

## SOCIAL STUDIES

Graduation requirement: three credits of high school social studies, including one year of U.S. history

Core classes: offered at honors, college prep, and foundations levels

ISOS (9<sup>th</sup> grade) → World History (10<sup>th</sup> grade) → U.S. History (11<sup>th</sup> grade)

Elective classes for juniors and seniors (semester classes):

AP U.S. History (year-long class for interested juniors as their U.S. history course)	
AP Human Geography (year-long course for seniors)	
Philosophy	Economics
History of Modern Feminism	Psychology
Holocaust	Street Law
Current Affairs	Classical Western Civilization

Course #	Course Title	Grade Level	Credits	Prerequisites
210	Introduction to Social Science	9	1	
215	Intro. to Social Science Honors	9	1	
220	World History	10	1	ISOS or Foundations
225	World History Honors	10	1	ISOS
271	Social Studies Foundations	9-10	1	
230	U.S. History	11	1	World History
265	AP U.S. History	11	1	World History
255	AP Human Geography	12	1	U.S. History
213	History of Modern Feminism	11-12	½	
214	Classical Western Civilization	11-12	½	
246	Street Law	11-12	½	
248	Psychology	11-12	½	
250	Philosophy	11-12	½	
261	The Holocaust	11-12	½	
266	Economics	11-12	½	
269	Current Affairs	11-12	½	

### 210 INTRODUCTION TO SOCIAL SCIENCE, 9 (1 credit)

This ninth-grade social studies course introduces students to the main disciplines and skills of the GSA social studies program. Students study the subdisciplines of government, economics, history, and geography through topics and case studies drawn mostly from the United States but also from other countries. Social studies students and citizens must have a body of knowledge, but more importantly, must use that knowledge for the purpose of developing and articulating opinions. Students learn to discern patterns in information, investigate the accuracy of information, arguments, and sources, and develop and debate opinions about social studies issues. Students learn more about using readings, maps, charts, and graphs to extract and analyze information. Students develop their writing skills within the social studies, especially argumentative and persuasive writing.

### **215 INTRODUCTION TO SOCIAL SCIENCE HONORS, 9 (1 credit)**

This ninth-grade social studies course introduces students to the main disciplines and skills of the GSA social studies program. Students study the subdisciplines of government, economics, history, and geography through topics and case studies drawn mostly from the United States but also from other countries. Social studies students and citizens must have a body of knowledge, but more importantly, must use that knowledge for the purpose of developing and articulating opinions. Students learn to discern patterns in information, investigate the accuracy of information, arguments, and sources, and develop and debate opinions about social studies issues. Students learn more about using readings, maps, charts, and graphs to extract and analyze information. Students develop their writing skills within the social studies, especially argumentative and persuasive writing.

### **220 WORLD HISTORY, 10 (1 credit)**

*Prerequisites: Introduction to Social Science, Introduction to Social Science Honors, or Social Studies Foundations*

This course introduces students to eight important themes in history: power and authority, religious and ethical systems, revolution, interaction with the environment, economics, cultural interaction, empire building, and science and technology. These themes are explored globally from antiquity to modern times. Students develop organizational skills, note-taking skills from lecture, video, and books, as well as critical-thinking skills. There are written assignments, chances for independent research, group projects, homework, and checks for comprehension that are test- and quiz-based.

### **225 WORLD HISTORY HONORS, 10 (1 credit)**

*Prerequisites: Introduction to Social Science or Introduction to Social Science Honors*

This course introduces students to eight important themes in history: power and authority, religious and ethical systems, revolution, interaction with the environment, economics, cultural interaction, empire building, and science and technology. These themes are explored globally from antiquity to modern times. Students develop organizational skills; note-taking skills from lecture, video, and books; as well as critical-thinking skills. There are written assignments, chances for independent research, group projects, homework, and checks for comprehension that are test- and quiz-based. Students in this course should be prepared for significant homework, especially reading, and significant class discussion.

### **271 SOCIAL STUDIES FOUNDATIONS 9 and/or 10 (1 credit)**

*Prerequisites: None. May be taken in both the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grades with teacher permission*

The subject matter of this joint ninth- and tenth-grade social studies course alternates every other year. Students can take this course in either or both years as a foundations-level alternative to ISOS and to World History. Students study government, economics, history, and geography through topics and case studies drawn both from the United States and from other countries. Social studies students and citizens must have a body of knowledge, but more importantly, must use that knowledge for the purpose of developing and articulating opinions. As a foundations-level course, there is special focus on working with students on their reading and writing skills in the social studies. Students also learn to investigate the accuracy of information, arguments, and sources, and to develop and debate opinions about social studies issues.

### **230 U.S. HISTORY, 11 (1 credit)**

*Prerequisites: World History or World History Honors, or Social Studies Foundations*

This course deals with the development of American ideals and institutions through the study of major events and personalities of American history from colonization to the modern era. The course provides a perspective on the relationship between the past and contemporary issues. Emphasis is placed on the development of written and oral communication skills and research through special projects, papers, simulations, and debates. Students are routinely required to use charts and maps as well as their reading to make inferences and draw conclusions about major events in U.S. history. Documentaries are also used to enrich the study of historic periods.

### **265 AP U.S. HISTORY, 11 (1 credit)**

*Prerequisites: World History or World History Honors*

This course deals with the development of American society, ideals, and institutions through an intensive study of the political, social, economic, and cultural history of the United States. The course is designed to provide students with the analytic skills and factual knowledge necessary to deal critically with materials and problems in U.S. history. Students learn to assess a variety of historical materials—their relevance to a particular problem, their reliability and importance—and to weigh the evidence and interpretations presented in historical scholarship. In preparation, summer reading and writing are required. Students who enroll in this class should be seeking a college-level history experience; they will also be required to take the AP exam in May.

### **255 AP HUMAN GEOGRAPHY, 12 (1 credit)**

*Prerequisites: U.S. History or AP U.S. History*

Human geography is the study of the geographic patterns of human culture, politics, and economics. We study how human society is influenced by the physical, cultural, and spatial environment. Topics of study are mostly from modern history and current events; our range of focus will include the local geography of Hancock County as well as geographic issues from the United States and around the world. In addition to learning geographic content knowledge, students develop skills in mapping, statistics, graphical representation of data, and original research. This course is a college-level introduction to human geography. Students should expect a level of independent learning and a workload commensurate with college expectations. Students are also expected to enter the course with a significant knowledge base from previous social studies courses. Students who enroll in this course are required to take the AP test in May.

### **213 HISTORY OF MODERN FEMINISM, 11-12 (½ credit)**

This course will explore the struggles, fights, and experiences of feminists across the globe during the last few centuries. We will explore issues that women have wrestled with for ages: the call for equality in education, the desire for universal suffrage, the mix of fierce indignation and deep scientific research in the early environmentalist movement, the rallying cry for equal pay and reproductive rights, and today's global perspective on sexual politics and human empathy. Our goal is to gain an understanding of how feminism has evolved over time. Students will be evaluated through their written responses to assigned texts, active participation during classroom discussion, homework completion, and performance on several tests.

### **214 CLASSICAL WESTERN CIVILIZATION, 11-12 (½ credit)**

Thousands of years have passed since the ancient Mesopotamians, Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans walked the earth. Much of their world has crumbled into dust, but their mythology, artifacts, and philosophies continue to inspire history lovers today. This course will tell the story of the early history of Western civilization. Instead of relying on empires, wars, and dates to describe this vanquished world, we will also study the art, literature, personalities, religions, and social structures of the time. We will attempt to draw connections between the past and Western culture today. Students will be evaluated on the persuasive essay responses to a series of writing prompts and homework, as well as several tests.

### **246 STREET LAW, 11-12 (½ credit)**

This course examines various aspects of your legal rights and responsibilities as citizens. Topics will include law and values, civil liberties, and criminal law. We will also learn about careers in criminal justice, such as a CSI detective or a police officer, through guest speakers. Students are evaluated through tests, reports, case studies, worksheets, and class participation, and are expected to participate actively in class debates.

### **248 PSYCHOLOGY, 11-12 (½ credit)**

This course introduces students to some of the major areas of psychology. Students explore the nature of psychology: Is it objective and scientific? What are the different approaches to psychology? Students are

introduced to some of the main topic areas of psychology: consciousness, learning, intelligence, abnormal psychology, personality, and gender. The coursework and grading emphasizes developing and arguing opinions based on fact and analysis. Students may take this course because of interest in a related career (psychology, medical careers, advertising) or out of personal interest.

#### **250 PHILOSOPHY, 11-12 (½ credit)**

Ethics is the branch of philosophy that aims to answer the question, “How should I live?” Once we take this question seriously, many other difficult, but fascinating, questions emerge: “How do I know what is right?” and “Is right for me the same as right for others?” “What are human rights?” “What happens when rights conflict?” “Do I have to tolerate opinions and behaviors that religious conviction tells me are wrong?” “Do religious beliefs or cultural norms justify offensive or harmful behavior?” “Is it ever right to impose my beliefs and code of conduct on others?” “How do we decide how to treat the unborn? the mentally incompetent? the very young? the very old? the dying? criminals? terrorists?” “Do animals have rights?” “Do I have a moral duty to protect the environment?” In this course, we notice the sorts of problems we begin to encounter when we try to answer these questions; consider several historically important theoretical ethical frameworks; and study in depth several “live” ethical issues, such as assisted suicide, abortion, famine, animal rights, offense to others, and bioethics.

#### **261 THE HOLOCAUST, 11-12 (½ credit)**

This course will provide an in-depth look at Germany’s post-World War I social and political environment that gave rise to Adolf Hitler’s rule and the attempted genocide of the European Jewish population. Hitler’s actions during World War II will be examined, as well as the persecution that the Jewish population of Europe endured during his rule. The aftermath of Hitler’s reign on Germany and the Jewish population will also be analyzed through the course, along with reactions from America and other areas of the world. Students are required to read and discuss at least one book about the Holocaust. Films are used extensively in this class.

#### **266 ECONOMICS, 11-12 (½ credit)**

Economics is designed to introduce students to the basic concepts of macro and microeconomics. Students learn about the economic factors that affect local businesses and citizens; in particular, students learn how interest rates, inflation, tax policy, and supply and demand factors impact their lives and affect local businesses. Students learn to think critically and creatively about current economic issues facing America and the world today while interacting with a variety of materials to further their understanding. This course is designed for students who may have a future operating their own business, but should also be valuable to students who might study it further in college.

#### **269 CURRENT AFFAIRS, 11-12 (½ credit)**

The course provides an overall understanding of the importance of daily events and demonstrates to students how these events affect their day-to-day lives. This course includes examination and spirited discussion of international, national, state, and local issues with the intent of interpreting their significance. Topics could include education, race, energy, environmental protection, free speech, gun rights, and health care. The course also focuses on the electoral process, examining selected presidential campaigns, analyzing candidates, issues, tactics, political cartoons, and campaign commercials. Daily use of a variety of news media will help place current affairs within a historical perspective as well as consider their current context and future implications.