

# **West Academy High School**

## **Course Descriptions**

**2017-18**

# WEST ACADEMY COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

## **West Academy Diploma Requirements:**

### **Careers: Exploration & Development**

Students will explore three major themes to determine where their career interests lie. The first area students will explore include interests, values, and the ideal lifestyle and how these items will influence their career choice. Next the student will develop an individual career plan and from there the student will research the skills needed on the job and gain valuable insight on how to develop these skills. Students will use the information and research from above to further develop their employability skills. In this course, time will be spent on developing job-hunting skills, creating an employment portfolio, and pursuing job interests, as well as planning for post-secondary education if it is in the student's career plan.

### **Personal Finance:**

#### **No Prerequisite**

The basic objectives of this course are to help students explore all aspects of financial life: personal development, decisions affecting their future finances, lifestyle options and consequences, managing family living, personal finance, and money management.

### **Computer Applications 1**

#### **No Prerequisite**

The purpose of this course is to give students an in-depth introduction to Office 2010. Students will learn the fundamentals of Word, Excel, and PowerPoint. This course will acquaint students with the proper procedures to create documents, worksheets, databases, and presentations suitable for coursework, professional purposes, and personal use. Students who take this course will learn these skills by completing hands-on activities.

### **Health:**

#### **Required**

#### **No Prerequisite**

The health course is to help you recognize the value of attaining and maintaining good health. If you know the benefits and rewards of good health, you are more likely to find the motivation to achieve it. You need the knowledge in order to get healthy and to stay healthy.

### **Physical Education:**

#### **Required**

#### **No Prerequisite**

All students are required by state law to participate in physical education classes each year are in attendance. An effort is made to provide a variety of activities to meet the needs and interests of as many students as possible. The major goal is to provide activities that are life long.

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## **Social Studies**

**All students are required to have 6 social studies credits**

### **US Government:**

#### **Required**

The class will meet the requirements to earn a high school diploma from Basics and Beyond, DMACC, or transfer to any high school served by Basics and Beyond. Students will learn the make-up of the United States government systems from local to federal governments and how each is intertwined. Those students eligible to vote will register and exercise his/her right to vote on Election Day.

### **Possible Selves:**

#### **Required**

#### **No Prerequisite**

**All new students to WEST Academy are required to complete this class during their first trimester at WEST.** The Possible Selves program is designed to increase student motivation and to work on goal setting. Students will examine their future and determine what goals are important to them. They will then set goals, create plans and work toward their goals as part of the WEST program. Students will also complete the Socially Wise program which focuses on building relationships, handling difficult situations, and what to do in various situations.

### **American History I:**

#### **Required**

#### **No Prerequisite**

In American History 1 students will study from the beginnings of America during colonial times and its evolution through expansion as well as the division of the Civil War and their effects on society and culture and how they still impact us today. This course will meet the requirements needed to earn a high school diploma from WEST Academy, DMACC, or transfer to any high school served by WEST Academy.

### **American History II:**

#### **Required**

#### **Prerequisite: American History I**

American History 2 covers the expansion in size and population of America and expansions effect on society and culture from the 1870's to the early 1900's and how it still impacts us today. This course will meet the requirements needed to earn a high school diploma from WEST Academy, DMACC, or transfer to any high school served by WEST Academy.

## **Sociology:**

**Elective**

**No Prerequisite**

In Sociology we will discover the meaning behind behavior and society's impact on an individual. Through the text, quick labs, case studies, projects, and discussions students will have the opportunity to analyze current social issues relevant to an adolescent student. Major themes the course will discuss are: Cultural Diversity and Conformity, The Adolescent and Adult in Society, Social Stratification, Gender, Age and Health, Family, Education, and Religion in Society.

## **US Geography:**

**Elective**

**No Prerequisite**

This class will meet requirements for high school diploma from WEST Academy, DMACC diploma, or transfer to any high school served by WEST Academy. In United States Geography students learn the 5 basic themes of geography; location, place, human-environmental interaction, movement and region. It also includes how the U.S. relates to other parts of the world as well as local geography.

## **Contemporary American History:**

**Elective**

**No Prerequisite**

Contemporary History will cover the beginning of the twentieth century through present times. This class will focus on American society and how many changes occurred socially and politically. Emphasis will be placed on WWI, WWII, Korea, and Vietnam Wars.

## **Psychology:**

**Elective**

**No Prerequisite**

This course exists to help the students analyze and solve their problems with themselves and others. Basically, it tries to answer the question: "Why do people act the way they do?" Emphasis is placed on the biological and environmental influences on one's behavior, covering areas such as: Personality, Behavior Modifications, Learning, Social Psychology, Dream Analysis, and Intelligence. The course is open to all students and becomes a valuable tool in helping them to manage their lives.

## **Sociology:**

**Elective**

**No Prerequisite**

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## **World History I:**

**Elective**

**No Prerequisite**

In World History I, we will begin to know and understand the “thinkers” who wanted to use reason to improve society. This may include composers, writers, and rulers within the society. We will focus on the industrial revolution and see how this revolution changed the lives of workers. In addition, we will see how change led to revolutions in Europe as well as Latin America. Lastly, we will examine the consequences of nationalism and imperialism throughout the world.

## **World History II:**

**Elective**

**No Prerequisite**

In World History II, we will examine how people of the world are all linked together. As the global economy becomes more interdependent culturally, economically and politically, we will look at the events that put into motion our world interdependence. The topics we will talk an in depth look at are the following: World War I (causes, the alliances, fighting, consequences (political, social, etc.), the in between years in Europe, World War II (causes, the Holocaust, results, United Nations), and lastly the Cold War and its effects on the world.

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## **English Requirements:**

**All students are required to have 8 credits of English**

### **English 9-1 (English 1):**

**Required**

**No Prerequisite**

In this course, a variety of poetry, short stories, and writing opportunities will be addressed. Major elements of the course include: analyzing texts for theme, style, and purpose; recognizing and understanding a variety of literary elements; reading for content; writing effectively for diverse purposes; and punctuation, capitalization, and spelling skills. Activities include research projects, journal writings, small group discussions, and grammar and usage applications.

## **English 9-2 (English 2):**

**Required**

**No Prerequisite**

This course is an extension of skills addressed in English 9-I (English I); however, reading materials become longer and more involved. Students will read short stories, poetry, drama, and non-fiction from a variety of authors. A longer unit focused around a featured novel is also incorporated. Students will create power points, short stories and extension projects over targeted reading materials/subjects. Reading comprehension/strategies, vocabulary, and grammar and word usage will be reviewed and applied.

## **English 10-I Literature (English 3):**

**Required**

**No Prerequisite**

Students in the course will be exposed to several new authors, literary works, and writing styles. Small and large group discussion, journals, and writing opportunities focus students on theme, figurative language, elements of poetry, and evaluation of writing styles. Units include: oral tradition (legends, myths, folk tales), poetry, science fiction, and non-fiction. English grammar and usage will be reviewed and applied.

## **English 10-II Writing (English 4):**

**Required**

**No Prerequisite**

Normally taken as a follow-up to English 10I (English III), this course focuses on increasing skills on a variety of writing styles. Objectives include composition skills (including citing sources), literary analyses, and writing effectively for diverse purposes. The following essays will be addressed: compare/contrast, character sketch, extended definition, personal narrative. English grammar and usage will be reviewed and applied.

## **American Authors**

**Elective**

**No Prerequisite**

This literature-based class emphasizes the major periods of American literary history and the accompanying social climate. Short stories, plays, and poetry are areas of concentration. Areas of emphasis include: an author's purpose for writing, social/period influences, gender/racial/socio-economic issues, and literary elements. English grammar and usage will be reviewed and applied.

## **Creative Writing 1/Creative Writing 2:**

**Elective**

Both of these courses are intensive writing courses designed for students who want to improve their creative writing skills. Students will write and revise poetry, short stories, and other works of fiction and nonfiction. CW II will write plays, more involved short stories, and additional forms of poetry. English grammar and usage will be reviewed and applied in both courses.

**Popular Literature:**

**Elective**

**No Prerequisite**

In Popular Literature we will read a variety of popular reading materials, including titles from the Best Sellers List, Iowa Teen Awards, and ALA/YALSA book awards lists. Also included in the course will be articles from current magazines, graphic novels, movies, and poetry. A goal of this class will be to develop in students an enjoyment and appreciation for literature through the utilization of materials focused on current social teen issues. Students will creatively explore literature through group and individual readings, projects, journaling, and group discussion. Major elements the course will discuss include: analyzing how text relates to current social issues and/or personal issues, literary elements authors utilize within their writings, writing and speaking effectively for diverse purposes, and using technology to gather, to create, and communicate information and ideas.

**Independent Reading 1/2:**

**Elective**

**No Prerequisite**

This class is offered for the student who loves to read and/or is interested in discovering new authors and titles/genres to read. Students read a combination of assigned books as well as those of choice. Reading logs and reflections are written, and projects are completed.



**PE Requirements:**

**All students are required to have 2 PE credits**

**Physical Education:**

**Required**

**No Prerequisite**

All students are required by state law to participate in physical education classes each year are in attendance. An effort is made to provide a variety of activities to meet the needs and interests of as many students as possible. The major goal is to provide activities that are life long.



**Science Requirements:**  
All students are required to have 6 science credits

**Physical Science:**

**No Prerequisite**

Physical science is about the properties of matter, elements, compounds, electricity, sound, light and much more.

**Earth Science:**

**No Prerequisite**

Earth Science is about the study of Earth's history and how physical and chemical processes have helped shape the land and atmosphere we live.

**Cell Biology:**

**No Prerequisite**

Cell Biology is about the study of living things, while understanding cellular life and how they are affected by environmental factors. The 4 major units are the scientific method, microscope, cells and genetics.

**Plant Biology:**

**No Prerequisite**

Plant Biology is a course designed to teach students about the evolution of plants/trees and how they are classified. They will grasp an understanding of interdependence and interrelationships among organisms in their ecosystems. Students will learn about matter, energy flow, conservation and photosynthesis.

**Human Biology:**

**No Prerequisite**

This course is about the body systems, their structures and functions and how they are interconnected in order for the body to work together as one unit.

**Animal Biology:**

**No Prerequisite**

Animal Biology is about the study of the animal kingdom and how organisms adapt, evolve and how they are classified based on characteristics. The main focus is on Charles Darwin and his theory on Natural Selection and Evolution.

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## **Math Requirements:**

**All students are required to have 6 math credits**

### **Algebra I A and B:**

**Prerequisite: Pre-Algebra or Teacher Approval**

Algebra I is the first course in the college preparatory mathematics sequence. It provides a general understanding of mathematics while covering algebraic topics including real number operations on expressions, linear equations and inequalities, linear graphs, systems of linear equations, quadratic equations, and polynomials.

### **Algebra II A and B:**

**Prerequisite: Algebra I and Geometry**

Algebra II is the third course in the college preparatory mathematics sequence. It briefly reviews the topics covered in Algebra I and introduces the student to higher level topics in mathematics. Topics will include quadratic functions, polynomial functions, exponential and logarithmic functions, graphing of rational functions, normal distribution of data, and fundamental probability principles.

### **Geometry A and B:**

**Prerequisite: Algebra I A and B**

Geometry is the second course in the college preparatory mathematics sequence. Students will apply a variety of problem solving procedures, mathematical thinking and reasoning to solve problems involving geometric concepts. Topics will include inductive and deductive reasoning, relationships of points, lines, and planes, and properties of triangles, quadrilaterals, polygons, and circles. Technology will be used throughout the course.

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### **Work Credit:**

**No Prerequisite**

This course is designed for West Academy students who have acquired a job that demonstrates a positive career choice. The student will be in contact with their advisor weekly during the work experience. The student will be under the supervision of their advisor and the community employer. Weekly work summaries will be required. West Academy credits are earned by completing required assignments and the number of on-site working hours engaged. The course must be taken during the school year. Work Credits: 120 hours/trimester = 1 credit

### **Learning Skills:**

**No Prerequisite**

Learning Skills class is for students with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP). Students enrolled in this class will work on academics and behavioral goals outlined in their IEP. Progress towards goals will be graphed to provide information to parents at annual reviews/parent-teacher conferences. Students will be allowed to receive assistance in other classes as mentioned as accommodations in each student's IEP.