



# Academic Catalog

## 2017-18<sup>1</sup>

### **INTRODUCTION and MISSION STATEMENT**

***Villa Maria Academy, a Catholic college-preparatory school for girls, rooted in the charism of the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, empowers young women to lead lives of spiritual growth, intellectual inquiry and Christian service***

*As Villa Maria Academy approaches its sesquicentennial in 2022, the Academic program looks to ensure a premium 21<sup>st</sup> Century educational experience that challenges each student to develop her God-given potential through:*

- *Strengthening the current academic program to support learning that is collaborative, creative, global in scope, as well as interdisciplinary and technologically appropriate*
- *Cultivating an environment where the technology infrastructure and learning space support a 21<sup>st</sup> Century academic program*
- *Implementing an effective faculty professional learning community that provides the time and resources for teachers to grow in their knowledge of innovative, research-based pedagogy*

*Propelled by its mission of educating young women to be critical thinkers, creative problem solvers, and collaborative citizens with strong communication skills, the course of studies is arranged to equip the student with the competence and skills necessary to support that mission and to continue her learning through life. Villa Maria requires students to meet a sequence of coursework in a core canon of subjects: Theology, English, Mathematics, Science, World Language, Social Studies, Fine Arts, Technology, Physical Education and Health & Wellness. Villa Maria students are also required to participate in a Capstone experience that is the broadest application of their learning and research skills. These academic requirements are enhanced by required annual retreats and service learning requirements.*

*Our students are expected to pursue a course of study that will continually reinforce acquisition of knowledge at the highest levels, with a mind toward preparation for a learning terrain that is defined by tomorrow's limitless boundaries of technology and innovation. Coursework at every level of instruction requires a learner who can think and work independently and collaboratively. Honors courses are taught at an accelerated pace to challenge the academically competent student who is able to pursue in-depth study. For those students ready - and able - to do college level work, 23 Advanced Placement courses are provided. In order to fully benefit from these accelerated courses, the student is required to take responsibility for extensive outside content preparation. Traditional coursework is supported by opportunities for occupational experiences and research in addition to direct opportunities for test preparation.*

---

<sup>1</sup> Villa Maria reserves the right to modify course delivery as the schedule dictates.

*The 2015-16 school year marked a move toward substantive daily schedule change, highlighted by longer class periods and opportunities for independent study time with the goal of meaningful learning at higher levels of retention and application. The 2017-18 school calendar was devised to support current research in instructional efficacy and provides periodic breaks that best support brain development during the adolescent years.*

*The annual Academic Catalog has been prepared to help the student select her courses for the upcoming school year as part of an overall match with college and major interests in preparation for career planning. With the guidance of teachers, counselors, administrators and with the approval of parents, course selection decisions are made. The student is expected to continue in those courses so elected for the entire year.*

*With the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the tireless efforts of a dedicated faculty, and the consistently effective study of the student, these years at Villa Maria afford an excellent opportunity to build a solid foundation for a successful college education and the attainment of life's goals.*

## Contents

COURSE SELECTION	10
COURSE REQUESTS	10
ACCREDITATION and AFFILIATIONS	10
GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS	10
COURSE LEVELS	11
EVALUATION SYSTEM	13
ENTRANCE AND PLACEMENT CRITERIA/DETERMINATION OF THE CURRICULAR PATH	13
QUALITY POINT AVERAGE	13
INTENSIVE SCHEDULING, SEMESTER SCHEDULING and REPORTING OF ACADEMIC PROGRESS	13
CYBER DAYS' POLICY	14
HONOR ROLL	15
INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY	15
ATTENDANCE	16
LONG TERM ABSENCE POLICY	16
POLICY FOR MAINTAINING CREDIT IN THE CASE OF LONG TERM ABSENCE	17
CHRONIC ABSENCE	17
FAILING GRADES AND ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY	18
RANK IN CLASS	18
SENIOR CAPSTONE PROJECT	18
GRADUATION	18
COURSE OFFERINGS	19
THEOLOGY	19
ENGLISH	22
SOCIAL STUDIES	27
WORLD LANGUAGES	32
MATHEMATICS	37
SCIENCE	42
TECHNOLOGY & MEDIA SERVICES	46
FINE ARTS	48
SENIOR CAPSTONE AND EXPERIENTIAL COURSEWORK	56

**CURRICULUM SEQUENCE OF COURSES**

<b>DEPARTMENT</b>	<b>GRADE 9 COURSE (LEVEL)</b>	<b>GRADE 10 COURSE (LEVEL)</b>	<b>GRADE 11 COURSE (LEVEL)</b>	<b>GRADE 12 COURSE (LEVEL)</b>
<p><b>THEOLOGY</b> (4 YEAR REQUIREMENT)  NOTE: ATTENDANCE AT ANNUAL CLASS RETREAT IS MANDATORY.</p>	<p><b>THEOLOGY 1 (CP)</b> SEMESTER 1: OVERVIEW OF CATHOLICISM SEMESTER 2: HEBREW SCRIPTURES</p>	<p><b>THEOLOGY 2 (CP)</b> SEMESTER 1: NEW TESTAMENT SEMESTER 2: CHURCH HISTORY</p>	<p><b>THEOLOGY 3 (CP)</b> SEMESTER 1: SOCIAL JUSTICE SEMESTER 2: MORALITY</p>	<p><b>THEOLOGY 4 (CP, H)</b> CP THEOLOGY 4: ONE SEMESTER OF ANY OF THE FOLLOWING:  SPIRITUALITY IN PRACTICE  WORLD RELIGIONS  HONORS WORLD RELIGIONS  ONE SEMESTER OF MARRIAGE AND LIFE CHOICES  HONORS THEOLOGY 4: APOLOGETICS/MARRIAGE AND LIFE CHOICES</p>
<p><b>ENGLISH</b> (4 YEAR REQUIREMENT)</p>	<p><b>ENGLISH 1 (CP, H)</b></p>	<p><b>ENGLISH 2 (CP, H)</b></p>	<p><b>ENGLISH 3 (CP, H, AP)</b> CREATIVE WRITING<sup>2</sup> (CP) PUBLIC SPEAKING (CP)<sup>3</sup></p>	<p>AP LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION  SENIOR ENGLISH SEMINARS (MUST CHOOSE 2-SEE CATALOG FOR DETAILS)  MODERN AMERICAN LITERATURE  THE DEVELOPMENT OF GENRE FICTION  SHORT STORY  HONORS 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY DRAMA  HONORS WOMEN IN</p>

<sup>2</sup> Preference for electives provided only when core requirements are met.

<sup>3</sup> Preference for electives provided only when core requirements are met.

<b>DEPARTMENT</b>	<b>GRADE 9 COURSE (LEVEL)</b>	<b>GRADE 10 COURSE (LEVEL)</b>	<b>GRADE 11 COURSE (LEVEL)</b>	<b>GRADE 12 COURSE (LEVEL)</b>
				<b>LITERATURE</b> <b>HONORS ISOLATION VS.          BELONGING</b> <b>CREATIVE WRITING (CP)<sup>2</sup></b> <b>PUBLIC SPEAKING (CP)<sup>3</sup></b>
<b>SOCIAL STUDIES          (3 YEAR          REQUIREMENT<sup>4</sup>)</b>	<b>WORLD          HISTORY 1 (CP,          H)</b> <b>PRE-AP          WORLD 1</b>	<b>WORLD HISTORY 2          (CP, H)</b> <b>AP WORLD HISTORY</b>	<b>UNITED STATES          HISTORY (CP, H)</b> <b>AP UNITED STATES          HISTORY</b> <b>ELECTIVES (CP):</b> <b>US GOVERNMENT</b> <b>ECONOMICS</b> <b>PSYCHOLOGY</b> <b>GEOGRAPHY</b> <b>CRIMINAL JUSTICE</b> <b>AP/HON          MICROECONOMICS</b> <b>AP EUROPEAN          HISTORY</b> <b>AP PSYCHOLOGY</b>	<b>ELECTIVES (CP):</b> <b>US GOVERNMENT</b> <b>ECONOMICS</b> <b>PSYCHOLOGY</b> <b>GEOGRAPHY</b> <b>CRIMINAL JUSTICE</b> <b>AP/HON          MICROECONOMICS</b> <b>AP EUROPEAN HISTORY</b> <b>AP US GOVERNMENT          AND POLITICS</b> <b>AP PSYCHOLOGY</b>

<sup>4</sup> Beginning with the Class of 2020, Students will fulfill a sequence that includes World History 1 & 2, American History, Government and Economics.

DEPARTMENT	GRADE 9 COURSE (LEVEL)	GRADE 10 COURSE (LEVEL)	GRADE 11 COURSE (LEVEL)	GRADE 12 COURSE (LEVEL)
<b>WORLD LANGUAGE (3 YEAR REQUIREMENT)</b>	<b>SPANISH 1 FRENCH 1 LATIN 1 LANGUAGE PREPARATION 1</b>	<b>SPANISH 2 FRENCH 2 LATIN 2</b>	<b>SPANISH 3 (CP, H) FRENCH 3 (CP, H) LATIN 3 (H)</b>	<b>SPANISH 4 (CP, H) AP SPANISH LANGUAGE FRENCH 4 (H) AP FRENCH LANGUAGE LATIN 4 (H)</b>
<b>MATHEMATICS (3 YEAR REQUIREMENT, 4 STRONGLY RECOMMENDED)</b>	<b>ALGEBRA 1 (CP, H)</b>	<b>ALGEBRA 2 (CP, H)</b>	<b>GEOMETRY (CP, H) AP STATISTICS STATISTICS (CP) ACCOUNTING (CP)</b>	<b>PRECALC (CP, H) TRIG/STAT (CP) STATISTICS (CP, AP) ACCOUNTING (CP)</b>
	<b>ALGEBRA 2 (H)<sup>5</sup></b>	<b>GEOMETRY (CP, H)</b>	<b>PRECALC (CP, H) AP STATISTICS STATISTICS (CP) ACCOUNTING (CP)</b>	<b>CALCULUS (H) AP CALCULUS AB AP STATISTICS STATISTICS (CP) ACCOUNTING (CP)</b>
	<b>ALGEBRA 2 (H)<sup>6</sup></b>	<b>PRECALC (CP, H)</b>	<b>CALCULUS (H) AP CALCULUS AB AP STATISTICS STATISTICS (CP) ACCOUNTING (CP)</b>	<b>AP CALCULUS BC AP STATISTICS STATISTICS (CP) ACCOUNTING (CP)</b>

<sup>5</sup> See course detail on student placement criteria at <https://www.vmahs.org/academics/>.

<sup>6</sup> See course detail on student placement criteria at <https://www.vmahs.org/academics/>.

DEPARTMENT	GRADE 9 COURSE (LEVEL)	GRADE 10 COURSE (LEVEL)	GRADE 11 COURSE (LEVEL)	GRADE 12 COURSE (LEVEL)
SCIENCE (3 YEAR LAB SCIENCE REQUIREMENT)	PHYSICAL SCIENCE <sup>7</sup> (CP)	BIOLOGY (CP)	CHEMISTRY (CP)	PHYSICS (CP) ANATOMY/PHYSIOLOGY (CP, H) ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE (CP) ASTRONOMY (CP)
	BIOLOGY (CP)	CHEMISTRY (CP)	PHYSICS (CP) ANATOMY/PHYSIOLO GY (CP) ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE (CP) ASTRONOMY (CP)	PHYSICS (CP) ANATOMY/PHYSIOLOGY (CP) ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE (CP) ASTRONOMY (CP)
	BIOLOGY (H)	CHEMISTRY (H)	AP BIOLOGY AP CHEMISTRY PHYSICS (CP, H) AP PHYSICS 1 ANATOMY/PHYSIOLO GY (CP,H) ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE (CP)  GENETICS (H) ASTRONOMY (CP)	AP BIOLOGY AP CHEMISTRY AP PHYSICS C: MECHANICS PHYSICS (CP, H) AP PHYSICS 1 ANATOMY/PHYSIOLOGY (CP,H) ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE (CP) GENETICS (H) ASTRONOMY (CP)
TECHNOLOGY (.5 CREDIT REQUIREMENT)	COMPUTER RESOURCES (CP)	AP COMPUTER SCIENCE PRINCIPLES DIGITAL MEDIA (CP)	DIGITAL MEDIA (CP) COMPUTER PROGRAMMING (CP) AP COMPUTER SCIENCE PRINCIPLES	AP COMPUTER SCIENCE A AP COMPUTER SCIENCE PRINCIPLES

<sup>7</sup> 3 years of a lab science that must include a minimum of Physical Science or Physics, Biology, & Chemistry. Physics is strongly recommended. Physical Science may only be used to fulfill the Physics requirement if it follows the recommended scope and sequence of beginning with Physical Science in the Freshman year.

DEPARTMENT	GRADE 9 COURSE (LEVEL)	GRADE 10 COURSE (LEVEL)	GRADE 11 COURSE (LEVEL)	GRADE 12 COURSE (LEVEL)
<b>FINE ARTS (.5 CREDIT REQUIREMENT INCLUDING .25 ART AND .25 MUSIC)</b>	<b>ART 9 (CP) STUDIO ART 1 (CP)</b>	<b>STUDIO ART 1, 2 (CP) GRAPHIC DESIGN AND VISUAL COMMUNICATIONS (CP)  COLLAGE: MIXED MEDIA (CP)* WATERCOLOR (CP)*  *Prerequisite: minimum one semester of Studio Art 1</b>	<b>STUDIO ART 1, 2 (CP) ART MAJOR (H) CERAMICS (CP) WATERCOLOR (CP)  ART HISTORY (H, AP) COLLAGE: MIXED MEDIA (CP) INTRODUCTION TO SCULPTURE (CP)  GRAPHIC DESIGN AND VISUAL COMMUNICATIONS(C P)</b>	<b>STUDIO ART 1, 2 (CP) ART MAJOR (H) ADVANCED ART MAJOR (H)  AP STUDIO ART (DRAWING AND 2D) CERAMICS (CP) WATERCOLOR (CP) ART HISTORY (H, AP) COLLAGE: MIXED MEDIA (CP) INTRODUCTION TO SCULPTURE (CP)  GRAPHIC DESIGN AND VISUAL COMMUNICATIONS (CP)</b>
	<b>MUSIC REQUIREMENT (CAN BE FULFILLED THROUGH MUSIC APPRECIATION OR MUSIC INSTRUCTION)  STRING ENSEMBLE (CP)</b>	<b>MUSIC THEORY (CP) MUSIC COMPOSITION (CP) EAR TRAINING (CP) MUSIC TECHNOLOGY (CP) MUSIC INSTRUCTION (CP) MADRIGAL SINGERS (CP) STRING ENSEMBLE (CP)</b>	<b>AP MUSIC THEORY MUSIC THEORY (CP) MUSIC COMPOSITION (CP) EAR TRAINING (CP) MUSIC TECHNOLOGY (CP) MUSIC INSTRUCTION (CP) MADRIGAL SINGERS (CP) STRING ENSEMBLE (CP)</b>	<b>AP MUSIC THEORY MUSIC THEORY (CP) MUSIC COMPOSITION (CP) EAR TRAINING (CP) MUSIC TECHNOLOGY (CP) MUSIC INSTRUCTION (CP) MADRIGAL SINGERS (CP) STRING ENSEMBLE (CP)</b>
	<b>DANCE ELECTIVES</b>	<b>DANCE ELECTIVES</b>	<b>DANCE ELECTIVES</b>	<b>DANCE ELECTIVES</b>

<b>DEPARTMENT</b>	<b>GRADE 9 COURSE (LEVEL)</b>	<b>GRADE 10 COURSE (LEVEL)</b>	<b>GRADE 11 COURSE (LEVEL)</b>	<b>GRADE 12 COURSE (LEVEL)</b>
<b>HEALTH/PE &amp; WELLNESS/GUIDANCE (2 CREDIT REQUIREMENT IN FULFILLMENT OF PA STATE STANDARDS)</b>	<b>FRESHMAN SEMINAR</b>	<b>PHYSICAL EDUCATION  HEALTH  SPORTS MEDICINE  SOPHOMORE SEMINAR</b>	<b>PE ELECTIVES  SPORTS MEDICINE  JUNIOR GUIDANCE</b>	<b>PE ELECTIVES  SPORTS MEDICINE  SENIOR COLLEGE GUIDANCE</b>
<b>EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING AND CAPSTONE (1 CREDIT REQUIRED)</b>				<b>CAPSTONE SENIOR PROJECT  DIOCESEAN SCHOLAR<sup>8</sup></b>

---

<sup>8</sup> Students in the top 2% of the rising senior class are invited to apply to take off campus credits at one of the Catholic universities in the Philadelphia Archdiocese.

## **COURSE SELECTION**

The selection of an educational program is one of the most important decisions you can make. It is one that will affect your immediate educational plans as well as your future. This catalog provides a brief description of the courses offered at Villa Maria Academy. Students are required to choose a minimum of seven credits per year with more than enough credits to fulfill graduation requirements.

As you plan your program, assess your aptitudes as well as your past scholastic achievements. Think about your college and career goals. You may choose any course listed, provided you meet the requirements. These requirements are made because education must build on previous knowledge if it is to be effective. There is no point selecting a course if you have not mastered the one upon which it builds. ***No exceptions to stated prerequisites will be considered.***

Not all courses will match your schedule. Scheduling conflicts occur when two or more classes that a student requests are offered at the same time. Not all conflicts can be resolved due to the number of courses offered and students requesting courses. During the course selection process students will be given the option of 3 choices for those courses where there are other options. While every attempt will be made to match first choice courses, there is no guarantee. Courses listed in the Academic Catalog are offered only if student interest at registration and staffing permit.

## **COURSE REQUESTS**

When selecting your courses it is important to remember:

- **Requests for or from a specific teacher will not be honored.**
- **Courses will be scheduled only if there is sufficient student demand and staffing permits.**
- **Once schedules are set, they must be honored for the entire school year. This pertains to courses offered in both semesters.**

**Requests for changes are not honored after the scheduled deadlines.** Exceptions are made only in the cases of conflicts, scheduling errors or recommendation of the teaching team and administration. Course fee refunds are only issued in the event of such situations.

## **ACCREDITATION and AFFILIATIONS**

Villa Maria is duly registered by the Department of Public Instruction of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. In 2015, Villa Maria Academy was awarded dual accreditation with the Middle States Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools and the Pennsylvania Association of Independent Schools (PAIS). Villa Maria Academy High School is also a proud member of the National Coalition of Girls' Schools (NCGS) and the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS). In 1989 the U.S. Department of Education recognized Villa Maria for Excellence in Education. In the same year the National Council of Teachers of English designated Villa Maria as a Center of Excellence in English Language Arts. Since 1990 the Villa Maria Chapter of the National Music Honor Society has consistently merited "Chapter of the Year" honors.

## **GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS**

All students must accumulate over four years a minimum of 28 credits to meet the graduation requirements of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and Villa Maria Academy in adherence to the scope and sequence set forth. The typical Villa Maria student's transcript exceeds this minimum requirement in order to

customize an academic program that is best suited for her and the attainment of her post-high school goals. Student attendance at a school sponsored Retreat each year and successful completion of the Senior Capstone project are **mandatory for graduation**.

Units of Credit	Course
4	Theology
4	English
3 <sup>9</sup>	Mathematics (4 Strongly Recommended)
3 <sup>10</sup>	Social Studies
3 <sup>11</sup>	Science
3 <sup>12</sup>	Foreign Language
1	Health/Physical Education
1	Wellness/Guidance
0.5	Technology
0.5	Fine Arts (Art and Music Requirement)
1	Senior Capstone
4	Electives
<b>28</b>	<b>TOTAL (Minimum Requirement)</b>

## COURSE LEVELS

Courses are leveled according to a student’s ability and needs:

- **Advanced Placement.** Twenty-three wide ranging Advanced Placement courses are offered to qualified students who experience college level classes and potentially earn college credits while still in secondary school. Those students wishing to roster for these classes must obtain the specific department approval having demonstrated motivation and previous academic achievement and must be ready to take responsibility for extensive reading and writing assignments as independent study. All students enrolled in an advanced placement course are required to pay for and take the advanced placement examination in May. Nightly independent workload for Advanced Placement courses may vary between subject areas. In general, students should expect significant independent weekly work per advanced placement course. In order to meet the Advanced Placement timetable, students may be required to complete summer work, although requirements may vary by course. **Any student scheduled for an Advanced Placement course must commit to that course for the remainder of the following school year. There will be no exceptions. Students who are considering a roster of more than 3 Advanced Placement courses should be very clear on the time necessary to meet the demands of these rigorous courses and must seek Guidance Counselor approval.**

---

<sup>9</sup> 3 consecutive years while at VMA.

<sup>10</sup> Beginning with the Class of 2020, all students will take a minimum Social Studies sequence of World 1 & World 2, American History, Government and Economics.

<sup>11</sup> 3 years of a lab science that must include a minimum of Physical Science or Physics, Biology, & Chemistry. Physics is strongly recommended. Physical Science may only be used to fulfill the Physics requirement if it follows the recommended scope and sequence of beginning with Physical Science in the Freshman year.

<sup>12</sup> 3 years consecutive of the same language while at VMA.

**Advanced Placement Courses are offered in the following areas:**

AP Literature and Composition  
AP Language and Composition (exam offered by invitation)  
AP Spanish Language and Culture  
AP French Language and Culture  
AP United States History  
AP European History  
AP World History  
AP United States Government  
AP Microeconomics  
AP Psychology  
AP Calculus AB  
AP Calculus BC  
AP Statistics  
AP Computer Science A  
AP Computer Science Principles  
AP Biology  
AP Chemistry  
AP Physics 1  
AP Physics C/Mechanics  
AP Studio Art/Drawing  
AP Art History  
AP Studio Art/2D  
AP Music Theory

- **Honors.** Honors level courses are offered for academically competent students who are able to pursue in-depth study and who are willing to spend extra time outside of class working independently. These courses require additional reading and writing assignments. Entrance into these classes requires department approval. The nightly workload for Honors courses may vary between subject area, but students can anticipate a significant amount of independent work. Students are expected to manage their time to meet nightly and long-term deadlines.
- **College Preparatory.** College Prep courses are offered for students whose command of skills enables them to accelerate at the pace required of a college preparatory curriculum. The level of independent work assigned will vary from subject to subject and from course to course. Home study may be a reinforcement of previous learning for mastery attainment. It may also be exposure to new material for the purpose of engaging students in attainment of new information. Independent work is designed to be meaningful in support of content and process goals.

## EVALUATION SYSTEM

Villa Maria Academy reports grades using an ALPHA GRADING SYSTEM according to the following scale:

Alpha Grade	Numerical Grade	Quality Points
A+	100 – 98	4.1
A	97 – 93	4.0
A-	92 – 91	3.8
B+	90 – 88	3.5
B	87 – 85	3.0
B-	84 – 83	2.8
C+	82 – 80	2.5
C	79 – 77	2.0
C-	76 – 75	1.8
D+	74 – 73	1.5
D	72 – 70	1.0
F	69 -	0

**Advanced Placement** courses are weighted by incrementing the quality point equivalent by 0.3 point.

**Honors** courses are weighted by incrementing the quality point equivalent by 0.2 point.

## ENTRANCE AND PLACEMENT CRITERIA/DETERMINATION OF THE CURRICULAR PATH

Villa Maria’s students are selected for admission based on the results of the High School Placement Test (HSPT ©) score, the student’s grade school performance, previous standardized testing, teacher recommendations and individual placement testing as relevant. Additional information with regard to the placement process is posted in the “Academics” link to the Villa Maria homepage at <https://www.vmahs.org/academics/>.

Supported learning services are provided to ensure that students develop the strategies necessary to achieve success in high school and beyond. Designed in conjunction with our philosophy of **‘placement for success’**, students may be assigned to specific programming to support directed instruction of cognitive strategies that empower learning and lead to academic success, as directed by the Office of Curriculum and Instruction. No student, regardless of curricular path, will be exempted from the graduation requirements.

All students are guided to a path that provides them the opportunity to fulfill their God-given potential while meeting the requirements of a Villa Maria Academy education. In recognizing the top quality academic talent drawn to a school of Villa Maria’s stature, students who demonstrate the breadth of academic aptitude and intellectual curiosity required of an elite high school will be identified and challenged to excel at the highest level of coursework, positioning them to fulfil their academic potential.

## QUALITY POINT AVERAGE

The Quality Point Average is determined by finding the average of the quality points accrued in each course counting toward GPA, taking into consideration the increments earned by the level of the course. This is an adjusted GPA. The final report in June will list the student's cumulative GPA, considering only those classes taken during her time in Villa Maria Academy. All coursework will be computed into the student’s GPA. No transfer credit is computed into a student’s Villa Maria GPA.

## INTENSIVE SCHEDULING, SEMESTER SCHEDULING and REPORTING OF ACADEMIC PROGRESS

Beginning in the 2015-16 School Year, Villa Maria adopted a daily schedule that follows an “A/B” intensive cycle model, whereby students can take as many as 8 classes annually, 4/day for a duration of 80 minutes

each, should they choose, with approval. Seven (7) classes per year is considered the minimum annual courseload for every student. The popular daily advisory period is embedded in the schedule to provide students with unscheduled time for independent work, collaborative research or the pursuit of specialized interests. In the event of unexpected school closing, a 'Cyber Days' policy will be invoked to ensure that instructional delivery stays consistent with the scripted pattern of the "A/B" schedule.

The Villa Maria Academic Calendar reflects a semester orientation, in preparation for the college experience. The Christmas holidays are intended to be a true break from work. Only semester-length classes may give cumulative tests in the days preceding the holiday break. The second semester resumes after the Christmas break. Restricted testing days are set aside in late November, early March and at year's end if a particular instructor feels that a cumulative test is the best measure of student progress.

Student academic progress is formally reported on the semester in January and in June. The move away from quarter reporting was made to reduce the reliance on traditional testing and to allow for more authentic opportunities for application and demonstration of student knowledge. At the discretion of the instructor, traditional assessments may be given, but more holistic and authentic measures of student mastery are encouraged. The grade calculation for the first semester will vary from subject to subject but cross – taught courses are required to have uniformity in grade calculations. See individual course expectations for specific grade calculations. Traditional final examinations are still the norm in all core subjects. The final grade is the average of the two semester grades. A student's grade point average and eligibility for honor roll is only calculated on the semester grade. Students must attend annual retreats, participate in required service learning and all seniors must complete a Capstone project in fulfillment of senior year requirements. Failure to successfully fulfill all required obligations could limit a student's ability to successfully advance to the next level.

Live time grade reporting available through PowerSchool has eliminated the need for interim progress reports. Internal reporting of students noted as 'at risk' is provided to the Office of Curriculum and Instruction on average 3 times during the semester. 'At risk' is defined as a student with a 70 average or less. Students reported on this list are reported to their designated guidance counselor for additional academic support and planning as needed. Academic eligibility is described in the section labeled "FAILING GRADES AND ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY".

Positive communication between home and school is always welcomed. While students are encouraged to be the chief communicators of their academic status, student progress is continuously updated and available through PowerSchool. Formal parent conferences are scheduled annually, but conferences are encouraged any time to discuss a student's progress. A clear chain of command for home and school communication has been established and will be respected at all times. Parents with concerns about their daughter's instructional program are required to first approach the teacher with their daughter as an active agent in the resolution.

## **CYBER DAYS' POLICY**

Villa Maria Academy High School has adopted guidelines for a "Cyber Days" schedule to ensure that classes stay on schedule even during weather events in which the physical school building is closed. With each occurrence the administration makes the decision whether a day will be designated a "CyberDay" or a "free day" depending on several factors including the severity of the weather event, the accessibility of the school roads and lot, and the schedule for the day, among other factors. All emergency closings will be considered Cyber Days unless designated otherwise by the administration. The policy is as follows:

All teachers will post assignments on Schoology for the cycle day being replaced. Assignments should be designed so that new material can be introduced and instructional objectives should be accomplished independently. The only work that needs to be posted is for classes that the 'cyber' day is replacing. For example, if an "A" Day is considered a cyber day, no "B" day assignments can be. The assignments should take a reasonable amount of time. All assignments should be posted by 9a.m. of the Cyber Day.

New Cyber Day assignments must have a due date and time specified, e.g. "all work must be submitted through Google Drive or via email by 10 p.m. tonight." Any difficulty in meeting this deadline should be communicated to the teacher promptly by the student.

Teachers must be available online for a specified time to answer questions at a time of the teacher's choice.

Students are REQUIRED to check Schoology for assignments. Isolated emergencies are to be handled on a case-by-case basis. The Principal will remind students of this responsibility on the emergency message.

If there is a widespread electrical outage and/or a State of Emergency and we/students cannot make contact, the students need to know to keep reviewing their current material. If there is an assessment scheduled for the next class day, the students need to be prepared to take it the day classes resume.

Due dates for previously assigned work will remain in effect where possible. The Principal reserves the right to suspend this policy due to weather or circumstances beyond the school's control.

#### **HONOR ROLL**

An Honor Roll is computed on the first semester grade and on the second semester grade. Honors are awarded by fulfilling the following requirements:

- **Distinguished Honors:**  
GPA of at least 4.0 with no major grade below A in any subject
- **First Honors:**  
GPA of at least 3.5 with no major grade below B+ in any subject
- **Second Honors:**  
GPA of at least 3.0 with no major grade below B in any subject

**A student achieving less than a passing grade in Conduct and/or Capstone will not be eligible for the Honor Roll.**

#### **INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY**

Internet access is available to students and faculty. The purpose of this access is to support research and education consistent with the mission of the school. This access is a privilege, not a right. Students are required to purchase and carry an Apple iPad 2 or later version to school daily. This device will be used to enhance the instructional scope and delivery and students should have their iPads charged and ready for the start of school each day. They may be securely stored in a locker when not being used. A list of required and suggested apps will be given to each student as part of her school supplies list for her coursework. Students will be able to sign into the school wireless network and access cloud storage and internet apps.

The **Computer Network and Internet Acceptable Use Policy** is published in the **Student Handbook**. Parents and students are asked each year to sign the form that accompanies this student handbook. In so doing,

they agree to abide by the Internet Acceptable Use Policy, as well as all other policies of Villa Maria, and are made fully cognizant of the consequences of any violation.

## **ATTENDANCE**

Regular attendance in class is expected of all students. If a serious reason causes a student to be absent from class then, it is her responsibility, immediately upon her return to class, to meet with the teacher to determine the work missed and the manner of completing the assignments. At the direction of the individual teacher all work must be completed within the designated time limit.

Students absent from school for any extended time (more than three school days) should immediately make contact with their guidance counselor to coordinate a return to work plan.

## **LONG TERM ABSENCE POLICY<sup>13</sup>**

If a long term absence from school becomes necessary, the following procedures will go into effect:

- Parents will be required to submit to the student's counselor a written note from the physician that explains the reason for the absence, the projected length of time of the absence, and any specific directives applicable to the school setting. Should that time be extended, the physician will need to provide an updated note. A copy of the physician's communication will be sent to the school nurse. Villa Maria reserves the right to interpret the recommended academic accommodations and will act, with the student's health and the school's interests in mind, to recommend alternative accommodations, if need be, that best fit the school's setting and curriculum. Villa Maria places the student's health interests primary, mindful that the student's health and recovery may not dictate the fulfillment of the Villa Maria curriculum (even with accommodations) and subsequently could have an effect on matriculation status, GPA, continuity in coursework and graduation. An internal team, known as the "Academic Support Team" (comprised of the Dean of Students, the Director of Curriculum and Instruction, the Athletic Trainer, the School Nurse and the Student's designated counselor) will be the chief communicators with the student's academic team to convey, as appropriate, any academic modifications to the student's teaching team as described below.
- If the student's absence is for mental health reasons, a written note from her doctor/therapist is to be provided to the Academic Support Team who will monitor the student according to the written directives.
- The student's counselor will organize a meeting of the Academic Support Team (the athletic trainer for sports-related injuries, the school nurse, the Director of Curriculum and Instruction, and the Dean of Students) to evaluate the written directives according to the academic policies of Villa Maria Academy. In the case of a concussion, the School Concussion Policy will be monitored by the nurse and/or athletic trainer.
- Teachers of the student will be notified of the student's absence and needs by the student's

---

<sup>13</sup> This policy applies to any student working through a concussion 'return to play' protocol.

counselor. If necessary, the counselor will organize a meeting of teachers, parents, and all involved parties to discuss any special circumstances. Following the meeting, each teacher, in consultation with the Director of Curriculum and Instruction, will devise an educational plan for the student which will include all required topics, assignments, and assessments that the teacher deems essential to the integrity of the course.

- Should the student's absence need to extend beyond the possibility of continuing successfully in the curricular program, the Academic Support Team will request that the parents register the student with their local school district of residence to initiate homebound tutoring. The counselor will contact the school district/tutor to discuss procedures and arrange for updates from the tutor to communicate with the student's Villa teachers.
- When the student is ready to return from such an extended absence, the school will require a written report from the physician/therapist and the school district tutors. A return to school meeting, organized by the counselor with the Academic Support Team, the student, and her parents will be scheduled to discuss the procedures and credit requirements/adjustments.

## **POLICY FOR MAINTAINING CREDIT IN THE CASE OF LONG TERM ABSENCE**

Absences from school, for whatever reason, do not excuse a student from the obligation to meet all schoolwork, as defined by the teachers, the Director of Curriculum and Instruction, and the prescribed departmental curriculum. Students failing to seek this assistance will be afforded no latitude.

- In the event that assignments/assessments are outstanding, a zero for that work will be recorded in the teacher's grade book until the missing work is turned in to the teacher who will then remove the zero and enter the appropriate grade.
- It may happen that the grade will be recorded as an "F" due to the presence of the zeroes. This grade will be adjusted once all work is up to date.
- A student receiving academic accommodations due to long term absence may not be eligible to participate in activities or extracurricular events, nor may she travel as representative of the school until she receives clearance from the Director of Curriculum and Instruction.

## **CHRONIC ABSENCE**

Students who miss more than 20 class periods for a full year course or 10 class periods for a semester course for any reason may fail that class for the year. Certification of an absence by a physician, as described in long term absence policy is an exception to the limit. Satisfactory completion of required work is expected. The administration in conjunction with the teaching team will review the matter with parents before a decision is made by the administration. Persistent absences may also result in the student being subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

## **FAILING GRADES AND ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY**

A student receiving a failing grade in any academic subject is on Academic Probation for the next grade reporting period. During the probation period, the student must meet weekly with the subject teacher, follow the recommendations of the subject teacher, report to any assigned tutoring, and report regularly to the Guidance Counselor and the Director of Curriculum and Instruction as directed. Failure to adhere to a prescribed academic assistance program may result in ineligibility from participation in extracurricular activities.

If a student is reporting a failing grade "F" when interim 'at risk' updates are required, she will be considered ineligible for extracurricular participation until a passing grade is achieved. Teachers have the latitude to report a student "In Danger of Failing/IDF" if, in the teacher's professional assessment, the student is making specific progress toward improvement of a poor grade. However, if the student does not meet the parameters of the improvement plan set forth or does move into a failing grade range, the student will be considered academically ineligible and she may not participate in extra-curricular activities until a passing grade is achieved. Students are fully responsible for monitoring their academic progress via PowerSchool. There should be no surprises if a situation arises to be made ineligible for an extracurricular activity. If a student is deemed ineligible, her status will be communicated to her by the Director of Curriculum and Instruction in conjunction with the Director of Activities, the Athletic Director, the Music Director and the student's counselor.

Students in grades 9, 10 or 11 who receive a final grade of "D" or lower or whose GPA falls below the college qualifying grade of "C" (2.0) at the end of the second semester must attend an approved summer school program in order to remediate the grade and return to Villa Maria Academy in good standing. The maximum allowable grade for a remediated course will be a "C". Any student who receives a final failing grade in two courses or more will not be permitted to return to Villa Maria. Seniors who have a failure will not receive their diplomas until all work is satisfactorily completed.

### **RANK IN CLASS**

Villa Maria Academy does not rank its students. This decision gives recognition to the fact that Villa Maria has a selective admissions policy, small class size, and a demanding marking system. For this reason, class rank is not an accurate measure of individual achievement and could be misleading in determining a student's ability to complete college level work successfully.

At the midpoint of the second semester, the two seniors with the highest cumulative GPA will be named Valedictorian and Salutatorian. Students must have spent their entire high school careers at Villa Maria Academy to be considered for this distinction.

### **SENIOR CAPSTONE PROJECT**

An inquiry-based experience, driven by student interest, is required for graduation. It involves critical thinking, investigative research, problem solving, written reflection and application of prior and acquired knowledge under the guidance of a mentor and through documented field experiences and/or service. In lieu of final exams, all seniors are required to submit written summaries which connect their Capstone experiences to their curricular work.

### **GRADUATION**

Graduation takes place each year on the first Saturday after Memorial Day. To participate in graduation, students must fulfill all requirements of the school: academic, financial, and disciplinary.

## COURSE OFFERINGS

### THEOLOGY

*The Theology Department of Villa Maria Academy recognizes its unique role in the educational ministry of the Church and its specific implications for this school. The Theology Department seeks to offer leadership, vision and inspiration within a school whose mission is firmly rooted in the Gospel and steeped in Catholic tradition. In an effort to respond faithfully to the goals set forth in the “Declaration on Christian Education”, we define our program and purpose, “... to inspire the student with the Spirit of Christ, to help to bring to maturity the gifts and talents of each student, and to direct all students to become involved in transforming their world into God’s Kingdom.” These goals offer an attitudinal, cognitive, and affective dimension as we seek to transmit a spirit of faith and to teach Theology as an academic discipline with specific, measurable objectives. It is the integration of these dimensions that provides the challenge as we seek to lead young women to live lives of spiritual growth, intellectual inquiry, and Christian service.*

SUBJECT	GRADE 9	GRADE 10	GRADE 11	GRADE 12
<b>THEOLOGY</b>	<u>Theology 1</u> Semester 1: Overview of Catholicism Semester 2: Hebrew Scriptures	<u>Theology 2</u> Semester 1: New Testament Semester 2: Church History	<u>Theology 3</u> Semester 1: Social Justice Semester 2: Morality	<u>Theology 4</u> CP Theology 4: One Semester of Elective Spirituality in Practice  World Religions  One Semester of Marriage & Life Choices  Honors Theology 4: Apologetics/ Marriage & Life Choices  Honors World Religions Elective

#### **135 Introduction to Christianity**

**Credit 0.5**

**College Prep**

This course introduces the vocabulary, the concepts, the events, and the beliefs of the Catholic faith for students who have little or no knowledge or experience of Christianity. It includes an overview of the story of Salvation History, beginning with Abraham and covering the main stories and people and truths of the Hebrew Scriptures. It continues with the story of Jesus through the Gospels, the growth of the Church, and an explanation of the status of Christianity in the world today. Students will also explore the reasonableness of Christian belief as well as how a Catholic Christian life is practiced through prayer, Mass, Sacraments, observance of the Commandments, and service to others in imitation of Jesus.

**160 The Hebrew Scriptures                      Grade 9                      Credit 0.5                      College Prep**

The *Hebrew Scriptures* course seeks to guide students to a more thorough understanding and a more mature appreciation of God's revelation to the People of Israel. The course examines the kinds of literature and literary devices used to communicate God's revelation about who God is, who we humans are, and what our relationship with God and each other should be. This Divine Revelation gradually unfolds through Jewish history. Students are encouraged to reflect on God's call and action within their own lives as their own salvation history. They are challenged to respond to God's love as it unfolds in their everyday experiences and relationships.

**161 Overview of Catholicism                      Grade 9                      Credit 0.5                      College Prep**

This overview of Catholic faith and character formation helps to form teenagers in the beliefs, values, and practices of the Catholic faith. Using the beliefs expressed in the Apostles and Nicene Creeds as the foundation, the course examines the meaning of these beliefs, the ways in which we should live according to these beliefs on a day to day basis, and specific faith-filled role models. It also examines the meaning and importance of Mass, the Sacraments, and prayer in the practice of the faith and growth in one's personal relationship with Jesus.

**162 New Testament                      Grade 10                      Credit 0.5                      College Prep**

The course on *New Testament* presents Jesus as the center of God's saving plan and, while it presents an overview of the entire New Testament, it especially shows how the four Gospels express the early Christian community's faith reflection on the meaning of Jesus' life. The course is also designed to help students to discover and appreciate the meaning of Jesus who understands and loves them and who challenges them to celebrate life, to care for other people, and to take responsibility for the world in which they live.

**163 Church History                      Grade 10                      Credit 0.5                      College Prep**

The *Church History* course completes the study of the New Testament begun in *The Gospels* course by examining the work of the Holy Spirit in Acts of the Apostles, the Epistles, and the Book of Revelation. It then surveys the development of Christianity to the present day, stressing the importance of knowing the richness as well as the difficulties of our past in order to understand and appreciate more deeply the teachings and practices of the Church today and the continued guidance and help of the Holy Spirit. It is the story of the people who have been and are being called to be the family of God, to be the brothers and sisters of Jesus Christ.

**165 Christian Morality                      Grade 11                      Credit 0.5                      College Prep**

The *Christian Morality* course stresses the need for a Christian philosophy of life that is reflected in moral choices. It seeks to help the student realize the need to make moral decisions based on her awareness of herself as a human person and a child of God. It also attempts to guide the student in recognizing that the law of Jesus is basically the response of a person who is truly human and at the same time a sharer in Divine Life.

**168 Social Justice                      Grade 11                      Credit 0.5                      College Prep**

The course on *Social Justice* aims to provide students with a methodology for living and doing justice in their own lives, according to their own capabilities. It guides them first to recognize the problems and the causes of the problems in our world. Next, it helps them to judge the facts according to Christian principles and criteria, drawing on the body of Catholic social teaching in modern times. Finally, once a situation is judged to be unjust, students consider what actions must be taken to correct it. All are encouraged to put their faith into action by doing what they can to further justice and peace in their lives and in our world.

Note: A requirement of this course is 5 hours of service specifically and directly with the poor, the elderly, and/or the handicapped.

**143 Honors Apologetics**                      **Grade 12**                      **Credit 0.5**                      **Honors**  
**Prerequisite: A student wishing to register for Honors Theology 4 must have earned a grade of at least an “A” in Theology 3 and receive a recommendation from her current teacher. A student wishing to register for this course with a grade of an “A-” will be considered only if space allows and with a recommendation from her current teacher.**

The Honors Catholic Apologetics course of the first semester is designed to provide students with the opportunity to examine the truths of their faith at a deeper level, with the hope that students will be able to appropriate for themselves the beliefs that they have been taught. In order for this personal acceptance of a faith relationship to occur, it is necessary that students examine the thinking and knowledge that underlies the beliefs of the Catholic religion, as well as understand that there are logical connections among our knowledge, belief, and actions. To this end the course will examine the key teachings of Catholicism from the Scriptures, Tradition, and Church teachings, as well as connect and relate those teachings as they developed over time within the context of the cultural, philosophical, and spiritual evolution of humanity. Readings will be selected from a variety of authors and primary sources and will serve as a basis for discussion. Students will also examine the Church’s teachings in the area of social justice.

**167 Marriage and Life Choices**                      **Grade 12**                      **Credit 0.5**                      **College Prep**

The course on *Marriage & Life Choices* seeks to help students to make decisions now and in the future in response to Jesus’ call to love and truth and in light of Pope St. John Paul II’s Theology of the Body. Students are encouraged to make vocational and career decisions based on Christian values. Current choices in the areas of communication, friendship, dating, sexuality and career planning are explored and their significance discussed in the light of one’s vocation as a disciple of Jesus. Attitudes about love, commitment, and trust are emphasized as foundational and essential for all careers and vocations in a life focused on God’s Kingdom. Marriage is presented as a sacrament and a covenant relationship of intimacy between a woman and a man, together with God. Vocations of priesthood, religious life, and single life are explored as unique opportunities to love and to serve, as a Christian.

**150 Spirituality in Practice**                      **Grade 12**                      **Credit 0.5**                      **College Prep**

This course will explore the many ways sports can develop us as whole persons and connect us more closely with God. By reflecting, reading and discussing, students will discover the connections between mind, body, and spirit that are inherent in sports.

**152 World Religions**                      **Grade 12**                      **Credit 0.5**                      **College Prep**

**153 Honors World Religions**                      **Grade 12**                      **Credit 0.5**                      **Honors**

**Prerequisite: A student wishing to register for Honors World Religions must also be enrolled in an Honors or AP English course because of the reading and writing skill level needed.**

This semester course will explore the nature and philosophy of the worldviews that make up the various religious traditions, especially those of Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, and Islam and Christianity. Students will examine the elements of each religion and the ways in which humans have experienced the sacred and how they attempt to answer the big questions of life. This rigorous course will help the student not only to understand the doctrine, history, and philosophical foundations of other religions but also provide her with another lens to examine Catholicism in the context of a pluralistic and ecumenical world. Having already completed a course in social justice, this course will help students to recognize the need for mutual understanding and respectful dialogue among members of the world’s major religions as vital to seeking and maintaining world peace.

## ENGLISH

*The English Department offers students a solid college preparatory program built around a strong emphasis on written communication. Classroom time is devoted to including each student in a community of discourse. Reading and writing, speaking and listening engage everyone. Critical thinking is fostered and encouraged as students develop an appreciation and understanding of both standard classic and contemporary literature. Within both the college prep and honors courses students approach literature as a means to explore our world and communication as a tool to express perceptions of that world. All students are required to participate in the summer reading program.*

*Seniors have several options in the English Department. Advanced Placement Literature and Composition is a year-long course, and students enrolled in the course must take the AP exam at the end of the year. Those students not taking Advanced Placement have the option of a variety of single semester courses. Students not taking AP must take one of these half-credit courses each semester of their senior year in order to meet the English requirements towards graduation; students may not take both required courses in a single semester.*

SUBJECT	GRADE 9	GRADE 10	GRADE 11	GRADE 12
<b>ENGLISH</b>	English 1 Honors English 1	English 2 Honors English 2	English 3 Honors English 3 Creative Writing Elective Public Speaking Elective AP English Language/Comp <sup>14</sup>	Modern American Literature The Development of Genre Fiction The Short Story Honors 20 <sup>th</sup> Century Drama Honors Women in Literature Honors Isolation vs. Belonging AP English Lit/Comp Creative Writing Elective Public Speaking Elective

**211 Honors English 1**

**Grade 9**

**Credit 1.0**

**Honors**

**Literary Genre/Techniques of Composition**

**Prerequisite: A student wishing to register for this honors course should have scored in the range of 70**

<sup>14</sup> At the discretion of the English Department, Honors English 3 students may be invited to participate in an independent study preparation for the Advanced Placement Language and Composition Exam.





**from her current teacher. A student wishing to register for this course with a semester grade of an “A-” or lower must receive a recommendation from her current teacher and show proficiency on a writing sample.**

Advanced Placement English follows the Princeton guidelines and is designed for those students who wish to earn college credits in English while still in secondary school. Students will read a variety of works, representing multiple genres and literary periods, centered around three thematic questions. They will develop their critical reading skills through consideration of the way that authors convey the essential themes and cultural perspective of each work through structure and style (including use of figurative language, imagery, symbolism and tone). They will approach writing as both a reflection of and a tool for learning, which will enable them to express ideas, develop understanding, and engage in conversation with others. Through their reading and writing, students will have the opportunity to challenge their preconceptions, engage in meaningful conversation, and ultimately define their own understandings. The intellectual level and workload of the course are modeled on the expectations of an undergraduate literature course.

**251 Honors 20<sup>th</sup> Century Drama**

**Grade 12**

**Credit 0.5**

**Honors**

**Prerequisite: A student in English 3 wishing to register for this honors course must have earned a semester grade of at least an “A”, receive the recommendation of her current teacher, and show proficiency on a writing sample. A student in Honors English 3 must have earned a semester grade of “B” or higher to register for this honors course.**

Students will study the works of influential 20<sup>th</sup> century playwrights, spanning the early 1900s through the 1990s. Classic works by playwrights such as Tennessee Williams, Arthur Miller, and Samuel Beckett will be explored, as well as plays from more diverse voices and perspectives. Analysis will focus on historical context, social criticism, theatrical conventions, and literary theory.

**252 Honors Women in World Literature**

**Grade 12**

**Credit 0.5**

**Honors**

**About and By Women: Women in World Literature**

**Prerequisite: A student in English 3 wishing to register for this honors course must have earned a semester grade of at least an “A”, receive the recommendation of her current teacher, and show proficiency on a writing sample. A student in Honors English 3 must have earned a semester grade of “B” or higher to register for this honors course.**

This course examines the contributions of women writers to literature throughout diverse time periods and cultures. Aided by the study of literary criticism and theory and using a global perspective, students explore literature by women which emphasizes the powers and challenges of women in society - past and present, near and far. There will be an emphasis on the impact of women despite social and economic inequality.

**253 Honors Isolation vs. Belonging**

**Grade 12**

**Credit 0.5**

**Honors**

**Isolation vs. Belonging: The Outsider in Literature**

**Prerequisite: A student in English 3 wishing to register for this honors course must have earned a semester grade of at least an “A”, receive the recommendation of her current teacher, and show proficiency on a writing sample. A student in Honors English 3 must have earned a semester grade of “B” or higher to register for this honors course.**

In this course, students will examine a variety of texts across different cultures using the question, “What makes someone an outsider in the larger culture?” Students will explore what factors in society or the individual create the role of “the outsider,” considering at the same time the effects that this phenomenon has on both society and the individual.

**254 Modern American Literature**

**Grade 12**

**Credit: 0.5**

**College Prep**

**The American Dream in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> Centuries**



## SOCIAL STUDIES

*The role of the Social Studies Department is to make available to the students a body of knowledge that will broaden their educational horizons and strengthen those values that are part of our school community. To these ends we have designed a curriculum that reflects the awareness of the diversity of humanity, the dignity of each person, and the responsibility which young women must exercise in the modern world.*

*The course offerings for the Social Studies Department fulfill the requirements of the state of Pennsylvania for those persons seeking a high school diploma. In addition to the required courses of World History 1, 2, and American History, our electives give students an opportunity to probe more deeply into the history of the ancient and modern world.*

*Through an examination of other times and places, it is hoped that our young women will develop respect for the role that geography, technology, and diversity play in the study of history; that the study of historical events and peoples will illuminate the pitfalls and perils that have resulted in chaos and catastrophe in order to learn more peaceful methods of dealing with national and world disputes; and finally, that our students will grow in their own faith as they trace the path of mankind's search for meaning in life. A summer reading assignment is required for all Social Studies courses.*

SUBJECT	GRADE 9	GRADE 10	GRADE 11	GRADE 12
<b>SOCIAL STUDIES</b>	World History 1 <sup>15</sup> Honors World History 1 Pre-AP World History	World History 2 Honors World History 2 AP World History	U. S. History Honors U.S. History AP U.S. History Electives: Economics US Government Criminal Justice Intro to Psychology Geography AP European History AP/Hon Microeconomics AP Psychology	Electives: Economics US Government Criminal Justice Intro to Psychology Geography AP European History AP US Government AP/Hon Microeconomics AP Psychology

---

<sup>15</sup> Beginning with the Class of 2020, Students will fulfill a sequence that includes World History 1 & 2, American History, Government and Economics.

**310 Pre AP World History                      Grade 9    Credit: 1.0    Honors**

**Prerequisite: Students must score a 5 on the Social Studies Department entrance exam prior to their freshman year. Students' scores on the HSPT and Entrance Exam will also be used to determine eligibility for the course.**

The Pre- AP World History course focuses on developing students' understanding of world history from approximately 8000 B.C.E. to 1450 C.E. The course has students investigate the content of world history for significant events, individuals, developments, and processes in three historical periods, and develop and use the same thinking skills and methods (analyzing primary and secondary sources, making historical comparisons, chronological reasoning, and argumentation) employed by historians when they study the past.

This Pre- AP World History course is designed to be the equivalent of the first semester of an introductory college or university world history course. Due to the nature of the course, a college level atmosphere of scholarly articles, independent work, research, and seminar style discussion are used throughout the course. Additional reading assignments will be given throughout the course of the year. This course is the prerequisite and the only path to AP World History.

**311 World History    Grade 9    Credit: 1.0    College Prep**

This is a survey course that emphasizes the origins and nature of civilization including the political, social, economic and cultural developments that define human history. Students are encouraged to investigate and analyze the events and influences from prehistory to the Renaissance and to identify common themes that influence the world of today. Combined with lecture and cooperative learning is instruction in organizational and study skills, geography and research process incorporating web search techniques.

**321 Honors World History    Grade 9    Credit 1.0    Honors**

**Prerequisite: A student wishing to register for this honors course must receive the recommendation of her current teacher, and show proficiency on a placement test administered by the Social Studies Department.**

Honors World History will focus on a multitude of topics, ranging from the early ancient civilizations to the Renaissance. A heavy emphasis will be placed on higher order thinking skills, making analytical and evaluative aptitude critical. Students will use a wide range of texts and primary sources as well as literary pieces and cultural examples to enhance their knowledge. Daily reading and discussion will be critical. Effective writing skills will be developed. Technology will be a priority incorporating blogs, online forums, and geographic applications as part of the evaluative process. With a focus on critical analysis, this course is designed to prepare the student for requirements of the collegiate skill set while providing a more global view.

**320 AP World History    Grade 10    Credit 1.0    Advanced Placement**

**Prerequisites: Students must have taken Pre-AP World History, and maintained an A average, in their freshman year to enroll in this course.\***

The AP World History course focuses on developing students' understanding of world history from approximately 1450 C.E. to the present. The course has students investigate the content of world history for significant events, individuals, developments, and processes in three historical periods, and develop and use the same thinking skills and methods (analyzing primary and secondary sources, making historical comparisons, chronological reasoning, and argumentation) employed by historians when they study the past. The AP World History is designed to be the equivalent of the second semester of an introductory college or university world history course. AP World History follows the curriculum set out by the AP in order to prep for the AP World History Exam in May. All students must take the exam. Due to the nature of the course, a college level atmosphere of scholarly articles, independent work, research, and seminar style discussion are used throughout the course. Additional reading

assignments will be given throughout the course of the year.

**\* The Class of 2020 must have scored a 96 in Honors World I for the first semester and had the recommendation of the teacher in order to enroll in AP World History for the 2017-2018 school year.**

**322 World History 2                      Grade 10                      Credit 1.0                      College Prep**  
This is a survey course that emphasizes the development of the world's major civilizations since 1500. This course focuses on the role of economic, social, and political change throughout modern world history. Students will gain a greater appreciation of the interaction and interdependence of nations and cultures within the modern world.

**323 Honors World History 2              Grade 10                      Credit 1.0                      Honors**  
**Prerequisite: Students must achieve an A average for the 1st semester grade of their freshman World History course and obtain Department approval.**  
Honors World History 2 emphasizes the development of the world's major civilizations since 1500. This course focuses on the role of economic, social, and political change throughout modern world history. Students will gain a greater appreciation of the interaction and interdependence of nations and cultures within the modern world. A heavy emphasis will continue to be placed on higher order thinking skills, making analytical and evaluative aptitude critical. Students will use a wide range of texts and primary sources to enhance their knowledge. Daily reading and discussion will be critical. Effective writing skills will be further developed. With a focus on critical analysis, this course is designed to prepare the student for requirements of the collegiate skill set while providing a global view of the world.

**330 AP United States History              Grade 11                      Credit 1.0                      Advanced Placement**  
**Prerequisite: Students must achieve an A average for the 1st semester grade of their last or current Social Studies course; PSAT scores consistent with the recommended AP expectancies and obtain Department approval.**  
This Advanced Placement United States History course is intended for qualified students. The course follows the AP program designated by the College Board AP curriculum. Students are expected to learn how to assess historical material, to weigh the evidence and judgments of historical scholars, and to express that understanding in comprehensive writing. Students must demonstrate motivation, previous high academic achievement in English and Social Studies courses and possess superior reading and writing ability. This course requires intense independent preparation and class participation. Students are required to take the Advanced Placement Examination.

**331 Honors United States History              Grade 11                      Credit 1.0                      Honors**  
**Prerequisites: Students must achieve an A average for the 1st semester grade of their last or current Social Studies course; obtain Department approval.**  
This course is intended for the academically competent student who is able to pursue an in-depth study of United States History from its beginning to the present day. The student must be willing and able to spend extra time outside of class working independently. This includes reading and analyzing primary and secondary sources as well as the ability to express this in historical writing.

**332 United States History                      Grade 11                      Credit 1.0                      College Prep**  
This is a survey course in United States History from the Age of Discovery to the present day. The influence of geographical, social, cultural, and economic factors is considered at the appropriate time. Special attention is given to the Colonial and Revolutionary eras, to the writing and establishing of the Constitution, to the Civil War, Industrialization and United States international involvement.

**340 AP European History**                      **Grade 11, 12**                      **Credit 1.0**                      **Advanced Placement**

**Prerequisite: Students must achieve an A average for the 1<sup>st</sup> semester grade of their last or current Social Studies course; perform well on a writing sample given during the year of course selection; obtain department approval.** This Advanced Placement European History course is intended for qualified, independent learning students who have attained high academic achievements in English and Social Studies courses. Students are expected to follow the AP program as designated by the College Board AP curriculum. Students will understand the principal themes in European History, be able to analyze historical evidence, and to express that understanding in historical writing. Students are required to take the Advanced Placement Examination.

**343 United States Government**                      **Grade 11, 12**                      **Credit 0.5**                      **College Prep**

This semester course is designed to provide students with a background in United States Government and its function. Students will study the Constitution and the theories it contains. The three branches of government and the electoral process will be explored. Current events will be incorporated to promote student comprehension of the governmental process.

**344 Economics**                                      **Grade 11, 12**                      **Credit 0.5**                      **College Prep**

This semester course studies the key concepts underlying economic theory and practice. A survey of macro and micro economics include: supply and demand, economic institutions, labor/wages, government spending/regulation, money/banking, Federal Reserve System, Gross National Product, economic growth and stability, unemployment, inflation, cooperative economic systems and international trade. Assessment includes tests and individual projects which apply concepts to reality.

**347 Introduction to Psychology**                      **Grade 11, 12**                      **Credit 0.5**                      **College Prep**

This semester course is a survey of the study of behavior and mental processes, with emphasis on the scientific nature of contemporary psychological investigation. Topics discussed include research methods, the biology of behavior, sensation and perception, learning, memory, cognition, motivation, emotion, life-span development of behavior, abnormal behavior and its therapies.

**350 AP United States Government**                      **Grade 12**                      **Credit 1.0**                      **Advanced Placement**

**Prerequisites: Students should have an A average for the 1<sup>st</sup> semester grade of their last or current Social Studies course; PSAT scores consistent with the recommended AP expectancies and obtain Department approval.**

This Advanced Placement Government course is intended for the qualified, independent learning students who have attained a high academic achievement in English and Social Studies courses. Students will follow the AP program designated by the AP College Board curriculum. Students will evaluate viewpoints presented through significant print and electronic media, understand statistical data and analyze trends related to political events. Students are required to take the Advanced Placement Examination.

**360 AP Psychology**                                      **Grade 11, 12**                      **Credit 1.0**                      **Advanced Placement**

**Prerequisites: Students should have an A average for the 1<sup>st</sup> semester grade of their last or current Social Studies course; PSAT scores consistent with the recommended AP expectancies and obtain Department approval.**

The Advanced Placement Psychology course is designed to introduce students to the systematic and scientific study of human behavior and the mental processes. Students are introduced to the psychological influences (both normal and abnormal) that make humans unique individuals. Students are exposed to the psychological facts, principles, and phenomena associated with each of the major subfields within psychology. Students are required to take the Advanced Placement Examination.

**370/371 AP/Honors Microeconomics      Grade 11, 12      Credit 1.0      Advanced Placement/Honors**  
**Prerequisites: Students should have an A average for the 1<sup>st</sup> semester grade of their last or current Social Studies course; PSAT scores consistent with the recommended AP expectancies and obtain Department approval. The course will be calibrated to the AP student and follow the AP curriculum, but students will have the option to take it at the Honors level and not be required to take the AP exam.**

The Advanced Placement Microeconomics course is designed to give students a thorough understanding of the principles of economics and decision analysis as it applies to individuals (consumers and producers), with the economic system. It places primary emphasis on the nature and functions of product markets and includes the study of factor markets and the role of government in a market economy, especially as it relates to efficiency and equity issues. The course will discuss comparative economic systems as allocating mechanisms and also touch on issues related to international monetary policy and banking policy.

**354 Geography      Grade 11, 12      Credit 0.5      College Prep**

This semester survey course covers physical, human, and political geography. Major topics include: the physical layout of the earth, world climates, weather patterns, landforms and oceans, water and soil, vegetation and animal life and current geographic problems. Various ancient and current technologies are explored. This course requires a lively interest in the past, present, and future of our planet.

**349 Introduction to Criminal Justice      Grade, 11, 12      Credit 0.5      College Prep**

This semester course is an introduction to the complex world that is the United States's criminal justice system. The course focuses on the current issues that plague the American criminal justice system. Other major topics include: What is crime?, The history of crime, police and police investigation, criminal court procedure, and the corrections system. Students will learn about these topics through simulations, case studies, practicing investigative techniques, guest speakers, and seminar style discussion.

## WORLD LANGUAGES<sup>16</sup>

The World Language Department of Villa Maria recognizes the need for all students to be able to communicate with the global community and meet the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Students must study at least 3 consecutive years of one language (French, Latin, or Spanish); although most students choose to continue their language studies beyond this requirement. The study of a second world language is also available as an elective.

### **Language Acquisition**

The course of study provides the opportunity to meet all aspects of language learning, with an emphasis on communication: vocabulary development, grammatical structure, reading and listening comprehension, civilization and culture, literature, composition, and (for the modern world languages) oral proficiency in the target language. The learning environment encourages risk-taking and problem-solving skills.

### **Cultural Understanding**

The culture-centered curriculum encourages an appreciation for diversity, and promotes empathy toward and an understanding of foreign peoples and cultures. Students gain perspective on other cultures so that they may better understand their own.

### **Authentic Experiences**

Students are encouraged to apply their language skills in the classroom setting and beyond. Language is studied in context via authentic, real-life resources, and meaningful experiences so that students become better informed citizens of the world. Opportunities for students to travel and practice the language and culture are provided both locally and abroad.

SUBJECT	GRADE 9	GRADE 10	GRADE 11	GRADE 12
<b>LANGUAGE</b>	Latin 1 Language Prep English as a Second Language	Latin 2	Hon Latin Prose	Hon Latin Poetry
	French 1 Language Prep	French 2	French 3 Honors French 3	Honors French 4 AP French Language
	Spanish 1 Language Prep	Spanish 2	Spanish 3 Honors Spanish 3	Spanish 4 Honors Spanish 4 AP Spanish Language

### **215 Language Prep**

**Grade 9**

**Credit 1.0**

**College Prep**

Language Prep is designed to provide students with a directed guided study course in support of their coursework in core classes. Students receive direct instruction in specific cognitive study strategies. Through careful progress monitoring, students may move into a level 1 world language class or continue to hone and develop skills to lay a foundation for success from the remaining years at Villa Maria. This course is graded Pass/Fail.

### **216 English Language Learning Support All Grades, as Indicated Credit 1.0**

**College Prep**

This course is for international students who need support in developing proficiency in English language modalities in order to be successful in an increasingly competitive global society. This class will support and supplement the instruction students are receiving in their core classes. This course will also focus on

<sup>16</sup> World Language assigned by level, not grade.









## MATHEMATICS

*The goal of the Mathematics Department is to develop the mathematical talents of each student. Our curriculum encourages academic excellence and fosters a love of learning, critical thinking, analytical reasoning, precise expression and a healthy spirit of achievement. It challenges each student according to her ability by offering courses that provide a well-rounded background in fundamentals as well as honors and advanced placement opportunities. As a college-preparatory school, we strongly recommend that all students take four years of mathematics. The Mathematics Department requires each student to own a TI-84 Plus graphing calculator as part of her equipment in mathematics classes, thus enabling her to come to a better understanding of mathematics concepts. Emphasis is placed on applications at all levels of instruction. PSAT and SAT needs are addressed.*

SUBJECT	GRADE 9	GRADE 10	GRADE 11	GRADE 12
MATH	Algebra 1 Honors Algebra 1	Algebra 2 Honors Algebra 2	Geometry Honors Geometry AP Statistics <sup>17</sup> Statistics <sup>18</sup> Accounting	Pre-calculus Trigonometry/Statistics Honors Pre-Calculus AP Statistics <sup>19</sup> Statistics <sup>20</sup> Accounting
	Honors Algebra 2	Honors Geometry Geometry	Honors Pre-Calculus Pre-calculus AP Statistics <sup>21</sup> Statistics <sup>22</sup> Accounting	AP Calculus AB Honors Calculus AP Statistics Statistics Accounting
	Honors Algebra <sup>23, 24</sup>	Honors Pre-calculus	AP Calculus AB Honors Calculus AP Statistics Statistics Accounting	AP Calculus BC AP Statistics Statistics Accounting

<sup>17</sup> Honors Pre-calculus or Pre-calculus is the recommended course; AP Statistics may be taken concurrently.

<sup>18</sup> Honors Pre-calculus or Pre-calculus is the recommended course; Statistics may be taken concurrently.

<sup>19</sup> Honors Pre-calculus or Pre-calculus is the recommended course; AP Statistics may be taken concurrently.

<sup>20</sup> Honors Pre-calculus or Pre-calculus is the recommended course; Statistics may be taken concurrently.

<sup>21</sup> Honors Pre-calculus or Pre-calculus is the recommended course; AP Statistics may be taken concurrently.

<sup>22</sup> Honors Pre-calculus or Pre-calculus is the recommended course; Statistics may be taken concurrently.

<sup>23</sup> For students who have already successfully completed Algebra 1 and Geometry prior to Grade 9.

<sup>24</sup> Curricular options will be designed for those students entering at a level above those listed.



**521 Honors Geometry**                      **Grades 10, 11**                      **Credit 1.0**                      **Honors**  
**Prerequisite: A student in Algebra 2 wishing to register for this honors course must have earned a semester grade of at least an “A” and receive the recommendation of her current teacher. A student in Honors Algebra 2 must have earned a semester grade of “B” or higher and receive the recommendation of her current teacher to register for this honors course.**

This accelerated, in-depth course is designed for those students who have excelled in Algebra 1 and Algebra 2. Students prove and apply theorems about points, lines, planes, triangles, circles, polygons, areas and volumes. They develop deductive and inductive reasoning skills that allow them to formulate rigorous two-column, paragraph and indirect proofs. The use of precise mathematical language is required. Students apply geometric concepts to problem solving. This course emphasizes the cumulative nature of geometry. The Geometer’s Sketchpad software is incorporated as a learning and problem solving tool.

**522 Geometry**                                      **Grades 10, 11**                                      **Credit 1.0**                                      **College Prep**  
Following the successful completion of Algebra 2, students explore a broad range of topics in plane and solid geometry. Topics studied include points, lines, planes, triangles, circles, polygons, areas, and volumes. Students develop deductive and inductive reasoning skills through two-column and indirect proofs. Appreciation of the need for precise language is encouraged, and applications to real life situations are made whenever possible.

**541 Honors Pre-calculus**                      **Grades 10, 11, 12**                      **Credit 1.0**                      **Honors**  
**Prerequisite: A student in Geometry wishing to register for this honors course must have earned a semester grade of at least an “A” and receive the recommendation of her current teacher. A student in Honors Geometry or Honors Algebra 2/Geometry must have earned a semester grade of “B” or higher and receive the recommendation from the current teacher to register for this honors course.**

This course is offered to students who have demonstrated excellent mathematical ability in Algebra 1, Algebra 2, and Geometry and are capable of moving at an accelerated pace. In the first semester, emphasis is placed on the trigonometric functions and their graphs. In the second semester, emphasis is placed on linear, quadratic, polynomial, rational, exponential and logarithmic functions and their graphs. Students will be introduced to both the intuitive and computational approach to determining the limit. The course strives to bring students to an understanding of the connections among the representations of functions graphically, numerically, analytically and verbally. The use of the graphing calculator is an integral part of the course.

**548 Pre-calculus**                                      **Grades 11, 12**                                      **Credit 1.0**                                      **College Prep**  
This is a traditional pre-calculus course. In the first semester, emphasis is placed on the trigonometric functions and their graphs. In the second semester, emphasis is placed on linear, quadratic, polynomial, rational, exponential and logarithmic functions and their graphs. The course strives to bring students to an understanding of the connections among the representations of functions graphically, numerically, analytically and verbally. Emphasis is placed more on application and less on theory. The graphing calculator is used extensively.

**546 Trigonometry/Statistics**                      **Grade 12**                                      **Credit 1.0**                                      **College Prep**  
This year long course is a semester of trigonometry followed by a semester of statistics. In the trigonometry course, both circular and triangle trigonometry are studied. Topics include graphing of the trigonometric functions and solving equations and triangles. Emphasis is placed more on application and less on theory. The statistics course develops the students’ ability to gather, organize, interpret, and present data related to problem solving or decision-making situations. Topics studied include graphical and numerical techniques to study patterns and departures from patterns, the normal distribution, data collection, and



are: parametric, polar and vector functions and their derivatives and integrals, analysis of planar curves, numerical solution of differential equations using Euler's method, logistic differential equations and sequences and series and their applications to polynomial approximation, convergence, divergence and error analysis. Students are required to take the Advanced Placement Examination.

**552 Honors Calculus**                      **Grade 11, 12**                      **Credit 1.0**                      **Honors**

**Prerequisite: A student wishing to register for Honors Calculus must have completed Honors Pre-calculus and receive the recommendation of her current teacher.**

This course is designed for those students who show aptitude in mathematics, have successfully completed pre-calculus and are capable of moving at an accelerated pace. Students study limits and continuity, derivatives, the definite and indefinite integral, area, volume, and a variety of applications. Emphasis is placed on the ways that concepts, problems and results can be expressed geometrically, numerically, analytically and verbally. Interpreting results, explaining solutions and justifying conclusions are desired goals. The use of the graphing calculator is an integral part of the course.

**563 Accounting**                      **Grade 11, 12**                      **Credit 0.5**                      **College Prep**

This elective course covers basic accounting theory, which deals with organizing, recording, classifying, summarizing, reporting and interpreting financial data. It creates a solid base of practical accounting knowledge and provides a foundation for those who may go on to study accounting or business in college. Connections to general business topics are introduced. Relevancy of certain topics to personal finance situations will be noted where applicable. No previous accounting experience is necessary. Accounting is an elective course in addition to the Mathematics requirement.

## SCIENCE

The Science Department supports the school's philosophy of educating the whole person. In order to help the school attain this goal the Science Department presents a comprehensive curriculum in the physical and biological disciplines. Science concepts and the development of the scientific method and its applications are stressed in the teaching of the college preparatory, honors, and advanced placement courses. Laboratory investigations instill the concepts presented and the use of current technology in the classroom develops a positive attitude for science in the student's life. Villa Maria requires the successful completion of three years of a lab science for graduation. *Courses required are: Physical Science or Physics, Biology and Chemistry.*

SUBJECT	GRADE 9	GRADE 10	GRADE 11	GRADE 12
<b>SCIENCE</b>	Honors Biology Biology Physical Science	Honors Chemistry Chemistry Biology	Chemistry Physics Honors Physics AP Physics 1 AP Biology AP Chemistry Anatomy/Physiology Honors Anat/Physiology Environ Science Astronomy Honors Genetics	Physics Honors Physics AP Physics 1 AP Biology AP Chemistry AP Physics C: Mechanics Anatomy/Physiology Honors Anat/Physiology Environ Science Astronomy Honors Genetics

### **611 Honors Biology**

**Grade 9 Credit 1.0**

**Honors**

This course covers in great depth and detail the study of living things on the cellular, molecular and organism level. Laboratory experiences augment knowledge gained through class study.

### **612 Biology**

**Grade 9, 10 Credit 1.0**

**College Prep**

The study of living things on the cellular, molecular and organism levels enhances the student's appreciation for the wonders of God's universe. Knowledge gained through class study is illustrated by laboratory investigations.

### **613 Physical Science**

**Grade 9 Credit 1.0**

**College Prep**

This course covers the study of matter and energy and their interactions. It will incorporate many hands-on activities to demonstrate concepts and principles while providing an introduction to problem solving, scientific research, and analysis of data. Students will be introduced to the major concepts of both chemistry (the structure of matter and its behavior) and physics (the nature of forces, motion and energy).

### **626 AP Biology**

**Grade 11, 12 Credit 1.5**

**Advanced Placement**

**Prerequisite: A- or higher in Honors Biology/CP Biology and Honors Chemistry, PSAT scores consistent with the recommended AP expectancies and obtain department approval. Exceptional students may enroll without the above prerequisites by invitation only.**

This is a rigorous course designed for motivated students in which biochemistry, molecular and cellular biology as well as evolution, ecology, microbiology and human physiology are discussed. The laboratory component of this course includes the required AP Biology labs in addition to other investigations. AP Biology is equivalent to a year of freshman college biology and is highly recommended for prospective



independent work than the honors level. It presents the basic physics principles surrounding kinematics, dynamics, energy, circular motion, oscillations, and waves, as well as electrical forces fields and circuits. Experiments and demonstrations will be included, although the primary stress will be on problem solving and developing critical thinking skills. Students can expect independent work during the summer and are required to take the Advanced Placement Physics 1 Examination.

**630 AP Physics C: Mechanics**                      **Grade 12 Credit 1.0**                      **Advanced Placement**  
**Prerequisite: A- or higher in Honors Physics. Calculus is required concurrently. Exceptional students may enroll without the above prerequisites by invitation only.**

This course follows the College Board guidelines for Advanced Placement and uses a college text. It is representative of the typical introductory college physics course and is intended for those who will be required to take such a course in college - especially those who plan to study engineering, science, or mathematics. Emphasis is placed on the algebraic description of physical phenomena; calculus will be utilized. Experiments and demonstrations will be included, although the primary stress will be on problem solving and developing critical thinking skills. Students can expect independent work during the summer and are required to take the Advanced Placement Physics C Mechanics Examination.

**639 Astronomy**                                      **Grade 11, 12 Credit 0.5**                                      **College Prep**

This introductory course on astronomy presents a fundamental study of our universe through topics such as historical astronomy, planets, the solar system, star formation and life cycle, galaxies, space exploration, and basic observational methods and tools.

**641 Human Anatomy/Physiology**                      **Grade 11, 12 Credit 1.0**                                      **College Prep**  
**Prerequisite: Chemistry and a B average or higher in all preceding Science Courses.**

This introductory course presents the brilliant complexities of the human body. It focuses on the structure and function of all eleven organ systems and their interdependence. Students should be motivated and interested in learning about the body, from cellular level through organ system.

**640 Honors Human Anatomy/Physiology**                      **Grade 11, 12 Credit 1.0**                                      **Honors**  
**Prerequisite: Honors Chemistry and a B average or higher in all preceding Science Courses.**

This introductory course presents an in-depth study of the brilliant complexities of the human body. It focuses on the structure and function of the eleven organ systems and their interdependence. Students should be interested in learning about the body, from cellular level through organ system, and motivated to learn medical terminology, understand the impact of disease and engage in thoughtful discussion around topics pertaining to the human body.

**642 Environmental Science**                      **Grade 11, 12**                                      **Credit 1.0**                                      **College Prep**  
**Prerequisite: Biology and Chemistry.**

The two main themes are Ecology and The Effects of Humans on the Environment. Ecology topics include tree identification, population dynamics, community interactions, earth science, biome identification, energy flow, and chemical cycling in ecosystems. Second semester topics include agriculture, land use planning, energy sources, biodiversity, and pollution. Students will learn the facts behind environmental issues and solutions so that they can make up their own minds about what should be done to promote a sustainable environment. Students will gain experience in collecting and analyzing data from both fieldwork on campus and in the lab.

**647 Honors Genetics**                                      **Grade 11, 12**                                      **Credit 0.5**                                      **Honors**  
**Prerequisites: B+ or higher in Honors Biology and Honors Chemistry; A or higher in CP Biology and CP Chemistry.**

This course will cover molecular and cellular biology; DNA structure and replication; mitosis and meiosis; gene regulation; complete, incomplete, and co-dominance; sex-linked patterns of inheritance; linked genes

and pedigrees. The role of DNA mutations, natural selection and other mechanisms of evolution will be studied along with evidences of evolution and the formation of phylogenetic trees. Current biotechnology and causes of human genetic diseases will be examined.



In this semester course, students will design a website, learn how to create digital photography using Photoshop, edit photos with drawing tablet tools, make photo mosaics, create animations with Flash, including “morphing”, frame by frame and “Claymation” animations. Emphasis will be project-oriented original work.

**673 Computer Game Design                      Grade 11-12                      Credit 0.5                      College Prep**

In this semester course, students will create an environment and control characters within it, create collisions, walls, mazes, obstacles and tally points. Logical thinking, problem solving, and controlling object behavior are emphasized. The class requires no prior understanding of programming or game creating experience.

**660 AP Computer Science Principles      Grade 10- 12                      Credit 1                      Advanced Placement**  
**Prerequisite: Grade of B or better in Algebra I**

AP Computer Science Principles introduces students to the foundational concepts of Computer Science and challenges them to explore how computing and technology can impact the world. There is a focus on creative problem solving, real-world applications, and building relevant solutions. AP Computer Science Principles prepares students for college and the workforce of tomorrow. The course offers a multidisciplinary approach to teaching the underlying principles of computation. The course will introduce students to the creative aspects of programming, abstractions, algorithms, large data sets, the Internet, cybersecurity concerns, and computing impacts. . All students must take the Multiple choice portion of the Advanced Placement exam in May, plus this exam includes 2 major projects submitted to AP Central Digital Portfolio before the exam.

**670 AP Computer Science A                      Grade 11- 12                      Credit 1.0                      Advanced Placement**  
**Prerequisite: Computer Programming 663 course, AP Computer Science Principles, or Approved Summer Computer Programming Course in Java**

This full year course will cover programming concepts in preparation for the Advanced Placement examination in **Computer Science A**. A focus on problem solving, data structures and writing clear modular programs is supported throughout the course. Students will also work in the community (WE) for exposure to real world problem solving. The programming language is Java, an object- oriented language which is used to create applications that will run on any computer and supports many web browser applications. Students will learn to design programs that are efficient, yet easy to understand and modify. All students must take the Advanced Placement exam in May.







**747 Collage: Mixed Media**                      **Grades 10-12**                      **Credit 0.25**                      **College Prep**  
**Prerequisite: Studio 1 (minimum one semester) (Sophomores currently enrolled in Studio 1 may take this course in the second semester only.)**  
Students will experiment with a variety of materials and subject matter in this semester course. We will research 20th century artists and techniques including but not limited to splatter paint, assemblage, printmaking, advanced drawing and painting, and cut paper collage. Students will create a variety of works inspired by these ideas and styles. An additional fee is required for this course.\*  
*(semester-long skinny)*

**748 Introduction to Sculpture**                      **Grades 11, 12**                      **Credit 0.25**                      **College Prep**  
In this semester class students will explore creative construction in three dimensions using a variety of media, including but not limited to wood, plaster, wire, and cardboard. Projects will deal with geometric, abstract and organic forms. Students will learn about and be inspired by famous sculptors throughout history while being able to express their own creativity. An additional fee is required for this course.\*

**701 Intro to Dance**                      **Grades 10-12**                      **Credit 0.25**                      **College Prep**  
This semester class is an introduction to dance. It will focus on understanding one's body and how it works. Touching on basic concepts in multiple styles of dance such as ballet, modern, and Jazz. No previous dance training required. Additional dance electives may be offered depending on course demand. Dance electives will be scheduled courses, can fulfill the Physical Education requirement, and will require an additional fee.

**709 Dance for Conditioning**                      **Grades 10-12**                      **Credit 0.25**                      **College Prep**  
This semester class will focus on enhancing athletic performance through basic dance training and conditioning to improve flexibility, endurance, agility and balance in the physically active student. Focus on proper alignment and increasing core strength will aid in injury prevention and balancing muscle groups. Dance electives will be scheduled courses, can fulfill the Physical Education requirement, and will require an additional fee.

**799 Theatrical Production and Design**                      **Grades 10-12**                      **Credit 0.5**                      **College Prep**  
This rigorous semester course is a complete immersion into the world of theatrical production. Students will choose a theatrical work to produce over the course of the semester. Students will work in all areas of the production, which include the following: actors, stage manager, assistant director, technicians, and designers (costume and set). The finished production will be performed at the end of the semester. All students, regardless of interest, will take part in an audition to cast the show at the end of the current school year. Students will also have a summer assignment involving their role in the production. Throughout the course guest speakers and theatrical performances will be utilized to enhance a student's view of the theatrical world. This class will be capped at 15 and upperclassmen are offered first preference.

**702-704 Madrigal Singers**                      **Grades 10-12**                      **Credit 0.5**                      **College Prep**  
The Madrigal Singers is an auditioned vocal ensemble of sophomores, juniors, and seniors. This year-long, half-block course will consist of rehearsals and classes designed to introduce students to a wide range of choral repertoire appropriate for the ensemble as well as to teach students about good choral/vocal technique and rehearsal etiquette. Work in this class will culminate in several performances including the Tri-M Induction, Christmas Concert, Fine Arts Festival, and additional performances as scheduled. Eligibility to audition is based on exemplary attendance and participation in Concert Chorus for at least one semester immediately prior to the auditions. Members of this ensemble are also required to maintain participation in Concert Chorus which meets Wednesdays after school. This ensemble is a year-long, not a semester-by-semester, commitment. Additional after-school, mandatory rehearsals are held close to performance dates; all ensemble members must be present for the entire duration of these mandatory rehearsals.

**705-708 String Ensemble****Grades 9-12****Credit 0.5****College Prep**

The String Ensemble is an auditioned string instrument ensemble of all grades. This year-long, half-block course will consist of rehearsals and classes designed to introduce students to a wide range of string repertoire appropriate for the ensemble as well as to teach students about good ensemble playing and rehearsal etiquette. Work in this class will culminate in several performances including the Tri-M Induction, Christmas Concert, Fine Arts Festival, and additional performances as scheduled. If ready, students may participate in off-campus competitions. Eligibility to audition is based on the level of the student's playing and commitment. Members of this ensemble are also required to maintain participation in Orchestra which meets Thursdays after school. This ensemble is a year-long, not a semester-by-semester, commitment. Additional after-school, mandatory rehearsals are held close to performance dates; all ensemble members must be present for the entire duration of these mandatory rehearsals.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND HEALTH

### WELLNESS & GUIDANCE

*Villa Maria Academy is proud to embrace the National Health Education Standards that were developed by the Joint Committee of the Association for the Advancement of Health Education; the American School Health Association; and the Society of State Directors who governs Health, Physical Education and Recreation in academic settings. The goal of this committee was to develop for schools what would be a framework for “world class” health education in this country. The Wellness model, which emphasizes the essence of balancing the mind/body/spirit triangle, has driven our curriculum to select specific performance indicators that focus on the development of both cognitive as well as personal-social skills that empower students to live healthier lives.*

*The health and physical education program has an instructional curriculum that enables our students to become responsible members of their families and communities. Skills stressed in all areas of learning include problem-solving, decision-making, critical-thinking, and effective communication. Students at Villa Maria Academy will take one semester of health education in the sophomore year. They will take two or more physical education electives to be completed in the sophomore year and may take additional electives in subsequent years if desired. We feel it is essential to enable students to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to promote health and overall well-being. Toward that end, we are committed to providing a framework for ongoing curriculum development, instruction, and assessment. All courses are taught for college prep credit. Required Guidance coursework counts in fulfillment of the Health and Wellness credits.*

#### **845 Health: Wellness and World Health**

**Grade 10**

**Credit: 0.5**

The goal of this course is to enhance the student’s well-being by creating a culture that integrates and balances the dimensions of wellness: social/environmental, physical, intellectual, emotional, and spiritual. Wellness emphasizes individual responsibility for well-being by making choices that will facilitate attainment of a higher level of health and fitness. It is an active process rather than a goal. It means becoming aware, developing attitudes and engaging in behaviors to make choices that enhance quality of life and maximize physical potential. This curriculum is designed to promote self-responsibility, motivation, and excellence in learning as well as a life-long commitment to wellness. This course will include content on decision-making, nutrition, substance use and abuse, and first aid, and it will explore the HIV/AIDS and STD curriculum provided by the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. Students will also be provided opportunities to explore current issues in health. The goal of this curriculum is for the students to acquire the knowledge and life skills necessary to make informed decisions regarding their health and well-being.

#### **846 Team Sports**

**Grades 10, 11, 12**

**Credit: 0.25**

This course is designed for students who enjoy the competition of team sports. Activities may include team handball, ultimate Frisbee, flag football, basketball, soccer, softball, and other team activities that require cooperation, leadership, and decision-making skills. Emphasis will be on team participation and strategic competition within a sport.

#### **847 Individual and Lifetime Sports**

**Grades 10, 11, 12**

**Credit: 0.25**

This course is designed for students who enjoy individual activities and competition. It will also highlight exposure to activities that can be carried over to adulthood and will help students assume responsibility for their own wellness through constructive use of leisure time. Students will gain knowledge of sports such as

tennis, track and field, and badminton, and activities such as pilates, yoga, and lawn games.

**848 Strength and Conditioning**                      **Grades 10, 11, 12**                      **Credit: 0.25**

This course is designed for students with a very strong interest in improving their physical conditioning. Students will receive instruction in all aspects of fitness, including nutrition, lifting techniques and safety, and cutting edge training. Students will be exposed to a variety of training methodologies as well as how and why the body responds to training.

**849 Outdoor and Adventure Education**                      **Grades 11, 12**                      **Credit: 0.25**

This course is designed for those students who like to test and exceed their perceived limits. Students will be exposed to individual and group physical, mental, and emotional challenges with the goal of developing problem-solving and cooperative skills, building confidence, and overcoming obstacles. Topics may include: team building and trust activities, hiking and observation, orienteering, knot-tying, outdoor skills, and climbing, belaying, and rappelling techniques. Instructor approval will be required for this course.

**841: Sports Medicine**                      **Grades 10, 11, 12**                      **Credit 0.5**

This is an introductory course to Sports Medicine, which explores many aspects of the specialized area of remediation for and prevention of athletic injuries. This course covers understanding of kinesiology as well as care, prevention and treatment of those injuries specific to athletes. Topics will include basic first aid, taping and wrapping, emergency action principles and basic sports nutrition through theory and practical applications. There is an additional course fee.

**868 Freshman Seminar**                      **Grade 9**                      **Credit 0.25**

Freshman Guidance assists freshman students in becoming oriented to Villa Maria and adjusted to life at high school. It addresses organizational and study skills, time management, extracurricular involvement, community engagement, college preparedness, and standardized testing. This course also affords the freshmen an opportunity to discuss the different qualities that go into building and maintaining strong character, both as a student at Villa Maria and a woman in today's world. The students identify possible obstacles and brainstorm solutions as well learn to make choices based on integrity.

**866 Sophomore Seminar**                      **Grade 10**                      **Credit 0.25**

Sophomore Guidance assists students in developing self-awareness, in building a strong college application profile, and in investigating multiple career pathways. Sophomores explore personal, academic and extracurricular interests and the way these relate to various career choices. This course uses Naviance/Family Connection to identify the student's strengths and blind spots through a personality type inventory and encourages the students to explore career options through the Holland Code and Career Interest Profiler. Students continue to assemble a strong resume and are encouraged to develop leadership skills in co-curricular and extra-curricular activities.

**870 College Guidance**                      **Grade 11**                      **Credit 0.25**

Junior College Guidance takes the self-awareness elements explored in the Sophomore Seminar course and guides students on how to incorporate that information into the college search. Juniors in this course practice articulating their strengths and experiences to help prepare them for personal statements, essays, and college admissions interviews. Students will become savvy with Family Connection and use the program as a resource for researching college data and developing their college interest list. Students will be taught

how to research the application process for schools they are interested in and are guided into appropriate class choices based on requirements to enter majors of interest. At the end of this course, students will have a list of personally well suited colleges, an understanding of what admissions representatives are looking for, and the know how to navigate a plethora of online college research tools.

**871 Senior College Guidance**

**Grade 12**

**Credit 0.25**

Senior College Guidance gives senior students the opportunity to have class with the guidance department in the beginning of their senior year. Counselors will walk the students through the college application process, assisting with completion of college applications, college essays, activities resumes, and other pertinent items. The counselors guide the students as a group to ensure that the senior class completes each task in a timely manner. This course's main purpose is to completely support the college application process as it is occurring and to allow the students to benefit from each other's experiences. A secondary, but no less valuable purpose is to prepare them for adjustment to college life and their academic career. The course will also strive to keep senior students "on-task" and focused throughout their senior year to support a strong transcript, scholarship eligibility, and completion of their capstone project.

## SENIOR CAPSTONE AND EXPERIENTIAL COURSEWORK

### **873 Senior Capstone Project**

**Grade 12**

**Credit 1.0**

An inquiry-based experience, driven by student interest, is required for graduation. It involves critical thinking, investigative research, problem solving, written summary and application of prior and acquired knowledge through documented field experiences and/or service. Fulfillment of a culminating assessment is required for graduation.

### **900/901 Diocesan Scholar Program**

**Grade 12    Credit 4.0    Advanced Placement**

Eligible students may be invited to apply to take college coursework sponsored through the Archdiocese of Philadelphia at one of the local Catholic Universities within the Archdiocese. Students are notified of their eligibility in mid February and successful candidates are notified in late March. Grades are not incorporated into the student's GPA but are noted on the transcript as being equivalent to Advanced Placement weight.