Course Descriptions
2021–2022

Arts
Career & Technical Education
English
Health & Physical Education
Mathematics
Science
Social Studies
World Languages
List of Contributors:

Brittany Andrews
Natasha Baker
Erica Baz
Tyler Bodlak
Kayla Fletcher
Marsha Frazier
Tamika Jarvis
Zoë Jones
Ted Maris-Wolf
Jason Pacious
Micaiah Presley
Chandra Wright
Academic Course Sequencing

CTE, Arts, and Physical Health Elective Courses:

No sequence required with the exception of Intro to Computer Science for 9th grade students and Senior College & Career Advisory for members of the 12th grade class.
ARTS COURSE OFFERINGS

**Music Literacy (0.5 Credits):**
Music Literacy is a quarter-long course designed to provide students with a broad overview of various topics across the music spectrum. Through the National Core Music Standards: *creating, performing, responding,* and *connecting*; students will explore the elements of music, identify ideas that are central to the music discipline and answer essential questions in relation to the music discipline. Students will participate in lectures, project-based learning activities, presentations and games to obtain a better understanding of the course content.

**Theater (1 Credit):**
This course introduces and provides experience in all aspects of theater arts. Students study basic principles of acting including character analysis, textual interpretation, voice, movement, collaboration, improvisation, and critical analysis of performance. Additionally, students gain a working knowledge of theater history and the multiple forms of theatrical performance, as well as the technical aspects of theater and theatrical design. Special emphasis is placed on theatrical vocabulary and codes of conduct, as well as the creation, production, direction of monologues and scenes.

**Introduction to Visual Arts (1 Credit):**
Intro. to Visual Arts ("Art") will offer students the opportunity to participate in the creation of comprehensive art projects. Students will also learn different art techniques and vocabulary. Students of Intro. to Visual Arts will have the opportunity to gain proficiency in the use of a variety of art mediums including graphite, charcoal, colored pencils and others.
CAREER & TECHNICAL EDUCATION COURSE OFFERINGS

**Business Entrepreneurship (1 Credit):**
This course is designed to introduce students to the basics of owning and operating their own business. Students will learn about business types, entrepreneurial ideology, accounting, finance, market research, business history, contracts, law, and management and will be provided tools to plan for their own successful and productive business future. They will apply these concepts in a simulation business plan from origination to presentation of a plan to “investors,” creating their own company from inception to product launch. *Students in this course are also encouraged to take advantage of an internship with CHAT’s Workforce Development Programs.*

**Driver Education (1 Credit):**
Driver literacy is an important life skill. Cars do not crash; people crash them. CHA's classroom and in-car driver education classes are intended to help eligible students develop a conceptual understanding of safe driving practices and improve their skill-based performance as drivers. This class will also stress the abilities to reason and connect safe driving skills with safe driving attitudes. Emphasis is placed on linking the skills of visual search, managing time, and space, and maintaining vehicle balance. Significant attention is given to awareness of risks, maintenance of alertness, driver distractions and protection of occupants.

**Economics and Personal Finance (1 Credit):**
Students need a solid foundation in economics and personal finance to be productive citizens in our ever-changing global economy. This course allows students to understand the complexities of the U.S. economy on a personal, national, and international level. Students are tasked with taking on an economic mindset, considering how decisions made now can affect their financial future. The class educates students on the importance of personal financial literacy and money management skills as it pertains to their own financial and life decisions. *Students of Economics and Personal Finance will take the WISE Certification test upon completion of this course.*

**Introduction to Computer Science (1 Credit):**
This course will focus on the conceptual ideas of computing, providing the student with knowledge of why certain languages and programs are used in computer problem solving. Students will be introduced to Python and music programming. This course will expose the student to the computational practices of algorithm development, problem-solving and programming using real-life scenarios. Students will be introduced to interface design, limits of computers, and societal and ethical issues centered on modern technology.

**Psychology of Spending (1 Credit):**
Psychology of Spending is an exploratory course that introduces students to psychology, psychological research methods, study of emotions, motivation, personality and social psychology. The course leads to a focused study of money, family habits and norms about money, social media influence, advertising and marketing that play a conscious and subconscious role in how we spend, save and view money.
**Senior College & Career Advisory (1 Credit):**

The Senior College & Career Advisory course is a semester-long course offered during the 1st half of senior year, with bi-weekly check-ins throughout the remainder of the school year. This course is designed for Seniors to adequately prepare for life after high school. Students in this course will research college and/or career options to aid in choosing their desired post-secondary path: college, workforce or the armed forces. Students will participate in lectures, project-based learning, group activities, campus & industry visits, guest speakers & panels.
ENGLISH COURSE OFFERINGS

**English 9 (1 Credit):**
The overall theme for English 9 is “Community.” English 9 at Church Hill Academy introduces students to the overarching theme of building and establishing community. The ninth grade student is given opportunities to plan and present oral presentations for both independent and collaborative projects. Students are introduced to literary works that highlight the functions of community and society and are encouraged to make connections to their personal experiences. Students will begin developing research skills by gathering various sources and learning to correctly cite these sources using a standard method of documentation. An emphasis is placed on effective collaborative work to reinforce the importance of building community, establishing personal responsibility, and creating spaces for open and inclusive discussion. Key texts include *Animal Farm* by George Orwell and *The Giver* by Lois Lowry.

**English 10 (1 Credit):**
The overall theme for English 10 is “Identity.” English 10 at Church Hill Academy challenges students to explore and think critically about identity across eras and cultures. As students continue to build and develop community, they are exposed to literary texts that explore culture through coming of age stories and are encouraged to reflect on their own personal experiences and identity. Students begin to analyze and compare various authors’ perspectives on similar topics and make connections to historical and societal references. English 10 students will build on previous knowledge of self and peer-editing to strengthen writing skills. Students will continue to develop research and presentation skills through the use of technology and media. Students will expand their understanding of grammar and mechanics through written and oral language. Key texts include *The Hate U Give* by Angie Thomas.

**English 11 (1 Credit):**
The overall theme for English 11 is “Social Commentary.” English 11 at Church Hill Academy explores classic and contemporary American Literature from the 19th century to the present. Students plan and deliver informative and persuasive oral presentations to exercise their ability to formulate an argument and support it with evidence. Students explore common themes in American literature, such as race, gender, class, and religion, and how literary texts reflect or critique American history and culture. Students draw conclusions and make inferences from literature and synthesize information with correct citations and textual support. English 11 focuses on building and refining student skills in critical thinking, analytical reading, and persuasive and informative essay writing. Key texts include *The Other Wes Moore* by Wes Moore and *The Girl Who Fell from the Sky* by Heidi W. Durrow.

**English 12 (1 Credit):**
The overall theme for English 12 is “Universal Themes and Global Citizenship.” English 12 at Church Hill Academy encourages students to find new and relevant meaning in classic texts of both American and British literature. Throughout the course, students will refine critical thinking, reading, and analysis skills. English 12 students will produce written and oral presentations that reflect standards for higher education and the workplace. Students will discuss and analyze contemporary issues and explore their role as community,
national, and global citizens. Students will demonstrate their ability to effectively articulate their thoughts and research through written and oral delivery, while building self and social advocacy skills. The highlight of English 12 is a Senior Dissertation in which students explore a topic of their choice and demonstrate a mastery of critical thinking, research, and presentation skills. Key texts include *Macbeth* by William Shakespeare and *The Bluest Eye* by Toni Morrison.
HEALTH & PHYSICAL EDUCATION COURSE OFFERINGS

Health (0.5 Credit):
High school is a time of many changes and important decisions. Health class is designed to help students learn about their changing bodies, help them sort out emotions and personal values, and aid them in maintaining optimum health as a lifelong process. Instruction is aimed at showing students how to take responsibility for making healthy decisions. The course centers on the student to make informed, health-enhancing decisions that can positively affect them personally, within their familial unit, and in their community.

Physical Education (0.5 Credit):
Physical Education focuses on exposing students to a variety of physical activities that will remain accessible throughout their lifetimes. This class is intended to expand our students’ understanding of sport and exercise, to encourage them to see the physical, social, and emotional benefits of exercise, and increase their confidence in their ability to lead a physically healthy life. At the conclusion of this course, the goal is that each student has experienced or discovered a form of exercise that they enjoy and continue to engage.

Driver’s Education (0.5 Credit):
Driver’s Education is a 30-hour classroom course that provides detailed understanding of safe driving practices. Emphasis is placed on awareness of visual risk, spacing, time management and distance, vehicle safety and maintenance. Students learn search methods to recognize potential risk and ways to avoid or react to risk. Attention is given to risk awareness, alertness, avoidance of driving distraction, and protection of self and others. The class covers fuel efficiency standards, recognition of alcohol impairment and road rage, motorcycle awareness, police stops, organ donation, and distracted driving. At the conclusion of this course, students will complete a competency test, and will be prepared for the behind the wheel component of Driver Education.
MATHEMATICS COURSE OFFERINGS

**Algebra 1 (1 Credit):**
Algebra 1 is a foundational course with a focus on solving for unknown variables. This is offered as a semester course, or separated into two parts throughout the year based on student learning needs. Within this course, students learn how to represent and analyze patterns within real-life situations. Students dive into operations on expressions and polynomials, linear equations and inequalities, functions, and statistics. Each day students are taught a new skill or concept, then given opportunities to reinforce their learning with an emphasis on peer collaboration by means of practice problems, puzzles, or supplemental activities.

**Algebra 2 (1 Credit):**
Algebra 2 is a semester-long math course where students build upon math skills developed in other courses and expand into a deeper understanding of mathematical concepts and their real-world applications. These math skills are further developed through mathematical equations and the use of problem-solving. The ability to apply learned mathematical concepts to real-world situations are approached through graphing and transformations of graphs. Graphing calculators are used to help students create connections to the real-world application and aid in the development of their math skills.

**Geometry (1 Credit):**
Geometry is a course designed to increase investigative learning skills. This course can be taught in one semester, or separated into two parts throughout the entire year based on student learning needs. By discovering theorems and postulates, students gain a deeper understanding of them and are equipped to apply them to the real world. Throughout the course, students will use inductive and deductive reasoning as well as prior knowledge of algebraic skills to explore angle relationships, characteristics of geometric figures, and transformations. Emphasis is placed on methodology and proving solutions by means of two-column proofs and verbal justification. Compasses and protractors will be used as students learn how to create various geometric constructions. Each day in class, students will work together investigating concepts to develop conjectures that can be used to solve problems.

**Pre-Calculus (1 Credit):**
Pre-Calculus is a semester-long advanced math course where students build upon math skills developed in other courses and expand into more complex understanding of mathematical concepts and their real-world applications. This course is best for students seeking a challenging math course for college preparatory. Students taking this course should have mastery of both geometry and Algebra II. Students’ math skills are further developed through mathematical equations and the use of problem-solving. The ability to apply learned mathematical concepts to real-world situations are approached through graphing and transformations of graphs. Graphing calculators are used to help students create connections to the real-world application and aid in the development of their math skills.
SCIENCE COURSE OFFERINGS

**Biology (1 Credit):**
This class is designed to introduce students to the basic fundamentals of Biology—the study of life! In this course, students investigate biological systems at the molecular, cellular, and macrobiological level. We explore biological themes such as cellular biology, evolution, genetics, ecology and anatomy. Laboratory exercises and field trips are incorporated into the curriculum for students to gain hands-on experience and scientific practice. Projects and reading supplements are also included with each unit of instruction to provide students with opportunities to draw connections between course material and current events in our society.

**Chemistry (1 Credit):**
Chemistry is a semester-long science course where students investigate and develop an understanding of how matter and energy interact with one another. The understanding of how these interactions take place are explored through laboratory experiences, mathematical equations, and the use of problem-solving. Science investigation skills are further developed through the implementation of scientific methodology by building skills like observation, communication, hypothesizing, inferring, designing experiments, and analyzing data. There are also new technologies introduced to help students create connections to real-world science data collection and to aid in their science investigative skills.

**Earth Science (1 Credit):**
Earth Science is a semester-long science course where students delve into the study of the planet earth and its composition, structure, processes, and its history; the atmosphere, fresh water, and oceans; and its environment in space. The history of space exploration and the study of space will help with developing thought processes about Earth and space. Through problem solving, analytics and creative thinking an understanding of earth's systems is developed. Science investigation skills are continuously developed through the implementation of scientific methodology by building skills like observation, communication, hypothesizing, inferring, designing experiments, and analyzing data.

**Physics (1 Credit):**
Physics is a semester-long science course where students utilize their investigative reasoning and deduction skills they have curated throughout their science courses to evaluate scientific evidence. This course is best for students seeking a challenging science course for college preparatory. Students taking this course should have a mastery of Algebra II and be taking/have taken pre-calculus. The understanding of how scientific investigation can be used to understand our world is explored through laboratory experiences, mathematical equations, and the use of problem-solving. Science investigation skills are further developed through the implementation of scientific methodology by building skills like observation, communication, hypothesizing, inferring, designing experiments, and analyzing data. There are also new technologies introduced to help students create connections to real-world science data collection and to aid in their science investigative skills.
SOCIAL STUDIES COURSE OFFERINGS

**African American History (1 Credit):**

It is impossible to understand United States history without appreciating the lives, perspectives, and contributions of Africans and their descendants in the making of America and the articulation—and commitment to realization—of our ideals. In what ways have the ideas and actions of African Americans shaped our society since its inception? How did slavery and freedom, prejudice and privilege develop together in Virginia and what would become the United States? How and where is African American history represented in Richmond and elsewhere today? Students examine such questions in an in-depth exploration of Virginia and United States history focused on African American perspectives, challenges, and accomplishments. As James Baldwin famously stated, “History is not the past. It is present. We carry our history with us. We are our history.” With Richmond as their primary case study, students explore how and why legacies of slavery, Reconstruction, and the long civil rights movement continue to present themselves in a variety of forms today. Students engage with various community leaders who, in this moment, are succeeding in their efforts to rename prominent roads, erect new monuments, and restore sacred places that honor the city’s many African American heroes. In this way, students focus on the political impact of a contested past and the relationship between American history and public memory in Richmond over the past 150 years. Various forms of historical evidence are considered, including documentary evidence, art, film, music, architecture, autobiography, archaeological data, and the Richmond landscape. Assignments reflect the experiential approach of the course. In addition to conducting oral history interviews to illuminate community members’ personal experiences during the Civil Rights Era, students design an original memorial for the city and argue before the class why the memorial is needed in the proposed location at this time.

**Law, Justice, and Social Change (1 Credit):**

Ongoing protests against police brutality, injustice, and systemic racism in Richmond and across the nation affirm Rep. John R. Lewis’s call to action: “If you see something that is not right, not fair, not just, you have a moral obligation to do something about it.” At certain moments in our history, everyday Americans have felt morally obligated to risk their lives and livelihoods to demand justice through law, activism, and popular protest. In this course, we seek historical context to better understand the present-day protests and reform movements that many of us now find ourselves a part of. How and why were repressive laws and systems of injustice created in our country, and why have they been so difficult to reform or erase? How have Americans demanded justice in the past, and what lessons do they have for us? Specifically, what do we “have a moral obligation to do something about” in Richmond, and how do we go about doing it? In seeking answers to these and other questions, we explore the work of thinkers and activists—past and present—who have called for, created, and chronicled societal change, that the nation might one day realize the long-stated ideal of “liberty and justice for all.”

**Virginia and U.S. Government (1 Credit):**

All clubs, teams, schools, organizations, communities, and nations create governments in which certain members make and enforce laws to promote unity and peace within the group and to ensure the group’s perpetuation. Many would agree with the 17th-century English philosopher Thomas Hobbes, who wrote that life without government would be “poor, nasty, brutish, and short.” Over time, how have we designed our
various governments—from the local to national levels—according to our evolving values and understandings of human nature? How do we select our leaders? How and by whom are our economic systems, laws, and public policies devised and applied in our communities and nations? In this course, we examine such big questions by exploring students' personal connections to the ideas and people who represent various levels and systems of government that shape their civic and economic lives. Students use their own neighborhoods and communities in the greater Richmond area as the primary laboratories for understanding such large topics as citizenship, representative government, civil liberties, and changes in foreign and immigration policy. Students create life maps, in which they identify their individual interactions and places within civic and economic systems that have helped to define and shape their realities. Course assignments are read alongside the New York Times and The Free Press, to better understand the relevance of political theory and government policy to students' everyday lives. In addition, over the course of the semester, students interview community members who represent local, state, and federal government entities. In this way, students create a collective community map of government structures and functions that depict in real terms a diverse and evolving democratic society at work.

**Virginia and United States History (1 Credit):**

What are the origins of hip-hop? Who invented basketball, and why has it become so important in American life? Should the government ever be allowed to restrict your freedoms? Do you live in a truly “free” country? What does “freedom” mean, exactly? These are just a few of the big questions we’ll be asking ourselves as we travel through time and place to better understand the state and nation in which we live. Our study of the past is organized into 1-2-week units, each guided by a central theme and question. Together, we will answer questions that will demand investigation, reflection, and discussion. Most course units culminate in a “summit,” in which students will represent historical figures they have researched. With a bit of historical imagination, we will convene meetings of individuals who lived in different time periods and places to imagine what a present-day conversation would sound like, if they were able to speak to one another! We will end the semester by choosing a person in our own life to interview, so that we can compare historical perspectives of a person we know to those of people in the past we have learned about this semester. Our final course project will include a narrative based upon our oral history interviews, as well as a class presentation.

**World Geography (1 Credit):**

How did climate change affect the outcome of the U.S. war in Afghanistan? Why are some neighborhoods in Richmond 10-20 degrees hotter than others on summer days? How important is technology in shaping our everyday lives—from where and how we live, to the kinds of educational opportunities and occupations that are available to us? Geography, our relationship to the natural environment and to social, political, and economic systems, helps us to answer such big and small questions that relate to the design of our neighborhoods, the shape of our city, or even the movement of wind, trade goods, and armies around the globe. Whether investigating Richmond’s East End or communities in coastal Bangladesh, we seek to better understand the myriad connections among the world’s people, places, and environments. Most course units culminate in a “summit,” in which students will represent ideas we have researched. With a bit of imagination, we will convene meetings of individuals from different parts of the world—and different time periods—to imagine what a present-day conversation would sound like, if they were able to speak to one another!
**City Semester (1 Credit):**
Located at the “fall line,” where rising tides meet river rapids, what became the City of Richmond has been a gathering place, an intersection of cultures, and a dynamic center of exchange for centuries. From its beginnings as Powhatan, a Native American settlement, to its later development as a colonial trading center, Revolutionary capital, and Civil War battleground, Richmond’s rugged environment and riverfront location have defined its possibilities. In this course, we journey through time and place to understand how Richmond’s environmental history shapes the biggest social, economic, and political issues of our day. We also explore visions for Richmond’s future development by examining various plans, designs, and proposals for “placemaking” in the city’s neighborhoods, historic districts, and commercial areas. City Semester is centered upon weekly excursions, to connect course readings and projects with a range of places and spaces. Students conduct fieldwork and original research through hands-on experiences in the city’s neighborhoods, parks, and cultural institutions. In short, the City of Richmond is our living, breathing textbook!

**Basic Biblical Interpretation (1 Credit):**
The Bible is without a doubt the most influential collection of books in human history. Sixty-six books written by over forty different authors, over a span of nearly two thousand years. This collection of books has been a source of hope for billions of people throughout human history. Whether you agree with its teachings or not, one has to grapple with the fact that these books--rather interpretations of their content--has started and ended wars, was used to enslave and to set people free, and is responsible for many of our social contracts that affirm human dignity. In this introductory biblical interpretation class students learn the importance of accurately interpreting the Bible and develop a framework for reading the Christian Scriptures.
WORLD LANGUAGE COURSE OFFERINGS

**Spanish I (1 Credit):**
This class is designed to introduce Spanish grammar and vocabulary in a way that students find compelling, so that they can functionally use the language in their everyday lives. As a class, we will learn to comprehend Spanish daily through listening, speaking, reading and writing in the language. Beyond learning the fundamentals of the Spanish language in the class, students will come to understand what it means to be an active global citizen as we explore the cultures of many different Spanish-speaking countries around the world. Through this class we will gain a better understanding of our own language and culture as we compare them to the Spanish language and culture abroad. Students will learn to reflect on their own culture while learning about the different cultures in Spanish-speaking countries and communities.

**Spanish II (1 Credit):**
This class builds on the foundation of Spanish I as students continue to develop their communicative and cultural competence through speaking, listening, reading and writing. Students will be introduced to more complex features of Spanish grammar and vocabulary and held to a greater level of accuracy when using basic language structures. Material is presented in a way that students can functionally use the language in their everyday lives. Students participate in individual and group activities and complete written and oral exercises to practice new vocabulary and grammar concepts. Students are encouraged to use the Spanish language in the classroom as often as possible. We will continue to investigate the cultures of many different Spanish-speaking countries around the world as we also gain a better understanding of our own. Throughout the course, students will progress in language proficiency and cultural knowledge that may apply these skills in opportunities beyond the classroom. Students will learn to reflect on their own culture while learning about the different cultures in Spanish-speaking countries and communities.

**Spanish III (1 Credit):**
This course begins with a review of essential Spanish I and II skills. The level of instruction assumes a basic knowledge of grammar concepts and vocabulary introduced in Spanish I and II. Emphasis is continually placed on using the Spanish language through speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Students participate in individual and group activities and complete written and oral exercises to practice new vocabulary and grammar concepts. Students are encouraged to use the Spanish language in the classroom as often as possible. We will also explore Hispanic culture, traditions, geography, and history, and students will have the opportunity to create presentations about Spanish-speaking countries and cultures. Our cultural exploration includes maps, newspaper and magazine articles, politicians, writers, musicians, past and current events from Spain and Latin America. Throughout the course, students will progress in their ability to communicate in Spanish with ease and confidence.