

## Course Descriptions – 2025-2026

### **Composition: Essays (Fall)**

Students learn and produce the different styles of essay writing, including narrative, descriptive, persuasive. Students study English grammar (as needed) and effective expression with attention to recognizing and employing appropriately the various levels of English usage, thinking logically, writing effectively, editing, evaluating content and intent of written English, and punctuating correctly. MLA style is the focus of our composition style since it is used by many colleges. Students will be given assignments for the following week. Students are responsible for completing assignments before class time. This way we can discuss and correct the current assignment and prepare for the next class time.

#### Required Texts:

1. *Writer's Inc.: A Student Handbook for Writing and Learning* (Barnes & Noble, Amazon)
2. *Painless Writing*. Jeffrey Strausser, Barron's: 2001. (Barnes & Noble, Amazon)

Course Credit: ½ English credit (12 weeks)

### **Composition: Research (Spring)**

Purpose: Students select a topic of choice, narrow down the topic, research that topic, and write a research paper in MLA style complete with citations and bibliography. The MLA writing style is studied in-depth and applied to the research process. Students prepare a topic, note cards, rough drafts, outline and works cited page. Students study and complete selected advanced grammar and spelling exercises appropriate to their needs. Students maintain a composition notebook complete with hours studied independently, information discussed in class, research (as needed), notes, handouts, tests, rough drafts, and final drafts. This is a college prep level class and students are expected to behave and prepare accordingly.

#### Required Texts:

1. *Writer's Inc.: A Student Handbook for Writing and Learning* (Barnes & Noble, Amazon)
2. *Painless Writing*. Jeffrey Strausser, Barron's: 2001. (Barnes & Noble, Amazon)

Course Credit: ½ English credit (12 weeks)

### **Honors British Literature- designed for high school juniors and seniors (Both semesters)**

Course Description: This class focuses on the literature of Great Britain and the British Empire. Students analyze literary works as unique literary structures, as representatives of a particular type of literary genre, as examples of a literary style or movement, and as products of history and culture. Students study epic, satirical, lyric, dramatic, and fictional pieces. Using fiction and non-fiction, students integrate critical thinking skills with effective written analysis and argument and draw distinctions between inferences and assumptions. Students gain an understanding of the effect of diction, metaphor, connotative, and denotative language. Students produce a research paper or literary review in MLA style. Literature selections begin with the dawn of Britain and span the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Course requires reading, analyzing and responding to literature selections through essays, class discussion and book reviews.

#### Texts:

1. Instructor provided: Glencoe Literature Study Guides, Sonlight Curriculum – *Survey of British Literature*;
2. Required texts: selections including: *Beowulf*, *Canterbury Tales*, *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, *Midsummer Night's Dream*, *A Christmas Carol*, *A Passage to India*, *Hound of the Baskervilles*, *Murder on the Orient Express*, and others.
3. *Writer's Inc.: A Student Handbook for Writing and Learning* (Barnes & Noble, Amazon).

Course Credit: 1 credit recommended college preparatory English (2 semesters- 30 weeks)

### **American Government**

The study of American Government enables students to gain an understanding of the need for government, the basis for the American government and the roles and responsibilities of government. Students explore how the founders struggled with defining the American government, examine the Constitution, Declaration of Independence and other founding documents, emphasizing the content of the Constitution and its meaning; as well as investigating the working of the government and the role of the Citizen in the governmental process. This is a course in the government of the United States and not a course in politics (we will discuss the differences). The course will consist of a weekly lecture and discussion. Each student is responsible for weekly assignments, an ongoing current events project, quizzes, and a semester project.

Credit: 15 Weeks; 1 1/2 hours per week = 22 1/2 hours class time + 3 hours/week homework = 45 hours = ± 67 1/2 hours = 1/2 credit - required social studies

Required texts:

1. *SparkNotes: American Government, A Complete Course in a Book*. Spark Publishing 2007. ISBN-10: 1-4114-0516-1; ISBN-13: 978-1-4114-0516.
2. *Painless Government* - Jeffery Strausser
3. *We Hold These Truths*, Ray Notgrass, editor (available at notgrass.com), ISBN #1-933410-42-6. 1-59337-055-5 OR newer edition (hardcover).

**Economics**

Economics is a semester long course introducing basic economic principles and current economic issues with a focus on the American economy. This course is a brief overview of the basic principles and concepts that make up the discipline of economics. The course will also include an introduction to basic personal financial principles as well as study of the biblical view of wealth. Students will examine components of the American economy such as price, competition, business and banking institutions, as well as examine issues related to the economy as a whole through employment and labor issues, the role of the government in the economy and selected topics on global economics.

Required texts:

1. *Whatever Happened to Penny Candy?* by Richard Marbury, Bluestocking Press, 2004.
2. *Economics: A Free Market Reader*, edited by Jane Williams and Kathryn Daniels, Bluestocking Press.
3. Instructor Provided Materials: *Economics Essentials*, McGraw-Hill. Selected chapters.

Credit: 15 weeks: see description for Government for approximate number of hours; 1/2 credit required  
Social Studies

**Advanced Composition: Responding to Literature (for high school juniors and seniors only) (Both semesters) Excellent for students preparing for Dual Enrollment English courses!**

Course Description: This course is designed to enhance and refine students' writing skills and ability to critique college-level literature. The literature list is diverse. In addition to developing analytical skills, students will engage in philosophical essay writing analyzing thoughts, society, and life itself, poetry, and short stories. Essays include critical analysis and argument, creative compositions, and eclectic essays. Students are expected to focus, limit, and organize ideas in coherent essay form with the goal of preparing for writing in other disciplines. Their study of literature is designed to enhance their appreciation of various genres of literature and expand their scope of issues concerning personal values, ethics, and social awareness. Students produce a literary research paper in MLA style. This course meets the requirements of a course of rigor and is designed as an Honors class.

Required Texts:

1. *Introduction to Reading and Writing* 6<sup>th</sup> Ed., by Edgar V. Roberts and Henry E. Jacobs (this text is extremely expensive if you buy the newer editions; I use the 6th edition which brings the cost down to just a few dollars)
2. *Write for College: A Student Handbook*, Sebranek, Kemper, and Meyer. ISBN #978-0-689-00031-3

Course Credit: 1 credit (30 weeks - 2 semesters)

**Speech**

Fall: 15 weeks; Prerequisite: NONE; course stands alone

Required texts: *None – instructor provides materials*

Course Description: The Speech course is a one-semester course equaling ½ Carnegie unit credit. The goal of this course is to build important communication skills that will enhance all aspects of the individual's life. Students will be taught how to acquire, analyze and evaluate information in order to organize effective arguments and be given opportunity to practice making those arguments. Students will begin with informal speeches developing skills to take them into more formal public speaking. Debate is introduced in the latter half of this course with the intent of leading students into the spring semester Debate class. Skill in debate helps the individual to think logically, clearly, and quickly. Students are taught to identify flawed reasoning and argue persuasively. Debate also contributes to the student's understanding of himself and his confidence in his ability to analyze issues and communicate effectively. The Speech class focuses primarily on great speeches, forms of debate, recognizing fallacies, and beginning debate techniques and format.

Credit: ½ credit (elective)

**Debate**

Spring: 15 weeks; Prerequisite: Speech

Required Texts: *None – instructor provides materials*

Course Description: The Debate course is a one-semester course equaling ½ Carnegie unit credit. The goal of this course is to build important communication skills that will enhance all aspects of the individual's life. Students are encouraged to acquire, analyze and evaluate information in order to organize effective arguments and be given opportunity to practice making those arguments. Skill in debate helps the individual to think logically, clearly, and quickly. Students are taught to identify flawed reasoning and argue persuasively. Debate also contributes to the student's understanding of himself and his confidence in his ability to analyze issues and communicate effectively. Debate delves more deeply into the form of debate and the art of argument, continuing with the study of fallacies. Students work together in research and debate teams.

The course utilizes five primary teaching methods:

1. Lectures/demos about debating and debate theory.
2. Class discussions focusing around the topic we will be debating, argumentative concepts, and debate methods.
3. Students will give short, unprepared speeches about very simple ideas.
4. Students will practice debates against each other in pre-arranged teams. These debates will use and be supplemented by research done by students as well as material supplied by the instructor.
5. Students will engage in research on various topics.

Credit: ½ credit (elective)

**Creative Writing**

Course Description: Creative Writing is designed to aid students in their creative expression and to improve writing skills at the secondary level. The purpose of this class is to encourage students to cultivate the habits, attitudes and flexibility of a professional writer in a professional writing community. Students explore different genres and elements of creative writing in a workshop-style setting, i.e. working independently and in groups, critiquing work. Students concentrate on short story writing. The Fall Semester concentrates on the writing process itself; the Spring Semester delves into the revision process. The writers provide support for their fellow writers and learn to revise their work using concrete, sensory details, appropriate choice of diction, syntax, purpose, and audience. Students produce work that reflects the process of writing and is publishable to various venues, both online and hard copy.

Texts: Recommended, but not required: *Writer's Inc.*, Sebranek.

Credit: 1 credit English elective; 15 weeks/semester