with peers from around the globe, learning and sharing how changes in materials, technology, and construction techniques lead to the evolution of contemporary architectural style and visual culture.

ARTS ENTREPRENEURSHIP

In this course, aspiring visual artists, designers, filmmakers, musicians, and other creatives will learn how to find success in the dynamic fields of their choosing. Students will learn about arts careers and organizations by attending virtual events and interviewing art practitioners, entrepreneurs, and administrators. Beyond exploring trajectories for improving their crafts, students will build skills in networking and personal branding while examining case studies of a variety of artistic ventures—some highly successful and some with teachable flaws. Using real-world examples of professional and emerging creatives and arts organizations, students will gain a better understanding of the passion and dedication it takes to have a successful creative career.

BIOETHICS

Ethics is the study of what one should do as an individual and as a member of society. Bioethics refers to the subset of this field that focuses on medicine, public health, and the life sciences. In this course, students explore contemporary, pressing issues in bioethics, including the "right to die," policies around vaccination and organ transplantation, competence to consent to care, human experimentation and animal research, and genetic technologies. Through reading, writing, research, and discussion, students will explore the fundamental concepts and questions in bioethics, deepen their understanding of biological concepts, strengthen their critical-reasoning skills, and learn to engage in respectful dialogue with people whose views may differ from their own. The course culminates with a student-driven exploration into a particular bioethical issue, recognizing the unique role that bioethics plays within the field of ethics.

BUSINESS PROBLEM SOLVING

How could climate change disrupt your production and supply chains or impact your consumer markets? Will tariffs help or hurt your business? How embedded is social media in your marketing plan? Is your company vulnerable to cybercrime? What 21st century skills are you cultivating in your leadership team? Students in this course will tackle real-world problems facing businesses large and small in today's fast changing global marketplace where radical reinvention is on the minds of many business leaders. Students will work collaboratively and independently on case studies, exploring business issues through varied lenses including operations, marketing, human capital, finance and risk management as well as sustainability.

COMPUTER SCIENCE - COMPUTATIONAL THINKING

This Computational Thinking Course focuses on solving problems, designing systems, and understanding human behavior. It has applications not only in computer science, but also a myriad other fields of study. This introductory level course centers on thinking like a computer scientist, especially when it comes to understanding how computer scientists define and solve problems. (This course is the prerequisite to all computer science coursework.)

COMPUTER SCIENCE - GAME DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT

Prerequisite: Computational Thinking

In this course, students design and develop games through hands-on practice. Comprised of a series of "game jams," the course asks students to solve problems and create content, developing the design and technical skills necessary to build their own games. The first month of the course is dedicated to understanding game design through game designer Jesse Schell's "lenses": different ways of looking at the same problem and answering questions that provide direction and refinement of a game's theme and structure. During this time, students also learn how to use Unity, the professional game development tool they use throughout the class. They become familiar with the methodologies of constructing a game using such assets as graphics, sounds, and effects, and controlling events and behavior within the game using the C# programming language.

CYBER SECURITY

Cyber criminals leverage technology and human behavior to attack our online security. This course explores the fundamentals of and vulnerabilities in the design of computers, networks, and the internet. Course content includes the basics of computer components, connectivity, virtualization, and hardening. Students will learn about network design, Domain Name Services, and TCP/IP. They will understand switching, routing and access control for internet devices, and how denial of service, spoofing and flood attacks work. Basic programming introduced in the course will inform hashing strategies, while an introduction to ciphers and cryptography will show how shared-key encryption works for HTTPS and TLS traffic. Students will also explore the fundamentals of data forensics and incident response protocols. The course includes analysis of current threats and best practice modelling for cyber defense, including password complexity, security, management, breach analysis, and hash cracking. Computational thinking and programming skills developed in this course will help students solve a variety of cyber security issues.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN A GLOBAL CONTEXT

How does an entrepreneur think? What skills must entrepreneurs possess to remain competitive and relevant? What are some of the strategies that entrepreneurs apply to solve problems? In this experiential course, students develop an understanding of entrepreneurship in today's global market; employ innovation, design, and creative solutions for building a viable business model; and learn to develop, refine, and pitch a new startup.

INTRODUCTION TO LEGAL THINKING

This course uses a case-based approach to give students a practical look into the professional lives of lawyers and legal thinking. By studying and debating a series of real legal cases, students will sharpen their ability to think like lawyers who research, write and speak persuasively. The course will focus on problems that lawyers encounter in daily practice, and on the rules of professional conduct case law.

GAME THEORY

Do you play games? Do you ever wonder if you're using "the right" strategy? What makes one strategy better than another? In this course, we explore a branch of mathematics known as game theory, which answers these questions and many more. Game theory has many applications as we face dilemmas and conflicts every day, most of which we can treat as mathematical games. We consider significant global events from fields like diplomacy, political science, anthropology, philosophy, economics, and popular culture.

INTRODUCTION TO PSYCHOLOGY

What does it mean to think like a psychologist? In Introduction to Psychology, students explore three central psychological perspectives in order to develop a multi-faceted understanding of what thinking like a psychologist encompasses:

- The behavioral
- The cognitive
- The sociocultural

The additional question of "How do psychologists put what they know into practice?" informs study of the research methods in psychology, the ethics surrounding them, and the application of those methods to practice.

MEDICAL PROBLEM SOLVING

In this medical program for high school students, participants collaboratively solve medical mystery cases, similar to the approach used in many medical schools. Students use problem-solving techniques in order to understand and appreciate relevant medical/biological facts as they confront the principles and practices of medicine, and enhance their critical thinking skills through:

- Examining data
- Drawing conclusions
- Making diagnoses
- Treating patients

Students explore anatomy and physiology pertaining to medical scenarios and gain an understanding of the disease process, demographics of disease, and pharmacology. Additional learning experiences in this high school summer medical program include studying current issues in health and medicine, interviewing a patient, and creating a new mystery case.

MEDICAL PROBLEM SOLVING 2

Prerequisite: Medical Problem Solving

Medical Problem Solving II is an extension of the problem-based approach in Medical Problem Solving I. While collaborative examination of medical case studies remain at the center of the course, MPSIIMPS II approaches medical cases through the perspectives of global medicine, medical ethics, and social justice. The course examines cases not only from around the world but also in students' local communities. Additionally, the course addresses the challenges patients face because of a lack of access to health care, often a result of systemic discrimination and inequity along with more general variability of health care resources in different parts of the world. All students in MPS II participate in the Catalyst Conference, a GOA-wide conference near the end of the semester where students from many GOA courses create and publish presentations on course-specific topics. For their projects, students use all of the lenses from the earlier parts of the course to choose and research a local topic of high interest. Further, their topics enable identifying a local medical problem, using local sources, and generating ideas for promoting change.

INDEPENDENT STUDY

An Independent Study elective course is offered to motivate well-organized sophomores, juniors, and seniors. Students' pursuits must be academic in nature and may include research, writing, reading, intensive study in a performing or visual art, and other similar endeavors. Independent studies are semester-long, .5 credit courses conducted during the school year and are reflected on a student's transcript with the course title "Independent Study" followed by the department sponsoring the study (e.g., "Independent Study: History). Students must apply for independent study, with approval by the end of the semester that precedes the one for which the study is proposed. The TNCS Leadership Team, along with department chairs, will consider the proposal and will approve or deny the student's enrollment in the study.

An independent study proposal must contain the following elements:

- a timeline that specifies when student-faculty sponsor meetings will occur and how they will be used,
- a description of the skills that the study will cultivate, and
- a description of the product that the student will create.

At the conclusion of the semester in which the independent study takes place, the student must make a final presentation in which s/he

- presents the final product,
- explains the methods used in creating the product,
- reflects upon how the study cultivated the skills that the student identified in the proposal, and
- presents a final list of scholarly sources used while engaged in the study.