# Table of Contents

The Nichols Philosophy................................................ 1
About Nichols...................................................................... 2
A message from the Headmaster ................................ 4

Course Descriptions

The Arts............................................................................ 5
Sophomore Arts Electives............ 7
Jr/Sr Arts Electives........................ 9

English........................................................................... 12
Freshman English....................... 12
Sophomore English................. 13
Junior English........................... 13
Senior English Electives.............. 13

Modern & Classical Languages............ 17
Chinese............................................. 17
French.............................................. 18
Latin.................................................. 20
Spanish............................................. 21

History.............................................................. 23
Freshman History......................... 23
Sophomore History...................... 24
Junior or Senior History............... 24
Senior History Electives.............. 24

Mathematical Sciences.................. 28
Freshman Math............................... 28
Sophomore Math............................ 29
Junior Math.................................... 29
Math Electives...................................... 29
Senior Math Electives............... 30

Science.......................................................... 32
Freshman Science.......................... 32
Sophomore Science..................... 32
Junior Science............................. 32
Science Electives.......................... 33

Additional Course Information........ 35
Graduation Requirements............... 35
Senior Thesis.......................................... 35

Course Load............................................................. 35
Grading System and Academic Standing........ 35
Grading Scale.......................................... 36
Independent Research Scholar........ 36
Science Scholar........................................ 36
Humanities Scholar.......................... 36
Independent Studies........................... 36
Independent Studies Application........ 38

History Curriculum.......................................... 42
Spanish Curriculum.......................... 43
Latin Curriculum................................. 44
Chinese Curriculum............................ 44

Mathematics Curriculum.................. 46
Curriculum Planning Guide............... 47

International Exchanges.................. 48
International Student Programs.......... 49
Advisory Programs............................. 50

Student Support Services.................. 51
College Counseling............................ 52

2013-2017 College Destinations.......... 53
Athletics................................................. 54

Athletics Offered at Nichols............... 55
Student Clubs and Organizations........ 56

Community Service and Outreach........ 59
Nichols School Philosophy

“To train minds, bodies and hearts for the work of life, and to carry into all we do the highest ideals of character and service.”

- Joseph Dana Allen
About Nichols

Nichols School is a nationally recognized college preparatory coed independent school in Buffalo, NY. At Nichols, students are encouraged every day not only to be accepting of challenge, but excited by it. Through caring guidance and unwavering support, they are inspired to face academic, athletic, creative and social growth with confidence, determination and joy. The ease with which our students approach new learning opportunities and experiences becomes a mark of their characters, and is an asset that continues to open doors for them throughout their lives.

As an independent school with an average class size of 14, our students are empowered to think critically, creatively and go beyond the test. Nichols offers 20 Advanced Placement courses, over 35 clubs, four academic teams, dozens of service opportunities, multiple performances throughout the year, plus more than 20 athletic teams—and we encourage participation in multiple activities and electives. From engineering and robotics to dance, on the courts, the turf or the ice, students are encouraged to be leaders, push limits and pursue their true potentials.

We take great pride in our distinguished academics and athletics, but there is much more to Nichols School than rigorous curriculum and winning teams. Students are encouraged to enrich themselves, express themselves and discover themselves through an extensive arts program that includes theatre, drawing, music, dance, fashion design and more.
Nichols School has occupied a special place in Buffalo and the greater Western New York community for many years. Located on 30 acres, the School is minutes away from galleries, historic houses, Olmstead parks and The Buffalo Zoo; our campus feels like a small liberal arts college. Our beautifully landscaped urban campus includes seven separate buildings linked by tree-lined sidewalks and several indoor passageways.

Faculty members, chosen for their expertise, regularly publish in their academic field: 75% have master’s degrees; 10% have doctoral degrees. About 14% of faculty members are Nichols alumni. They are committed to the School’s educational mission and they have an average of 20 years of service. Teachers are involved in student life beyond their classrooms, serving as student advisors, coaches, club advisors and mentors.

Nichols students abide by an Honor Code in all aspects of their life both in and out of the classroom. Nichols School subscribes to the Statement of Principles of Good Practice of the National Association of College Admission Counseling. The school is also a member of the National Association of Independent Schools, the College Board, the National Association for College Admission Counseling, and the Association of College Counselors in Independent Schools.

Nichols is accredited by the New York State Association of Independent Schools and the New York State Department of Education. It received national recognition in the Secondary School Recognition Program and Exemplary Private School Recognition Program.
A message from the Head of School

Dear Reader,

This curriculum guide serves as a road map for learning at Nichols. In the following pages you will read descriptions of disciplines and courses and develop some understanding of the different academic journeys our students take.

However, to truly understand what makes a Nichols education come alive, you must know our teachers who are their own best course descriptions, their own best textbooks. The rich stories of their lives—their education, mentors, personal interests, successes and failures, hopes and dreams, families, friends, travels, and love of learning—provide necessary context and meaning for our student travelers. And you must know the men and women whose hard work and steady application supports their efforts.

What we do here is special. Please come and visit us.

Sincerely,

Bill Clough

Bill Clough
Head of School
Course Descriptions

The Arts

Nichols requires all students to participate in the fine and performing arts. We feel no education is complete without a profound understanding of the arts, and that understanding is best gleaned from hands on involvement in the creative process. In addition to offering students formal instruction in the arts, extracurricular activities are available in theatre, music, dance, and visual arts.

In Grade 9, Freshman Survey of the Arts, a comprehensive, interdisciplinary course is required. Survey of the Arts emphasizes a shared vocabulary amongst all of the art disciplines. Double class periods may be used for guest artist visits and presentations. The course involves a rotation through the music, theatre, dance and visual arts mediums. Students may also take chorus, orchestra or dance for credit.

All 10th graders are required to take either two semester sophomore electives or a full-year course. The Arts Department offers Foundation of the Arts electives in Visual Arts, Music, Theater, and Dance. Chorus and Orchestra also fulfill the 10th grade requirement. Introduction to Computer Programming or the first year of a second Modern and Classical Language also fulfill this requirement. Select sophomores may use a junior/senior elective to fulfill the requirement.

In Grade 11 or 12, students take an additional year-long elective in either or both years. Select juniors and seniors may also use two semesters of sophomore arts to fulfill this requirement.

All Grades

Orchestra

A year-long commitment, Orchestra is open to players of string, wind, brass, and percussion instruments who have demonstrated proficiency on their instrument. Music from Baroque, Classical, Romantic and the Modern era is performed. Developing aesthetic sensitivity, the proper technique, timing, tone, and interpretation are stressed. Each student is evaluated in a weekly lesson lab. Performances include a minimum of two instrumental concerts. The Jazz Band, an extracurricular activity, meets twice a week after school to prepare for performances throughout the year.
Concert Choir
A year-long commitment, Concert Choir is an ensemble requiring scholastic achievement, concentration, and incredible discipline striving toward excellence in the choral arts. It is open to any student interested in singing. Emphasis is placed on the development of vocal skills, beginning sight singing techniques, and music listening skills. The Concert Choir will sing music in a variety of musical styles including contemporary, pop, sacred, secular, classical, baroque, and others depending on concert activities. Students will also learn the fundamentals of proper vocal technique through individual lesson instruction with the director. At least two annual school concerts should be expected, with the addition of possible tours, off campus concerts, and optional events including (but not limited to): Cabaret, All-County Chorus, Area All-State Chorus, and NYSSMA solo Adjudication.

Advanced Contemporary Dance I, II, III, or IV
This class is for students who have previous training and often find it difficult to balance a full commitment to the after school program and their outside competition studios. The class meets during X period. Students may opt to take the course for P.E. credit or Arts credit. In order to achieve both P.E. and Arts credit in the same sports trimester, they will have to come to the afterschool program a minimum of 2 hours per week. The advanced dance class has three goals:
• To develop students who enter the upper school and have extensive previous training and a passion for dance.
• To offer an elite performing ensemble as part of the Nichols dance program.
• To allow these students opportunities to learn contemporary dance techniques that they will encounter in collegiate programs.
Curriculum will include learning and performing advanced and professional dance repertoire, (fall) choreographic lessons and creation, (winter) and subtle somatic techniques and awareness of choreographic forms (spring). Students will collaborate and view experimental choreographic examples throughout the year. Assessment will include performing in the Fall Dance Concert, the Choreographers Showcase, school meetings and/or peer teaching opportunities.

Nichols Dance Ensemble I, II, III, IV
This student dance group provides opportunities for freshman, sophomore, junior and senior students to study dance techniques, create dances, collaborate with peers and perform challenging works. Students may enroll for a full year or for each individual sports trimester. This class takes place daily during the after school sports period (3:45-5:30). Students may receive both physical education and arts credit for fully participating in the classes and contributing to the performances. With the permission of the instructor, students may enroll twice a week for PE Credit only. Because of limitations in space, priority is given to those who aspire to have the daily experience of training as a “team” and performing as a finely tuned ensemble. Students study ballet, classic modern, improvisation, composition, yoga, and dance repertoire. Guest artists teach movement workshops and set choreography for performances. Advanced dancers have the opportunity to work individually and in small groups on solos, professional repertoire, and portfolio development.
Sophomore Foundations of the Arts

**Visual Thinking and Community, Photography (Fall)**
In this course the students develop their understanding of the basic guidelines of design and composition using a variety of traditional and digital photographic tools. The goal of this class is to introduce students to the language of photography and to become smart image-makers and critical thinkers in our current culture of mass media and prolific mechanical reproduction. Through the application of photographic techniques ranging from the very simple (such as pinhole camera) to the more complex (photo collage) students create images that challenge conventional and personal viewpoints. Through multimedia presentations, we look at other photographers, discuss their work and build a greater understanding of photographic history. This is primarily a hands-on studio class, which includes group projects, group critiques and development of students’ personal perspectives and styles. The class includes at least two field trips to a local art center and a meditation on the role of visual art in the community.

**Foundation in Drawing and Painting (Fall)**
This course introduces the beginning student to a variety of materials and techniques. The course emphasizes the elements of line, texture, shape, space, value and color through the creation of both objective and subjective artworks. Special focus will be placed on developing observational drawing skills and hands on experience in an engaging classroom community. Students will participate in class discussions, critiques, and group activities as well as create individual projects and keep a visual journal. Shorter projects will introduce new concepts and build confidence before applying these ideas to extended student driven works. Multiple mediums are explored which may include graphite, ink, frottage, printmaking, watercolor crayons, charcoal and acrylic paint. Field trips to local art events will enrich classroom experiences and course discussion.

**Sophomore Foundation of the Arts: Play Making (Fall)**
This class is designed for students with or without experience in theater. Students learn in a very active, hands on way about the elements of drama through reading and watching plays, group discussion, theater games and exercises, improvisations, and visits from local playwrights. Students develop their imaginations, strengthen their artistic voice, and develop their sense of self by creating 3 short original works. Students work individually and collaboratively.

**Sophomore Foundation of the Arts: Xylophone Band (Fall)**
In this course, students will create and perform their own music using an ensemble of percussion instruments including xylophones, metallophones, gongs and chimes. No previous musical training is necessary. We will start by learning how to play the instruments. The rest of the course will be devoted to creating our own original compositions under the guidance of the instructor. If time permits, we might arrange a contemporary well-known piece of music for the ensemble. This class places top priority on learning how to listen and communicate musically with each other and the desire to acquire long-term goals through regular practice.
Visual Thinking and Community, Motion Pictures (Spring)
In this course the students develop their understanding of the basic guidelines of composition, using the principles and elements of two-dimensional design in relationship to both space and time. An emphasis is placed on time-based art making techniques such as performance, animation, film, video, photography, and projection. Using a variety of film and video media, students complete projects that include: movie making, media literacy, performance art and animation. The goal for each project is for students to gain experience with new or familiar material, develop a strategy for completing a piece of artwork, and incorporate an art historical reference, or contemporary cultural critique. The class includes at least two field trips to a local art center and participation in the Flick Fest student film festival.

Fashion Laboratory (Spring)
This course emphasizes learning to think creatively to gain a better understanding of the history of fashion as a voice for the people it clothes. In this maker’s space, students will receive an introduction to sewing, both by hand and machine. Previous sewing experience is not required. Sketches and concept boards will inform 3-dimensional sculptural pieces constructed from both fabric and nontraditional materials. The introduction of multicultural and historical content through the examples of contemporary and influential historical designers will inspire students to respond with designs of their own in a strong classroom community. Fieldtrips, guest speakers and class discussion will introduce issues of identity, race and gender politics and the environmental effects of the garment industry as we discuss how, when, where and why we wear what we wear.

Technical Theatre (Spring)
This course covers the important concepts of technical production primarily through hands-on experience. The students learn about the principles and basic operation of theatrical lighting, audio, and video systems; theatrical rigging; the theatrical production process and technical theater’s role in it; and workplace safety. Participation in school plays and Cabaret is encouraged but not required.

Sophomore Foundation of the Arts: Play Building (Spring)
This class is designed for students with or without experience in theater. Through collaborative exercises, improvisation, discussion, and performance projects, students engage in the theatrical process as actors, directors, designers, and technicians. We learn firsthand about the roles that various theater artists play in mounting a production. Creative teams work to design and stage short works from the Play Making class. Visits from local theater artists enhance learning throughout the semester.

Songwriting I and II (Fall and Spring)
In Songwriting, students will foster their own personal musical style while developing skills in melody, harmony, music theory, arranging and writing lyrics. Students are not required to know how to play an instrument to take this course. Other class time will be spent in creative activities and discussion, working to understand songwriting fundamentals and the connection between emotion, imagination and song. We will use Garageband, instruments, iPads, voices and other technological devices to record, create and arrange music. This course is essentially split into two semesters (Songwriting 1 and Songwriting 2) and can be taken as Sophomore (half-year), Junior or Senior (full-year) to fulfill your arts elective requirements.
**Junior/Senior Arts Electives**

With permission of instructors, juniors and seniors may use two semesters of sophomore arts electives to fulfill this requirement.

**Acting: Introduction to Acting Technique**
Students engage in exercises that focus on building a character vocally, physically, and psychologically. Acting exercises created by theatre greats Jaques LeCoq, Konstantin Stanislavski, Uta Hagen, and others are explored through improvisation and prepared performance projects. Students also apply Stanislavski’s character and scene analysis techniques to short elliptical scenes and full length scenes from 20th and 21st century American Theatre. Film acting is also explored. *Suggested Prerequisites for this course are Foundations of the Arts: Play Making and Play Building.*

**Advanced Acting**
*This year long class is available only to students who have completed Acting: Introduction to Acting Technique or those who have been granted special permission from the instructor.* After a brief review of Konstantin Stanislavski’s technique, we focus on the Sanford Meisner acting technique through improvisational “repetition” exercises and scene work. For the second half of the year we apply improvisation, character analysis, and scene analysis techniques to a small ensemble piece to be performed in late spring.

**Songwriting 1 and 2**
This class is open to any student who enjoys popular American music. Students will foster their own personal musical style while developing skills in melody, harmony, music theory, arranging and writing lyrics. Students are not required to know how to play an instrument to take this course. Other class time will be spent in creative activities and discussion, listening to and discussing American popular music since 1950, and working to understand songwriting fundamentals and the connection between emotion, imagination and song. We will use Garageband, instruments, iPads, voices and other technological devices to record, create and arrange music. This course is essentially split into two semesters and can be taken as Sophomore (half-year), Junior or Senior (full-year) to fulfill the arts elective requirements. Students should expect to participate in group discussions, group projects, individual presentations, reading/article evaluations and field trips to evaluate and discuss the evolution of music in America.

**Filmmaking and Video Production 1**
This course challenges students to use the tools of digital filmmaking in the production of original, creative, and thought provoking work. The use of digital video cameras, lighting, microphones, audio editing software, video editing software, and postproduction techniques are introduced and taught through projects. Students are asked to produce several short original works in a range of genres that include animation, narrative, experimental, documentary, and performance/video art. In order to better understand time-based media, super 8mm film production, wet processing, and hand coloring are explored. In addition to making films, video, and audio works, the class spends time looking and analyzing a variety of films and videos by local, national and international artists. In the spring the class curates and produces the Flick Fest, an annual film festival that features work from Western New York and Southern Ontario student filmmakers. The students in the class work to launch the festival at the North Park Theatre. *Suggested prerequisites for this course are sophomore art electives Visual Thinking and Community.*
Filmmaking and Video Production 2 and Screenwriting
This course builds on the Filmmaking and Video Production 1 class and further challenges students to use the tools of digital filmmaking in the production of original, creative, and thought provoking work. The Advanced Filmmaking and Video Production 2 class explores the process and craft of screenwriting. The students analyze existing screenplays, and critique the resulting films during the first weeks of the course. The students write an original screenplay for a short narrative work in the first quarter. During the second quarter they produce their original work using students in the Filmmaking and Video Production 1 class as their crew. In the spring, the class experiments with 8mm film, video installation and curates and produces the Flick Fest, an annual film festival that features work from Western New York and Southern Ontario student filmmakers. The students in the class work to launch the festival at the North Park Theatre. **Prerequisites for this course are permission of the instructor, Visual Thinking and Community, or Filmmaking and Video Production 1. This course must also be taken concurrently with the senior English Elective, Criticism 1.**

Photography
The photography course takes the application of image reproduction and photographic techniques and applies them to the very simple and complex techniques available to us. The course starts with black and white traditional darkroom photography for the first quarter, branching out in the second, third, and fourth quarters to introduce digital imaging, electronic transmission, studio photography, photojournalism, and image analysis and criticism. Emphasis is placed on development of a photographic portfolio that includes at least 25 quality works. **Students are required to have either a 35mm or a digital SLR (single lens reflex) camera for this class.**

Advanced Photography
Advanced Photography is a class for students who have a serious interest in photography even though they may not have any experience with formal photographic technique. This class moves quickly through the technical strategies involved in traditional and digital photography. The emphasis of this class is on developing original and individual expression through photography. Students are challenged to address each class project through the production of a series of photographs. As a final project, students are required to complete an in-depth investigation on one topic. Both digital and traditional photography is accepted for the final project. The class emphasizes building a portfolio of work, and is a suggested pre-requisite for the AP Studio Art class. **Students are required to have either a 35mm or digital SLR (single lens reflex) camera for this class. Prerequisites for the Advanced Photography course are Visual Thinking and Community, or permission of the instructor.**

A Study and Practice in Creativity
This full year course focuses on each student practicing creativity and taking a hands on approach to the processes used by creative role models in many fields. This course is for Seniors who have not had a junior year of arts or who have limited experience. Projects and class activities that encourage creative collaboration between peers is a fundamental method of learning. This interdisciplinary course provides the students with opportunities to engage in many creative projects. Additionally, students practice yoga fundamentals and stress reduction techniques. A relaxed mind is a creative mind. Artistic journaling, jewelry making, and reading about the creative process and creative individuals show students that we are all creative and have more unrecognized or unexplored skills to express these ideas than we realize. Creativity found in the arts, science, writing, and leadership is explored through media and internet resources.
AP Studio Art
A capstone course, this class is for students that take their art making seriously, are highly motivated and self-reliant. The work of this class is to make art with fluency and conviction. Students must produce a living breathing body of work. This class requires a lot of work and promises great reward and satisfaction for jobs well done. The class builds on techniques and concepts that students have acquired in past art courses in the production of new work. The major project in this class is the production of a series of 12 artworks based on a central interest. The 12 work concentration should develop a theme and challenge the maker and viewer with complex aesthetic and conceptual ideas. Work in this class can include photography, mixed media collage, digital art, painting, and drawing. The portfolio of work must be primarily two dimensional in nature. Students are required to complete a portfolio of at least 25 works. The portfolio includes a concentration (12 pieces), a breadth (12 pieces) and 5 works selected for quality. Suggested prerequisites for this course are Advanced Photography, Visual Thinking and Community, Photography, Drawing, Painting. Open to Juniors and Seniors.

Exploring Concepts in Drawing and Painting
This course embraces multiple approaches to a topic by pushing the boundaries of medium and technique to explore ideas through visual communication. Students develop observational skills, explore expressive mark making, use color theory and gain hands on experience while creating a diverse and content rich portfolio. Multiple mediums are explored which may include various types of graphite, ink, printmaking, watercolor crayons, acrylic paint and charcoal as well as more experimental mediums. Students participate in class discussions, critiques, and group activities as well as create individual projects and keep a visual journal. Students may participate in one or more art service projects as part of the curriculum. Shorter projects introduce new concepts and build confidence before applying these ideas to extended student driven works. Conceptual units may include ideas of identity/portraiture, time/motion, and space. Students are introduced to multicultural and historical means of art making as well as being exposed to local artistic resources through multiple field trips throughout the year and workshops with visiting artists.

The Art of Craft
This is a course for juniors and seniors with limited hands on experience, but an interest in making. Through the introduction of fine craft students explore carving, forming, sewing, printing, and weaving both utilitarian and decorative objects over the course of this year-long arts elective. Students actively create individual as well as group designed projects within a supportive and collaborative class community. Shorter projects introduce new concepts and build confidence before applying these ideas to extended student driven works. Emphasis is placed on the exploration of materials to express ideas. Students are introduced to multicultural and historical means of art making as well as being exposed to local artistic resources through multiple field trips throughout the year. Printmaking, fiber, sculpture, as well as installation are explored in the creation of both two and three dimensional projects. A visual journal is also kept.
English

The Nichols English program seeks to develop in our students the related skills of reading, thinking, speaking, and writing. Students achieve these goals through the study of literature at all grade levels in the Upper School. The English faculty expects and encourages students to read with close attention; to participate in Socratic-style class discussions; to become aware of the linguistic nuances of the texts they read; and to incorporate the fruits of their reading, thinking, and speaking into well-crafted essays. The English program serves the purposes and objectives of Nichols School in several ways:

- The close, careful reading of literary texts is a skill transferable to texts in other academic disciplines.
- The ability to write clear and concise prose is equally valuable in other disciplines and in later life.
- Articulating ideas in the give-and-take of class discussion helps to build the student’s confidence in his or her own ideas and values.
- Exposure to the ethical and moral issues found in great literature intensifies a student’s awareness of these issues in his or her own life and in the wider world.
- An aesthetic appreciation of the beauties of the English language—especially in poetry—makes our various Arts offerings more attractive to students.
- The pleasures of close and attentive reading require patience and a willingness to reflect and contemplate. We all require a “broad margin” to our lives and occasional havens of peace.

Grade 9

Foundations of Literature

Foundations is an introductory course in composition and world literature. The program in writing provides a review of paragraph structure and introduces short expository or analytical essays. In literature, readings in poetry and short fiction build critical attitudes and develop awareness of
narrative points of view, tone, imagery, symbolism, and irony. Works studied include *The Odyssey*, The Old Testament, and *Julius Caesar*.

**Grade 10**

**Literature of the English Language I**
This course focuses on the development of the literary tradition in the English language from the late medieval period to the 21st century. Extensive emphasis is placed on lyric poetry and drama; the second semester covers the emergence of prose fiction in both the novel and short forms. Students receive further instruction and practice in critical writing and continue to develop verbal and analytical skills. Works studied include *Hamlet*, the poetry of Donne, Milton, and Wordsworth, the 19th century novel, and 20th century writers of Britain and the Commonwealth.

**Grade 11**

**Literature of the English Language II or AP English Literature and Composition**
Although the course reviews usage, mechanics, sentence structure, and organization, the most significant composition work takes place individually, as students revise and edit their own work through teacher's comments on papers or after individual conferences. Literature of the English Language II traces American literature from colonial times to the present day. Works studied include Hawthorne, *Huckleberry Finn*, *The Great Gatsby*, the poetry of Whitman, Dickinson, and Frost, and *Invisible Man*. The Junior Poetry Paper must be completed in order to pass this course. If the student is taking AP English Literature and Composition, the AP exam is a requirement of the course.

**Grade 12**

**English VI or Advanced English VI**
This course is the culmination of a student's progress in critical reading and in the development of a mature writing style. Students choose two, one-semester electives designed to delve deeply into a particular theme, author, or genre. All of the courses demand extensive reading, discussion, and writing. Students enrolled under the advanced designation complete extra work.

**Senior Electives** (Note: these classes change year to year and the 2018-2019 electives may not include all those listed below.)

**Fall Semester**

**Irish Literature**
This course is one of discovery and exploration of the rich and multi-textured literature of Ireland. Because the culture and history of Ireland is inextricable from the literature, the course necessarily introduces various faces of Irish life, past and present. The course cannot be an exhaustive study of Irish literature and history; it is an introduction. Most of the course is centered on contemporary Irish literature. As with all “introductions” to a National Literature, we attempt to diminish the myths and stereotypes of the Irish and Ireland to reveal its complex troubled history and dynamic culture.
Creative Non-Fiction
Creative nonfiction is synonymous with memoir or autobiography. The conversation, however, has become one not necessarily about who a person is and what his or her experiences are, but how he or she tells her story. And inevitably, it often ends with a reader wondering how true is this? We begin with Stephen King’s On Writing before moving into Annie Dillard’s An American Childhood, Gretel Erlich’s The Solace of Open Spaces, and Barry Lopez’s Arctic Dreams. Essays also come from a collection of creative nonfiction essays titled In Fact (edited by Lee Gutkind). Students both read and write a great deal of creative nonfiction and must be open to whole class essay workshops. Each student also presents a creative nonfiction essay to the class.

African-American Literature
In African-American Literature, we survey the major authors and movements in the field. We read slave narratives (for example, Douglass), post-Reconstruction attempts to define African-Americans’ place in American culture (Washington, Du Bois, Johnson), works from the Harlem Renaissance (Hurston, Hughes), and Modern and contemporary works (Wright, Ellison, Walker, Dove, Mosley). There are lots of representative works to cover and several more obscure works to discover.

Creative Writing/Poetry
This course operates in a studio format, with each student presenting work to the class, receiving feedback from peers and the teacher, and revising thoroughly on a weekly basis. The end product for each writer yields a collection or portfolio of twenty to thirty poems. There are no expository papers, but energetic participation in class discussion (based on nightly readings from the anthology and other works) is a must--approximately 35% of the overall grade is based on this and on constructive contributions to the workshop critiques. No previous experience in creative writing is presumed. Text: The Postmoderns: The New American Poetry (Allen and Butterick, eds.)

Salinger and Kerouac
The autobiographical fiction of Jack Kerouac and J.D. Salinger helped define a certain attitude of modern literature. The noted literary historian Daniel S. Burt suggests that "no other American novel written during the second half of the 20th century, with the possible exception of J.D. Salinger's The Catcher in the Rye, is so heavily freighted with a cult or cultural significance as Jack Kerouac's revered, reviled, and all too often misunderstood On the Road." We examine these two writers from the perspective of their lesser known - but equally impressive - works. Texts include Salinger's Franny and Zooey, Raise High The Roof Beam, Carpenters, and Seymour, An Introduction, and Kerouac's The Dharma Bums and Big Sur.

The Mythology of Ovid
During the reign of Rome’s first emperor, Ovid became its most famous poet, but was banished suddenly and lived out his life in a dull town on the coast of the Black Sea. He never wrote any kind of poetry without breaking all the rules, and in the process pioneered new genres of literature. In this class, we study the Metamorphoses, his epic masterpiece of mythology. Many of the great myths are known to us only because Ovid wrote them down in this work. It is not merely a collection of myths, however, but a rich exploration of human experience, of love and gender, suffering and triumph, adventure and death. We explore its influence of Renaissance artists and writers such as Shakespeare, and discover why Ovid is undergoing a revival of popular and critical opinion.
Spring Semester

Creative Writing: Contemporary Short Fiction
This is a course aimed at promoting the enjoyment and appreciation of contemporary short fiction. Students are expected to make informed literary responses to the readings—a skill central to every course in the English Department—and to try their hands at the craft of writing the short story. This is not going to be a survey course, but instead concentrates on the works of some of the best known, and some lesser-known, writers working in the English language today. Though most of the artists are not those recognized as part of the more traditional academic canon, they invite rich academic study. The student understands how individual stories work, and how authors use the formal resources of narrative. The second aim of the course is to incite and nourish literary enthusiasms beyond the course’s scope. The student also develops the ability to analyze texts within their social, political and cultural context. We also look at a few writers who are quite dead physically, but very much alive artistically.

War Literature
We begin by reading The Essential Iliad compiled and translated by Stanley Lombardo. Wilfred Owen’s and Sigfried Sassoon’s poetry from WWI serve as comparison pieces to Kurt Vonnegut’s Slaughterhouse Five, and even more contemporary writers. Students read Brian Turner’s poetry, Kevin Powers’s The Yellow Birds, Ben Fountain’s Billy Lynn’s Long Halftime Walk, and Phil Klay’s collection of short stories, Redeployment. We also spend time going to the VA Adult Day Health Care facility.

Changelings: Literature of the Inuit and the Norse
The encounter between Native North American populations and Norse settlers around 1000 CE is the first attested meeting between peoples of the Old and New Worlds. This course examines the literatures and mythologies of these two peoples, both discretely and with regard to their impact on each other. Special attention is paid to the ways in which we construct such terms as "myth," "legend," and "history." Major Texts: William T. Vollman, The Ice Shirt, Mitiarjuk Npaaluk, Sanaaq. Tete-Michel Kpomassie, An African in Greenland; Paul Muldoon, Quoof; The Elder Edda; Snorri Sturlusson (and others), Selections from the Icelandic Sagas; Henry Rink, ed., Tales and Traditions of the Eskimo.

Introduction to Shakespeare
This course is not simply about reading Shakespeare’s plays as literature. Instead, the course serves as a well-rounded introduction to the study of Shakespeare. We explore the history of Shakespeare’s texts since the seventeenth century. We talk about the history of Shakespearean stage practice including current trends. We study the history of Shakespeare criticism. We read Shakespeare’s plays as texts for performance, and we talk about how his language directs that performance. By the time you finish this course, you should have a fairly comprehensive awareness of the current state of Shakespeare studies in the early twenty-first century.

The Writing of John McPhee
Since 1963, John McPhee has written more than one hundred pieces for The New Yorker. He is described as "one of the most prolific non-fiction writers of our time. He's written about the famous
(for instance, the young Bill Bradley in *A Sense of Where You Are*) and famously about pursuits of the common man.” McPhee currently serves as the Ferris Professor of Journalism at Princeton University, where he has taught since 1974. This course explores “the most versatile journalist in America” and his best works of creative non-fiction.

**Readings:** *The John McPhee Reader, The Second John McPhee Reader*

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**Anna Karenina**

Leo Tolstoy’s *Anna Karenina* is often called the greatest novel ever written. It is a sprawling work of realism set in a world of princes and palaces in 19th century Russia, which is inhabited by some of literature’s greatest characters. We follow Anna as she is drawn into a love affair and finds herself caught between her own desires and society’s restrictive demands on women. The title is misleading, however, because the novel contains several other major plot lines, with men and women struggling to decide what to make of their lives, characters who nearly come to life through Tolstoy’s unparalleled descriptive powers and remain with readers forever. Through close reading and response papers, students in this class will come to understand Tolstoy’s great achievement.

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**Postmodern Approaches to Literature, Art, Film, and Social Media**

Text and images bombard us every day. In order to organize all of this information and experience, we rely on “metanarratives”—grand, underlying stories that help us to organize and understand all of the little stories. So, for example, if we understand the “hero’s journey” metanarrative, we might appreciate it as the basic story template underlying the movie *Star Wars* or the myth of King Arthur, *Wonder Woman* or *The Lord of the Rings*. Likewise, if we grasp the basic story template of capitalism, we probably rely on it when we read *The Great Gatsby* or watch *The Godfather*. Even when we do not consciously think about them, metanarratives point us toward some sort “universal truth.” They organize our lives. French theorist Jean-Francois Lyotard points out, however, that we can approach these metanarratives, or grand stories, with skepticism. By identifying and questioning the metanarratives underlying works of literature, art, or film, we become free to critique the text and images all around us.

**Primary Sources from a Variety of Media**

- *Center 63*. Building, Nichols School Campus. 2010-present.
- Genesis, chapter 1. John, chapter 1. The King James Bible.
- Homer. *The Odyssey* (selections). c. 750 BCE.
- Kaufman, Andy.
Modern and Classical Languages

We teach modern and classical languages in order to bring to our students the intellectual, personal, and cultural benefits of learning new means of communication. Students, in learning a language, come to understand the structure underlying all language, including their own. Language study increases mental agility and leads to growth in one’s powers of reasoning, memory, and creative thinking. Language study allows one to go beyond oneself to experience the new and different, and to courageously confront and surpass personal limitations. It nurtures adaptability and openness. Through the medium of language, students come to know and appreciate the richness of other cultures in our increasingly interdependent world. By encouraging the free exchange of ideas, the development of articulate expression, and the incorporation of both contemporary and time-tested thinking in other languages, we help equip our students to learn from the past, to participate in the complex world of today, and to shape the future.

Chinese I

This course begins with an introduction and an overview of both the phonetic and writing system of Mandarin Chinese. After extensive drill of the phonetic system, listening and speaking skills are cultivated through the acquisition of vocabulary, memorization of dialogues of natural speech and extensive drill of pattern structures. Learning to read the traditional form of characters and to write simplified forms of characters is the second phase after an oral foundation has been established. Appreciation of Chinese culture is cultivated through readings and appropriate activities.

Chinese II/ II Advanced

A continuation of Chinese I, Chinese II is designed to increase vocabulary and strengthen grammar. The course focuses more on integration of oral and written skills. The class is principally conducted in Chinese, and students are required to use Chinese as much as possible. Additional aspects of Chinese culture are introduced through readings, film and speakers.

Chinese III

Chinese III continues to sharpen students’ oral and writing skills by increasing the volume of vocabulary, mastering more complex sentence patterns and writing compositions. Chinese culture is further explored through reading pieces in various genres, making oral presentations, learning songs and watching/discussing films.

Chinese III Advanced

Chinese III Advanced stresses the development of the four basic language skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. It focuses on grammar, building up vocabulary and mastering complex sentence structure and the improvement of writing skills. Students who successfully complete the Advanced Chinese III generally go on to the Advanced Placement course and exam in Chinese during senior year.
**Chinese IV**
Chinese IV is designed for students who have already completed Chinese III. It focuses on the continued development of the four major communicative skills. Students read articles that deal with a variety of historical and contemporary elements. Classes are conducted predominately in the target language. Students have more opportunities to do oral presentations.

**Chinese IV Advanced**
Chinese IV Advanced is designed for students who have already completed Chinese III Advanced. Students will read longer articles with a variety of historical and contemporary elements, write longer essays and have more opportunities to do research projects and oral presentations. Classes are conducted predominately in Chinese. Students who successfully complete the Chinese IV Advanced class will go on to AP class in senior year.

**AP Chinese Language**
The AP Chinese Language course is designed to help fine-tune and improve students' reading, writing, listening and speaking skills in Chinese in preparation for the exam taken in May. AP Chinese Language is an advanced course and the work done in this class is reflective of that which is done in an intermediate college course. We review grammar as needed, acquire a wide range of new vocabulary and idiomatic expressions and read selections of prose and poetry written by Chinese authors. We also read newspaper and magazine articles and listen to radio broadcasts in Chinese to keep abreast of what is happening in the Chinese-speaking communities in the U.S. and internationally. *Prerequisite: Completion of Chinese IV and recommendation of the Department. The AP exam is a requirement of the course.*

**Chinese V**
The Chinese V course is designed for students who have already completed Chinese IV. The class will focus on learning cultural topics such as Chinese Arts, Famous Chinese People, current events in China, etc. The class is mainly conducted in Chinese, and video clips will be used as authentic resources to support student learning. Students will do research on cultural topics, and will write and orally present on these topics. *Prerequisite: Completion of Chinese IV and recommendation of the Department.*

**French I**
French I is an introductory course for all students beginning their study of French. Through the acquisition and practice of the four language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing, the course aims to develop functional proficiency -- the language skills necessary to handle communication tasks and social situations in a culturally correct manner. Students work on acquiring a wide range of vocabulary, and on mastery of verbs, both regular and irregular, in the present tense. The compound past tense is introduced in the second semester. Students are introduced to and work on appreciating and reproducing both formal and informal levels of language. A new textbook and materials include a very developed Internet component which allows students unlimited listening, speaking and vocabulary practice on their own from any Internet-connected computer.
French II
French II continues the work of the French I course. The course work again centers around the four language skills. Vocabulary development expands and students thoroughly review the present and compound past tenses. The remaining indicative tenses, both simple and compound, are presented, and the study of grammar structures intensifies with an emphasis on reflexive verbs and pronouns. Class activities emphasize speaking and listening activities.

Advanced French II
The Advanced French sequence comprises Freshman and Sophomore-level courses emphasizing grammar study and vocabulary building. Students who successfully complete Nichols’ Advanced French sequence generally go on to the Advanced Placement course and exam in French language during Junior year. Students in Advanced French II review and work on present and past tenses, reflexive verbs and pronouns, among other grammar topics. Cultural topics and short-subject films provide a theme for each chapter’s extensive vocabulary. Students are introduced to expository writing in Advanced French II. Prerequisite: Recommendation of the Department.

French III
French III continues the sequence of instruction begun in Levels I and II. The Level I and II grammar work is reviewed in advanced form as part of each chapter’s work. Vocabulary-building continues with review and expansion of vocabulary topics from French I and II and with the addition of new topics. Students learn to use the subjunctive and conditional modes and to express actions in the future tense. Readings are literary, historical and cultural at this level. Level III, regular or advanced, is the final required course in French. Students successfully completing French III may elect to continue in French IV.

Advanced French III
Students in Advanced French III continue the grammar and vocabulary work begun in Advanced French II. Verb tense review and practice is constant. Students learn the remaining indicative tenses and the two subjunctive tenses. Other grammar topics include review of all pronouns, adjective, adverbs, prepositions and the passive voice. Writing assignments are lengthier than those in Advanced French II leading up to working on essay-writing. Level III, regular or advanced, is the final required course in French, although students in the Advanced section generally elect to continue in the Advanced Placement course as Juniors. Prerequisite: Recommendation of the Department.

French IV / V
This course is divided into 4 quarter-long electives that deal with a variety of historical and contemporary elements of francophone study. The course focuses on the continued development of the four major communicative skills while offering the students a unique opportunity to study one particular topic in depth. Prerequisite: Completion of French III and recommendation of the Department.
French IV AP: French Language
AP French concentrates on further developing the four language skills in order to prepare the students for the College Board Advanced Placement exam in French Language given in early May. The AP exam in French is divided into four equal parts, one part for each of the language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Classes are conducted predominantly in the target language, the major exception being grammar study. Works of literature and other authentic documents make up the reading material. Internet resources are increasingly available both as reading and as listening-practice material. Essay-writing is also an ongoing part of the work in AP French. Speaking practice in class is required of all participants. Students in AP are strongly encouraged to participate in Nichols’ French Exchange Program if they have not already done so. 
*Prerequisite: Completion of Advanced French III and recommendation of the Department. The AP exam is a requirement of the course.*

Advanced French V: Current Events
This course deals with a variety of current events and global realities through a francophone lens. This course is designed for students who have completed the AP French course and are interested in perfecting their fluency in a fast-paced learning environment. The individual courses focus on the continued development of the four major communicative skills while offering the students a unique opportunity to study their role as global citizens. Students who have completed French IV AP or French IV are eligible to take this course. 
*Prerequisite: Completion of Advanced Placement French and recommendation of the Department.*

Latin I
In this course students are introduced to basic elements of Latin grammar and begin to build a vocabulary in Latin through the reading of stories about Roman history and mythology. Students also learn to recognize the patterns of word derivation from Latin to English and the Romance languages. They investigate ancient Roman life and culture, and explore many facets of Greek mythology.

Latin II/II Advanced
Students continue to master fundamental Latin grammar, to broaden their vocabulary, and to further their understanding of the etymology of English words derived from Latin. We now begin to read selected stories from Latin literature and short poems in Latin. Ancient Roman life and culture, and Greek mythology, are also important topics in this course.

Latin III/III Advanced
This course completes the sequence of grammar lessons and continues the study of mythology, word etymology and derivation, and Roman culture and life. The development of a broad vocabulary and a strong facility in reading Latin is a significant goal of the course. Students now begin reading selections, in both prose and poetry, from various Roman writers on a wide range of perennially vital topics including love, leadership, and heroism.
Latin IV Advanced/V Advanced
This course offers advanced work in Latin prose literature. The primary focus will be on reading Julius Caesar’s commentaries and studying their historical context, but students will also read selections from other important prose authors, including Cicero, Sallust, and Livy, as well as various inscriptions and documents from the ancient world. Students will study the history, geography, art and daily life of ancient Rome. This course will prepare students for the AP Latin course. Prerequisite: Completion of Latin III and recommendation of the Department.

Spanish I
Spanish I provides an introduction to the four basic skills of language and communication: speaking, listening, writing and reading. Acquisition of cultural knowledge is also emphasized at this level. Students focus on subject-verb and noun-adjective agreement, the essential building blocks of all sentences. The present tense, gender and number agreement, an introduction to the preterit and basic vocabulary elements complete the course work.

Spanish II
Spanish II continues to stress the development of the four basic language skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Emphasis is placed on oral communication and interaction, and students are expected to use the spoken language extensively in class. Content consists of structured reading assignments, as well as grammar-vocabulary activities and cultural awareness units. Students learn and practice the present, past, future, and conditional tenses.

Advanced Spanish II
Advanced Spanish II is designed for students who possess strong linguistic skills and dedication to the study of languages. This course covers the same material as Spanish II at a faster pace, with greater attention to reading, and more frequent writing assignments. They also master the various command forms and are introduced to the formation and use of the present subjunctive. Students are selected for the course by the department members, based on ability and commitment to the language. Prerequisite: Recommendation of the Department.

Spanish III
Spanish III completes the introduction of advanced grammar points, and requires the students to communicate successfully in challenging conversational situations. The students continue to refine their use of the spoken and written language through a multiplicity of drills, compositions, and oral-aural techniques. The course is conducted primarily in Spanish. The students read short stories and articles on historical and cultural information. Written work gradually becomes more complex as students master the use of all verb tenses and moods, in addition to completing an in-depth study of the formation and use of the present and the imperfect subjunctive.

Advanced Spanish III
This course is conducted almost entirely in Spanish. Students are expected to express themselves exclusively in Spanish both in oral and written work. It is designed for students with strong linguistic skills and dedication to the language. It is taught at a faster pace, with a more extensive reading list and more frequent writing assignments. This course introduces literature through short stories, poetry and drama by Spanish and
Latin-American authors. The department selects the students for the advanced section based on ability and commitment to the language. **Prerequisite: Recommendation of the Department.**

**Spanish IV**
This course increases student proficiency in language skills, requires frequent class participation, readings in Spanish, writing, and the use of recorded material. Language usage is stressed, as well as a thorough review of grammar. The course is taught predominantly in Spanish, and examines the history and society of Spain and other Hispanic countries. **Prerequisite: Completion of Spanish III and recommendation of the Department.**

**Honors Spanish IV**
This course is designed for students who have already completed Spanish Level III. This course alternates between readings of short stories, short film analysis, and the review of selected grammar concepts at an intermediate/advanced level. Class activities emphasize oral and written communication; therefore, active participation in the target language and careful homework completion are essential to do well in this class. This class is taught entirely in Spanish. **Prerequisite: Completion of Advanced Spanish III and recommendation of the Department.**

**AP Spanish Language**
The Advanced Placement Spanish Language course is for students who have demonstrated proficiency in composition, conversation, and grammar. This course concentrates on further developing the four communicative skills. Classes are conducted entirely in Spanish, and emphasize advanced work in grammar, progressive vocabulary building, reading advanced works of literature and other authentic documents. Intensive writing and extensive speaking stress both formal and informal types of situations. **Prerequisite: Completion of Advanced Spanish III and recommendation of the Department.** This class prepares the students for the May AP examination, a requirement for this course.

**Spanish V: Youth Culture**
The Spanish V: Youth Culture course will examine a variety of themes relevant to the culture of teenagers and young adults across the Hispanic world. Students will engage in a study of music, movies, daily regimen, attitudes and initiatives and popular style. Students will engage in weekly presentations and daily conversations to develop their productive and receptive auditory skills. They will also write reviews, summaries and opinions and share these with their classmates. In this way all four linguistic skill will receive frequent attention. **Prerequisite: Completion of Spanish IV or Spanish 3 ADV, and recommendation of the Department.**

**Advanced Spanish V: Contemporary Film and Culture**
This is an advanced senior course taught entirely in Spanish and structured around a selected topic each quarter. The course focuses on the continued development of the four communicative skills and on the understanding of Latin American and Spanish culture through various forms of representation. Therefore, in this course students read a variety of works of literature (about 60% of the course), watch and discuss films and other audiovisual material, as well as discuss cultural events published on media outlets. **Prerequisite: Completion of Spanish IV AP or Honors, and recommendation of the Department.**

**Cultures of the Spanish-Speaking World**
This course fosters language proficiency while teaching new vocabulary and grammar explicitly through the study of Spanish-speaking cultures. New grammar concepts are communicated and existing grammar is strengthened topically as students study Spanish culture (family values, etiquette, religion, holidays, celebrations, media, and food) both in the United States and around the world. The course is taught primarily in Spanish. Students are expected to participate within the target language and are assessed based on class discussions, homework assignments, quizzes, and projects. **Prerequisite: Completion of Spanish III and the recommendation of the department.**
History

The study of history is a cornerstone of a liberal arts education. History provides an appreciation of the past, its peoples and its cultures. The study of history offers unique opportunities to understand the human condition and the processes of change. These skills are necessary for the development of citizenship in a democratic republic. History allows for the development of a range of skills including reading, writing, interpretative analysis, and critical thinking. Research is an integral part of historical scholarship and requires familiarity with current technologies for investigation and communication.

Grade 9

Ancient World History
This course is a survey course tracing the development of civilization from the Neolithic Revolution to the emergence of the modern world around 1500 CE. Emphasis is placed on an examination of the ancient civilizations of Egypt, Mesopotamia, India, China, Greece, Rome & the medieval Mediterranean. A strong emphasis is also placed on the development of key skills through a multifaceted program of instruction. Instruction emphasizes technology and media skills and fosters development of critical thinking and reading. Special attention is also paid to analyzing and interpreting primary sources as a key to understanding history. Finally, connections to contemporary world issues is a critical aspect of this course, promoting historical understanding as well as global awareness.
Grade 10

Modern World History or AP World History
This course is framed as a continuation of our 9th grade course in Ancient World History. The course begins with the end of the Middle Ages in Europe, and continues to the present. Topics include the rise of nation-states, the era of colonization, the Atlantic slave trade, social and intellectual developments, the 20th century (World Wars, dictatorships, and the Cold War), and the Age of Terrorism. This course encompasses the history of five geographic regions of the globe: Africa, the Americas, Asia, Europe, and Oceania, with special focus on historical developments and processes that cross multiple regions. Critical reading is expected and analytical writing is developed. Students learn to work with primary documents and refine research skills. If enrolled in AP World History, the AP exam is a requirement for this course.

Grade 11 or 12

United States History or AP US History
Students take a course with two major components. The first is a chronological coverage of American history from the Colonial period to the present. In the second component, students examine in depth critical themes of American history. Critical writing and analytical skills are emphasized. So, too, is historiography, the analysis of how historians have viewed controversial events, trends, or people in history. In the second semester, a major 2,000 to 3,000-word research paper is required. Topics are introduced in the spring at the teacher’s discretion, and the process of completing a major research paper becomes the focus of the third quarter. If enrolled in AP US History, the AP exam is a requirement for this course.

History Electives

AP Economics
This course is a study of the major concepts of economics, using the A.P. curriculum as a guide. The course begins with a focus on the basic concepts of economics, providing a foundation for the rest of the course. For most of the first semester, the course examines basic economic principles and macroeconomics. The purpose of this half of the course is to give students a thorough understanding of the principles of economics that apply to an economic system. There is an emphasis on the study of national income and price-level determination, while developing students’ familiarity with economic performance measures, the financial sector, stabilization policies, economic growth, and international economics. Through an examination of macroeconomic perspectives and ideas, students have a better understanding of economics on the national and international level, and relate them to everyday examples and applications in the classroom. The second semester focuses on microeconomics. Students examine the principles of economics that apply to the functions of individual decision-makers, both consumers and producers, within the economic system. An emphasis is placed on the nature and functions of product markets, including the study of factor markets and of the role of government in promoting greater efficiency and equity in the economy. Both semesters culminate in a
comprehensive examination. A macroeconomics examine is given at mid-year and a microeconomics exam is given at the end of the year. In order to take this senior elective, students must acquire a recommendation from the History Department. This course concludes with the expectation that all students will take either the AP Macroeconomics or AP Microeconomics exam given in May.

AP Government & Politics
There are two segments to this course, which examine government and politics. The first semester of the course begins with a general study of the American political system, taking a look at the constitutional and federal context of the national government as well as the cultural and ideological backdrop against which this system operates. It provides students with an analytical perspective on government and politics in the U.S., including both the study of general concepts used to interpret U.S. government and politics and the analysis of specific examples. The course also provides familiarity with the various institutions, groups, beliefs, and ideas that constitutes U.S. government and politics. The second semester of this course focuses on comparative government and politics. This segment of the course provides students with a global perspective as they compare and contrast different political systems throughout the world. Students examine a variety of countries from Europe, North America, Africa, and Asia, focusing on political institutions and behaviors, and drawing conclusions about the impact that these countries have on each other and the global community. Students also explore the following topics: the concept of sovereignty, political institutions, the relationship between citizenship, state, and society, political and economic change, as well as public policy. By examining both U.S. Government and Politics and Comparative Government and Politics, students have a solid foundation in understanding how the government and countries interact and impact each other. Growing out of this, students also have a solid foundation in understanding how different governing systems work, providing the students with important perspectives and insights into the global community. This course requires an extensive commitment from students if they want to be successful. Daily preparation, attention to detail, refinement of written work, and a commitment to work in class is vital to all students in this course. There are periodic tests and quizzes as well as two exams, one at mid-year and another at the end of the year. In order to take this senior elective, students must acquire a recommendation from the History Department. This course concludes with the expectation that all students will take either the AP US Government & Politics or AP Comparative Government & Politics exam given in May.

AP World History
AP World History focuses on developing students’ abilities to think conceptually about world history from approximately 8000 BCE to the present and apply historical thinking skills about the past. Five themes prevail in this course: focusing on the environment, cultures, state-building, economic systems, and social structures. This course encompasses the history of five geographic regions of the globe: Africa, the Americas, Asia, Europe, and Oceania, with special focus on historical developments and processes that cross multiple regions. Seniors enrolled in this course will need to complete an intense review of Ancient World History during the final weeks of the summer; this will include the reading of the first few chapters of the textbook. In order to take this senior elective, students must have received a recommendation from the department. The course concludes with the expectation that all students will take the AP examination given in May.
AP Psychology
This course is designed to introduce students to the systematic and scientific study of the behavior and mental processes of human beings and other animals. Students are exposed to the psychological facts, principles, and phenomena associated with each of the major subfields within psychology. They also learn about the ethics and methods psychologists use in their science and practice. Major topics include history and approaches, research methods, biological bases of behavior, sensation and perception, states of consciousness, learning, cognition, motivation and emotion, developmental psychology, personality, testing and individual differences, abnormal psychology, treatment of psychological disorders, and social psychology. In order to take this senior elective, students must acquire a recommendation from the History Department. This course concludes with the expectation that all students will take the AP exam given in May.

Entrepreneurial Studies
This class analyzes the problems of real start-up companies and asks students to present solutions and creative ideas to business owners over a short time frame. Students work in teams to brainstorm, research, interview, and propose ideas to help business owners. After working on two or three real business problems students explore the steps necessary to create a new start-up. The course combines theoretical and experiential learning to prepare students to transform knowledge into practice. Students benefit as they learn to think critically, make well-informed decisions, innovate, and communicate effectively in today’s high-tech, fast changing world.

Service and Social Justice
Do you feel called to serve others? Is the idea of making a difference important to you? Are you interested in social change? Are you bothered by injustice? Do you suspect that there is more to a good education and a good life than only individualistic or self-centered pursuits? If you answer “yes” or “maybe” to any of the above questions, Service and Social Justice (SSJ) is for you. SSJ is a course that will be at turns experiential, academic, and personal. The experiential part of this course centers on hands-on service learning experiences both here at school and out in our Western New York community, where we will often find ourselves off campus partnering with local nonprofit organizations. The academic part of SSJ will, through reading, writing, film, guest speakers, and class participation, encourage students to participate in the ongoing discussions and debates surrounding service and social justice. Finally, the personal aspect of this course will ask students to reflect on their experiences in the classroom and out in the community, to keep a service journal, and to arrive at a personal ethic of service that might help to shape, enrich, and give meaning to their lives after Nichols. Through all of this work, students will gain practical skills while also arriving at a deeper understanding of injustices such as homelessness, the ongoing refugee crisis, economic, racial, and gender inequities, environmental degradation and pollution, poverty, unequal access to healthcare, and hunger. At its heart, then, SSJ aims to fulfill our shared Nichols commitment to “train minds, bodies, and hearts for the work of life.”

Urban Studies
Urban Studies will allow students to learn about issues facing the City of Buffalo and surrounding areas. Students will be assigned various issues impacting our region (i.e., the inner harbor/outer harbor conversation) and will research and develop thoughts to support their position, ultimately culminating in a debate of the assigned issues. In order to gain a better understanding of the topics, students will engage with their community by taking field trips and interacting with pertinent stakeholders. Readings will be drawn from urban planning, urban design and urban theory. Students will gain a deeper understanding of the issues confronting our city today by actively engaging with their community. It will provide the students with a baseline understanding of what issues affect our
city and what is being done to address them. This understanding will empower the students to become active participants in our city, and as they grow up, exert positive change as they become the future leaders of tomorrow.

Importantly, they will develop character by honing their public speaking skills through debate and will become agile in communication and listening skills. Researching the issues to debate will allow students to learn how to ask the right questions, and how to properly frame an issue to effectively argue a point. Further, they will interact with and connect with residents of the Western New York region to foster a stronger relationship between Nichols and the community at large. With the strong Nichols alumni network in the Western New York community, the students will be able to actively lean on alumni support thereby strengthening our Alumni Relations program in creating connections between the school and the community.
Mathematical Sciences

The goals of the mathematics program at Nichols for students to master algebraic skills, understand algebraic methods, reason graphically and analytically, and utilize mathematics in solving everyday problems. For each course, the students are divided into levels based on their backgrounds and abilities. Courses at all levels make use of graphing calculators and appropriate computer software.

Grade 9

Algebra I
This first course in algebra promotes the understanding of a variable while teaching students to express and solve problems using equations. Students develop computational skills including graphing, manipulating fractions, factoring, working with polynomials, and solving first degree equations and inequalities. The course typically includes an introduction to quadratic equations. Order of operations, graphical representation, and proportional reasoning are emphasized throughout the course.

Integrated Geometry and Algebra I
This full year course provides an introductory geometry course integrated with an intensive review of elementary algebra. Intended for students whose background in algebra needs additional support, this course covers many of the concepts of a traditional geometry course, however, it places less emphasis on formal proof in favor of algebraic computation and manipulation.
Geometry
Geometry explores congruency, similarity, transformations, convex polygons, area, and volume. Students are also introduced to the presentation of ideas in the format of formal and informal proof. In order to cement skills studied in Algebra I, the course utilizes the coordinate plane and algebraic descriptions of geometric properties. At all levels, the course employs exploration and discovery in addition to traditional lecture. The Honors and Advanced sections presume greater proficiency with elementary algebra; these sections study vectors and transformations with greater depth and rigor.

Grade 10

Algebra II
Algebra II develops computational proficiency while studying absolute value, linear and quadratic equations and expressions, systems of equations and inequalities. Function notation is introduced. Utilizing equations to model real world applications is emphasized. The Advanced and Honors sections study additional topics including polynomial, rational, power and root equations.

Integrated Geometry and Algebra II
Integrated Geometry and Algebra II continues the exploration of the principles of plane and solid geometry through the lens of algebraic problem solving. The course gives students the opportunity to cement fundamentals from an introductory algebra course while advancing their command of geometric reasoning. The course also introduces several algebraic techniques typically studied in a second year algebra course.

Grade 11

Functions and Trigonometry
This course utilizes the fundamental concepts and mechanical algebraic skills developed in Algebra II to study Analytic Trigonometry and advanced algebraic concepts. Topics include polynomial, rational, trigonometric, exponential, and logarithmic functions. As time permits, additional topics of study include matrices, polar coordinates, parametric equations, vectors, sequences, series, probability, and analytic geometry.

Algebra and Trigonometry
This full course advances students’ understanding and facility with algebraic methods of problem solving while preparing students to study more abstract topics in mathematics. The course includes an intensive review of trigonometry in triangles and also introduces the study of analytic trigonometry. This third course in the integrated sequence continues to emphasize concrete applications of mathematical concepts.

*Completion of Functions or Algebra and Trigonometry satisfies the graduation requirement in Mathematical Sciences.

Mathematics Electives:

Introduction to Computer Programming
A computer program is a set of instructions that tells a computer how to accomplish a given task. Computer programming is the art and science of planning and implementing computer programs.
This course is designed as an introduction to both hardware and software programming. The course begins with basic components of a computer, machine representation of data, number systems, and an introduction to digital electronics through logic gates. The course also introduces the syntax and style of a high level programming language such as C++ or Java. The course stresses the nature and design of algorithms, top-down and object-oriented design, and coding and debugging skills. Topics include data types, file and screen input and output, conditional statements, iterations, recursion, subroutines, arrays, and if time permits pointers and data structures. Students who do well in mathematics and have a possible interest in pursuing careers in any math or science area should consider taking this course. 

Prerequisite: An interest in computers, logic, and digital electronics with completion of Geometry with a Grade of C or better and permission from the Department.

AP Statistics
AP Statistics introduces students to the major concepts and tools for collecting, analyzing, and drawing conclusions from data. Students are exposed to four broad conceptual themes: i) Exploring data: Observing patterns and departures from patterns i) Planning a Study: Deciding what and how to measure iii) Anticipating patterns: Producing models using probability theory and simulation iv) Statistical Inference: Confirming models. Prerequisites: Completion of Algebra II with a Grade of C+ or better and permission from the Department. The AP exam is a requirement of the course.

AP Computer Science A
This second course in computer programming is intended for students who have successfully completed the Introduction to Computer Programming course and wish to continue their studies. The language focus for the second year course is Java. At the completion of the course, students have sufficient programming experience in Java and computer science knowledge to take the Advanced Placement A examination in Computer Science. Prerequisite: Introduction to Computer Programming. The AP exam is a requirement of the course.

Data Structures and Topics
This third course is a continuation of study in computer science. The intention of the course is not only to study certain data structures and their associated algorithms, but also to study topics that are of student interest, such as GUI and applets. Prerequisite: AP Computer Science A.

Senior Mathematics Electives:
Registration for VI Form electives requires completion of Functions and Trigonometry with a grade of C+ or better. Students whose grades do not support further study in mathematics may be required to do summer work if they wish to register for a mathematics elective.

Foundations of Precalculus
This full year course cements student understanding of more abstract concepts introduced in earlier coursework with the goal of preparing students for the study of mathematics at the collegiate level. Through both applications and more formal study, this course underscores the important multiple representations of mathematical concepts. Students are encouraged to employ algebraic, graphical, and technological skills to formulate and solve mathematical problems.
Differential Calculus
While promoting a deeper understanding of the abstract notion of Function, this course concurrently introduces the fundamentals of Differential Calculus including Limits, the Difference quotient, the Derivative and its applications. The course is organized around families of function with particular attention to polynomial, exponential, logarithmic and trigonometric functions. Prerequisites: Completion of Functions and Trigonometry and permission of the department.

Honors Differential and Integral Calculus
This full year course introduces qualified students to the fundamentals of calculus. Topics from differential calculus include slopes of secant and tangent lines, the definition and interpretation of the derivative, applications of the derivative including related rates, optimization and linearization. Topics from the integral calculus include techniques of integration and utilizing integration to find area, distance, and volume. Prerequisites: Completion of Honors Functions and permission of the Department.

AP Calculus AB
AP Calculus AB covers all the material presented in Calculus, however it is studied in greater depth and with more emphasis on theory as opposed to computation. Additional topics covered include Mean Value Theorem, volumes by known cross-section, slope fields and differential equations. Prerequisites: Completion of Honors Functions and permission of the Department. The AP exam is a requirement of the course.

AP Calculus BC
AP Calculus BC covers all the topics in AP Calculus AB but in greater depth. Additionally, students in BC also study Rolle's Theorem, Taylor series, L'hospital's rule, polar coordinates, arc length, surface area, vectors, and parametric equations. Prerequisites: Completion of Advanced Functions or Advanced Algebra II and permission of the Department. The AP exam is a requirement of the course.
Science

Science at Nichols is designed for students to understand and emulate the process of science; to examine natural laws, matter, ecology, energy, and the structure of the world around us; to acquire the tools of scientific inquiry; and to consider the relationship between science and society. The use of technology is an integral part of the science curriculum. The department sections students by ability in physics, chemistry, and biology.

Grade 9

Physics I
The science department believes that a firm understanding of the natural laws that govern the universe is essential to further studies in science. This is a conceptually and mathematically rigorous course that allows students to understand the principles that govern the phenomena they witness in their everyday lives. Extensive and original laboratory work forms a cornerstone of this course. Students explore the concepts of motion, forces, momentum, energy, static electricity, electric circuits, and magnetism.

Grade 10

Chemistry
Chemistry is a broad science. Knowledge and awareness of chemical principles are important in understanding other fields of science and touches on virtually every aspect of life. Chemistry is a subject that explains the fundamental principles involved in the study of matter. Topics include: the states of matter; chemical equilibrium; acids and bases; oxidation-reduction reactions; kinetics and thermodynamics; and organic biochemistry. This course prepares the student for advanced study in chemistry. It also establishes a foundation for the understanding of the chemical principles pertaining to the study of biology, the next course in the science sequence at Nichols. Prerequisite: Physics

Grade 11

Biology
The main topics covered in Biology are: i) Molecular and Cellular Biology, ii) Genetics, iii) Animal Structure and Function with an emphasis on Human Systems, iv) Evolutionary Concepts, and v) Plant Structure and Function. Laboratory exercises are designed to demonstrate the principles discussed in class. Additionally, labs provide the students with an opportunity to develop laboratory skills and to learn the use/application of scientific instruments. Prerequisite: Chemistry

AP Biology
This course follows the Advanced Placement biology curriculum. Over the course of the year, the students receive a detailed introduction into many of the major branches of biological sciences. Unit topics include evolution, cellular biology, metabolism, cell division, genetics, molecular biology,
anatomy and ecology. Major themes include the random and directional changes to systems, the flow of information and energy, the cycling of matter and the ability for living systems to communicate and coordinate. Laboratory work is an essential part of the course. Prerequisite: Chemistry and permission of the Department. The AP exam is a requirement of the course.

Science Electives

**AP Physics C**
This course involves an advanced mathematical approach to physics. The content of the course follows the calculus-based program of the AP Physics C syllabus. Each year of this course alternates content and consists of either a full year of mechanics or one full year of electricity and magnetism. Permission of the department is required to ensure adequate preparation for the mathematical demands of the course. Prerequisite: Completion of the science graduation requirement and permission of the Department. The AP exam is a requirement of the course.

**AP Chemistry**
This course is designed for students who have successfully completed one full year of chemistry and who have demonstrated excellent ability in the area of mathematics. It is the equivalent of a college freshman chemistry course. This course provides preparation for the Advanced Placement chemistry exam and for further scientific study at the college level. Laboratory work is a vital part of AP Chemistry. Prerequisite: Completion of the science graduation requirement. The AP exam is a requirement of the course.

**Anatomy and Physiology**
Complete with clinical case studies and dissections, anatomy and physiology examines the structure and function of the human organ systems. The anatomy section of the course is interwoven with the physiology section to clarify and highlight the interrelationships between the structure and function of body parts. Emphasizing relevance, each organ system is introduced with a clinical case study pertaining to a pathology of the system. Through lecture and laboratory work, the course explores the skeletal system, the muscular system, the nervous system, the circulatory system, the respiratory system, the digestive system and the renal system. Prerequisite: Completion of the science graduation requirement.

**Introduction to Engineering I & II**
The goal of these courses is to teach a variety of engineering skills through the lens of robotics. Our class is a registered First Tech Challenge (FTC) team. We create 40 pound robots that play 2 on 2 sports. We design and build our robot in the fall and compete during the winter and spring. Students taking this course can expect to learn skills in mechanical engineering, electrical engineering, CAD and programming. Students will learn to design and fabricate custom parts on our
3D printers, UV laser cutter and CNC Router. We also work on economic tracking, video production, interview preparation, and community service. A significant component of this course is attending outreach events and competitions, typically involving a commitment of one Saturday or Sunday each month. The dates for these events are announced with as much advance notice as possible. This elective is available to both Juniors and Seniors. Students may take the course twice, focusing on different skill development each time. Participants in the class can apply for specific personal awards and college scholarship money through the FIRST program.

**Organic Chemistry**
Generally stated, organic chemistry is the study of compounds containing carbon. This course integrates and elaborates on topics introduced in physics, chemistry, and biology. Emphasis is placed on the basic structure of organic molecules and their properties, advancing into synthetic organic chemistry concepts such as alkene reactions, stereochemistry, substitution reactions and structure determination. Laboratory techniques are emphasized. This course prepares the student for advanced study in pre-professional sciences. *Prerequisite: Completion of the science graduation requirement.*

**The Biology of Cancer (Spring Semester)**
This course will cover the fundamental principles of oncology. An emphasis will be placed on the hallmarks of cancer behavior, the underlying molecular mechanisms that drive cancer formation and progression, the detection and treatment of cancer, and current avenues of promising research in the cancer field. *Prerequisite: Completion of the science graduation requirement.*

**Weather and Climate (Fall Semester)**
Our students interact with weather events and our local climate on a daily basis. This course will cover the fundamental principles of meteorology and climate science. An emphasis will be placed on interpreting meteorological forecasts, learning the mechanisms behind and impacts of our localized weather patterns in Western New York and studying the evidence underlying our current understanding of global climate change. The students will be trained to become discerning consumers of weather and climate information. *Prerequisite: Completion of the science graduation requirement.*

**Water: Our Most Important Global Resource (Spring Semester)**
Water is the ultimate connector of people on planet Earth and our most important global resource. As members of our global and local communities, students have a vital interest in understanding how past and present decisions impact our water. This course is designed to encourage students with varied backgrounds and science experience to investigate and question our relationship with water globally and locally, and promote learning through experience, place, and community engagement. The course will begin the semester considering the distribution and history of water on Earth. Our focus will then narrow to North America, investigating water resources and the history of rights and distribution. We will then focus further on the Great Lakes and ultimately Western New York’s relationship to its water. This course will be interdisciplinary in nature and appeal to a wide range of interests: science, history, policy and law, engineering, social justice, and stewardship. Students will interact with community partners (Riverkeeper, Alliance for the Great Lakes, etc), local university professors (UB and Buffalo State), and engineering professionals. Projects will afford students the opportunity to delve deeper into areas of interest. *Prerequisite: Completion of the science graduation requirement.*
Additional Course Information

Graduation Requirements

**English** - 4 full years

**Mathematics** - 3 full years, through Functions or Algebra and Trigonometry

**History** - 3 full years, through US History

**Science** - 3 full years, through Biology

**Modern and Classical Language** - Complete through level 3 on one language

**Fine and Performing Arts** - 2 full years

**PE/Athletics** - 4 full years (2 credits)

**Electives** - 3 full years

*For Modern and Classical Language and Mathematics* - Students may satisfy their requirements in each department if they have completed level three in Language or Pre-calculus by Junior year. In the event that a student completes both Math and Modern and Classical Language requirements by the end of 10th grade, the student is then required to take at least one advanced course in either department before graduating.

Senior Thesis

The Senior Thesis is a capstone academic experience involving extensive research in an academic field or in the arts. Seniors develop their thesis topics throughout the year and, after receiving faculty approval, embark on a period of research and writing. In addition to a Senior Thesis paper, all students are required to give an oral defense of their thesis in order to pass.

Course Load

Freshman and Sophomores must take a minimum of six courses. Any additional courses must be approved by the Academic Review (ARC) Committee.

Juniors must take a minimum of five courses. Any additional courses must be approved by the ARC Committee.

Seniors must take a minimum of six courses. Any additional courses must be approved by the ARC Committee.

Seniors must pass all courses in their final year. This requirement negates the use of the “wild card” credit during senior year.

Grading System and Academic Standing

Nichols has no pass/fail courses, and does not modify its requirements for students who transfer into the Upper School. The normal course load during grades 9-12 results in a total of 25 credits.
Due to the competitive nature of admission to Nichols and the academic rigor of the program, the faculty has chosen not to rank students, nor calculate a cumulative grade point average.

**Approximate Grading Scale:**

- Superior Achievement $A = 100-90$
- Strong Achievement $B = 89-80$
- Satisfactory Achievement $C = 79-70$
- Minimal Achievement $D = 69-60$
- Unacceptable $F = Below 60; no credit$

Highest Honors is awarded when a student achieves an unweighted A- average (3.7/4.0). Honors is awarded when a student achieves an unweighted B average (3.0/4.0). Commendations is awarded when a student achieves an unweighted B- average (2.7/4.0).

**Independent Research: Nichols Research Scholar**

**Science Scholar**

This program gives Nichols students the opportunity to conduct scientific research in the western New York area. Research facilities previously involved in this program include the University of Buffalo, Roswell Park Cancer Institute, and the Hauptman-Woodward Medical Research Institute. Students, under the guidance of research scientists, learn laboratory techniques, use state of the art equipment, and study the processes involved in completing college level scientific research. All students participating in the program present their scientific findings to the Nichols community. Students may request independent research credit through a petition to the Academic Review Committee. Permission from both the Science Department and the Academic Review Committee are required for participation in this program.

**Humanities Scholar**

This program gives Nichols seniors the opportunity to conduct humanities research in the western New York area through SUNY Buffalo. Depending on the length and intensity of the project, students may apply for independent study credit through the Academic Review Committee. Faculty members serve as liaisons with university and institute personnel. Student participants are encouraged to apply to present their papers at conferences and seminars in which they present and defend their data before other scholars who evaluate its merits. They are also expected to attend local humanities events, lectures and demonstrations as observers. At the conclusion of the program whether it is for the summer, one year or more, students present a poster or power point presentation to other participants in the program, mentors, faculty and parents. Other interested teachers and students may attend, as well. *Senior class status, along with permission from either the Modern and Classical Languages Department, English Department or the History Department and the Academic Review Committee are required for participation in this program.*

**Independent Studies**

Teachers and students at Nichols have very full schedules that make additional commitments difficult to fulfill. While Independent Studies take the place of a credit in a student's schedule, teachers undertake Independent Studies in addition to all teaching requirements and major duties such as coaching and heading clubs. **No**
teacher is expected to undertake this additional duty, and the Academic Review Committee will take a teacher’s schedule into account when deciding whether to allow a student to pursue this course of study. 

Due to the above considerations, Independent Studies are granted only in cases where students have demonstrated an exceptional ability to work independently in the course of their time at Nichols. Independent Studies are only possible for a course of study that is not currently offered at Nichols School. Instead of granting the Independent Study request, the ARC may propose an offered course that a student should take in place of the Independent Study, or suggest that a student pursue his or her interest as a Senior Thesis topic. Independent Studies are not part of the Arena Scheduling process, and therefore, students need to have a full schedule of options from courses offered at Nichols School in order to finish the Arena Scheduling process. Independent Study Proposals will be heard at ARC in the meeting following the close of the third quarter. Grade level deans will bring IS proposals to the ARC.

An Independent Study (IS) is subject to the following stipulations:

- The student must find a Nichols faculty member who is competent in the proposed field of study, is in the appropriate department, and is willing to supervise and evaluate the student’s work and assign grades. Teachers are not under any obligation to supervise a proposed IS.
- The student understands that whatever papers or assignments the IS teacher assigns must be completed as in a regular course.
- The student understands that the bulk of the work and learning in an IS will be done independently, outside of a classroom setting. The teacher’s role is to provide guidance and tutorials.
- The student must demonstrate that the work to be completed will be the equivalent of a comparable course that is offered by the department within which the IS will be supervised.
- The student must meet with his or her IS teacher for at least two full periods in every rotation.
- Semester courses must complete all meetings within a single semester.
- The student will receive 1/2 of a credit for a semester course and a full credit for a full year course.
- The student must complete an IS application and submit it to the grade level dean.
- The IS application must be approved by the Academic Review Committee (ARC).
- Once the application is approved, there can be no midterm or mid-year adjustments to the proposal, the workload, or the number of credits earned. If a student chooses to drop an IS after the drop/add period, the drop will be reflected on a student’s official transcript.
NICHOLS SCHOOL
APPLICATION FOR INDEPENDENT STUDY

NAME ____________________________________________________    Grade________________

Proposed Title of IS __________________________________________________

Supervising Faculty Member ___________________________________________

Department _________________________________________________________

The course will meet for a □ semester, □ full year (select one).

The student proposing the Independent Study will submit a formal proposal that demonstrates substantial interest and effort. Please type a formal proposal that includes the following information:

1. A thoughtful and specific description of the topic and justification for proposing it as an IS. Please include several essential questions that you plan to explore in the course of your study.

2. Provide a typed list of readings with correct bibliographic format.

3. Provide a list of proposed assignments and evaluations (consult with proposed IS teacher) along with due dates.

Signatures:
Student: __________________________________________________________________
IS Teacher: _______________________________________________________________
Department Head: __________________________________________________________

Upon approval by ARC,
Head of Upper School: ______________________________________________________

Once this application is approved, it constitutes a learning contract, and the student is bound to complete the proposed work.
**Arena Scheduling**

Arena Scheduling takes place each year in March for rising juniors and seniors. The combination of teacher recommendations and blind lottery is meant to ensure that the process is fair and transparent for all involved. Following Arena Scheduling, a list of recommended courses based on selections made during the scheduling process is sent home. Sometimes students are placed on waitlists for courses following Arena Scheduling, but we are often able to resolve any conflicts or waitlists by the time the schedule is completed in late August.

**AP Exam Policy**

Any student whose cumulative average in an AP course is below B- two weeks prior to the AP exam will be required to take a departmental final exam in addition to the regular AP exam. All students enrolled in AP courses are required to take the AP exam. This requirement may be waived by the ARC in cases of financial hardship or extreme mitigation circumstance.

**Drop/Add Procedure**

After the beginning of the year, adjustments are made to students’ schedules, such as changing from AP to regular math or dropping a difficult extra (6th or 7th) course. Only in very unusual circumstances, and only with the approval of the Academic Review Committee, may a student drop a year-long course after the third week of school or go below five courses. Students dropping a year-long or semester course after the third week of the marking period will have the designation of “withdrawn passing” or “withdrawn failing” on their transcript, unless that designation is waived by the Academic Review Committee.

**Academic Review Committee**

The Academic Review Committee, or ARC, is a group charged with examining the academic performance of our students after each marking period. This committee is made up of the Class Deans, Academic Department Chairs, Athletic Director, Director of Studies, Dean of Students, College Guidance Counselors, and the Heads of Middle and Upper Schools. ARC will also review Independent Study proposals, questions about course loads, schedule changes, as well as approve added or dropped courses.

**Disciplinary Status**

If asked, Nichols reports major disciplinary measures taken against a student to any college, university scholarship program or educational program that requests such information. Major disciplinary measures include, but are not limited to, suspensions and expulsions occurring while the student is enrolled in grades nine through twelve.

**Cum Laude Society**

The words “Cum Laude” come from the Latin phrase meaning “with high praise.” In 1918, Nichols School was the thirteenth school in the country to be admitted into the membership of the Cum Laude Society.
Pathways Schematics: Arts Curriculum

(Concert Choir, Orchestra, and Dance Ensemble are available to students in grades 9-12)

Freshmen Survey of the Arts
Music, theater, dance, visual arts

Sophomore Foundations of the Arts
Music, theater, technical theatre, photography, film, drawing & painting, dance

Junior/Senior Electives

Regular Track

Introduction to Acting Technique

Photography

Film I

Exploring Concepts in Drawing and Painting

The Art of Craft

A Study in Practice in Creativity

Songwriting I & II

Advanced Track

Advanced Acting

Advanced Photography

Film II

Drawing & Painting

AP Studio Art
Pathways Schematics: English Curriculum

Graduation Requirement: 4 full years

Regular Track

- Foundations of Literature
- Literature of the English Language I
- Literature of the English Language II
- English VI (Senior Electives)

Advanced Track

- Advanced Foundations of Literature
- Advanced Literature of the English Language I
- AP English Literature and Composition
- Advanced English VI (Senior Electives)

Senior Electives

- Introduction to Shakespeare
- The Writing of John McPhee & Co.
- Irish Literature
- Creative Non-Fiction
- Creative Writing/Poetry
- Salinger and Kerouac
- Criticism I
- African-American Literature
- Mythology of Ovid
- Creative Writing: Contemporary Short Fiction
- War Literature
- Changelings: Literature of the Inuit and the Norse
- Postmodern Approaches to Literature, Art, Film and Social Media
- Anna Karenina

Students can move between tracks from year to year based on the recommendation of the teacher.
Pathways Schematics: History Curriculum

Graduation Requirement: 3 full years

Regular Track

Ancient World History

Modern World History

US History

Advanced Track

Advanced Ancient World History

AP World History

AP US History

*Juniors may take one of the senior elective courses providing their schedule permits it and if there is room in the class. Seniors have first priority.

AP World History

Urban Studies

Entrepreneurial Studies

AP Psychology

AP Government and Politics

AP Economics

Service and Social Justice

Students can move between tracks from year to year based on the recommendation of the teacher.
Pathways Schematics: Modern & Classical Languages

Curriculum

Graduation Requirement: Complete through level 3 in one language

Students can move between tracks from year to year based on the recommendation of the teacher.
Pathways Schematics: Modern & Classical Languages
Curriculum Continued

Graduation Requirement: Complete through level 3 in one language

Students can move between tracks from year to year based on the recommendation of the teacher.
Pathways Schematics: Science Curriculum

Graduation Requirement: Physics, Chemistry and Biology (3 full years)

Regular Track

- Physics
- Chemistry
- Biology

Advanced Track

- Advanced Physics
- Advanced Chemistry
- AP Biology

*Juniors may take one of these senior elective courses provided their schedule permits, if there is room in the class, with permission of the instructor, and with concurrent registration in appropriate mathematics courses. Seniors have first priority.

- Anatomy and Physiology
- Organic Chemistry
- Intro to Engineering I*
- AP Physics C*
- AP Chemistry
- Introduction to Engineering II
- The Biology of Cancer
- Weather and Climate
- Water: Our Most Important Global Resource

Students can move between tracks from year to year based on the recommendation of the teacher.
Pathways Schematics: Mathematics Curriculum

Graduation Requirement: 3 full years (through Precalculus)

*Algebra I* is usually completed during Grade 8; those who take it in grade 9 enter the Geometry Sequence in Grade 10. Most go to *Geometry* or *Integrated Geometry & Algebra I*. *AP Statistics* is open to students who are in the regular track or higher. When space is available, 11th graders who have completed *Advanced Algebra II* or *Honors Algebra II* are also eligible.

Students can move between tracks from year to year based on the recommendation of the teacher. The green lines show the typical track for a student.
Curriculum Planning Guide

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Courses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9th</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Foundations of Literature (Reg or Adv)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>History</td>
<td>Ancient World History (Reg or Adv)</td>
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<td>Math</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Science</td>
<td>Physics (Reg or Adv)</td>
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<td>Foreign Language</td>
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<td>Arts</td>
<td>Freshman Survey of the Arts</td>
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<tr>
<td>10th</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Literature of the English Language (Reg or Adv)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>History</td>
<td>Modern World History, AP World History</td>
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<td>Math</td>
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<td>Science</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Electives</td>
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<tr>
<td>11th</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Literature of the English II, AP English Literature and Composition</td>
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<td>History</td>
<td>AP US History</td>
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<td>12th</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>English VI Electives</td>
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<td>Electives</td>
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International Exchanges

Nichols students have a variety of opportunities to gain a greater understanding of people and their cultures by participating in one of the many cross-cultural programs we offer.

Students have the opportunity to immerse themselves in another culture by participating in the China, France or Spain exchange programs. Students taking part in the exchange will host a foreign student for three weeks, and then will live with that same student’s family when traveling abroad. The homestay aspect of the exchange is what makes the experience so unique because it gives our students the opportunity to live as a native of that country. In addition to living with a host family, students experience what life is like in a foreign school and take part in excursions that give them a better cultural understanding of the region in which they are living.

In addition to our exchanges, we offer a variety of opportunities for students to engage in experiential learning opportunities on a global scale. Tailored to support the interest of our Classics enthusiasts, our Archaeological Dig in Germany allows students to take part in an actual dig in addition to visiting various museums of archaeological interest. From the gravy smothered “poutine” to the maple-infused Sugar Shacks, students get a taste of Quebecois culture first-hand by taking part in the Montreal excursion. Our “Global Citizenship: Costa Rica” program promotes cross-cultural awareness through personal inquiry. Furthermore, the program offers students with the chance to apply global citizenship principles into action on a local and global scale.

Overall, our students have a variety of unique and exciting ways to put their language skills to use and gain a greater understanding of culture and a respect and appreciation towards people from all walks of life.
Nichols School has eight international students hailing from China, Korea and Poland. Nichols works with partner international student organizations, Nacel Open Door and Cambridge/greenplanet, and is a member of ASSIST. An International Student Coordinator is on staff and acts as an advisor and support person for these students, closely working with the faculty, deans and staff to help support students through their academic experience here, as well as with their hosting experience living with a host family. As a global community, Nichols is committed to having several international students attend each year and believes these students enrich the educational experience of their peers and the school environment on the whole.
Advisory Program

In the moments when students need to talk through academic, personal or social matters, or college plans and career questions, faculty members are ready to help. Most students find a particular faculty member with whom they feel comfortable and to whom they can turn in confidence. In addition to these informal relationships, a formal advising system exists.

The formal advising system does not impede or hope to preclude the spontaneous relationships between students and teachers, but guarantees one such relationship for each student. Most students continue with the same advisor for several years assuring that students have an adult in their school life who shares their academic, extracurricular and social successes.

Each advisor meets with his or her advisee group once weekly, on Wednesday mornings in normal weeks. Advisors are also present at all-school Morning Meetings and Form-level meetings. Through these meetings and periodic one-on-one discussions, the advisor follows each advisee’s academic, social and extra-curricular progress. Advisors suggest practical tactics and strategies for improvement in study habits, organization, relationships with teachers, and other academic concerns. The role of the advisor is principally as an advocate, supporter and personal faculty liaison to the student.

Advisors present a comprehensive character and leadership development curriculum comprised of 36 lessons presented over the course of a student’s Upper School career. The lessons are from the CTRIS Curriculum from the The G. Frederick Zeller ’47 Initiative for Ethics and Character. All lessons, selected by the grade level Deans, are chosen for their developmental and Nichols experience appropriateness.

Class Deans, key figures in a student’s life at Nichols, devote the majority of their time to managing the overall concerns of a class and the needs of its individual members. Deans communicate regularly with parents, sharing information about almost anything that may concern a student’s behavior, performance or well-being at Nichols.

Feel free to call your child’s Dean or advisor at any time. Deans are available to field most questions related to your child, from course registration issues, to problems in a specific class. Your child’s advisor, likely a teacher, may be more difficult to reach during the school day, but is often a good point of contact for personal concerns. Deans will inform advisors of pertinent information related to a student and vice versa.
A framework of academic and personal support exists at Nichols, affording students the individual consideration that distinguishes a Nichols education. Most advising at Nichols happens informally, as students seek out trusted adults for questions, concerns and conversation. The formal advising systems in the Upper and Middle Schools exist to ensure that our students have ample contact with their advisors, and advisors have ample opportunity to address a student’s concerns. Frequent contact between deans and students, advisors and advisees, and parents and teachers makes certain that all Nichols students are cared for and supported. In order to support our students’ mental, emotional and personal needs we have a school social worker in the Middle School and a mental health counselor in the Upper School. These positions work as early intervention specialists and crisis support for our students and families. In addition, they work to link the students and families to community resources and support.
The College Counseling Program at Nichols School is guided by the mission of the School: “to train minds, bodies and hearts for the work of life, and to carry into all we do the highest ideals of character and service.” The college process offers students the opportunity to examine the work they have done in high school, reflect on the person they have become, and discern their future goals and aspirations. The counseling program is designed to help students uncover and articulate their strengths and accomplishments and then apply that understanding to their college application process. We are here to help students and their parents with every step of the process including researching college options, making the most of their college applications, and, ultimately, choosing their college placement.

We hope that you will visit the College Counseling website often to explore the wealth of information included there. Up-to-date events calendars, step-by-step guidelines for students in each year of high school, newsletters geared specifically to seniors and their parents, comprehensive information regarding financing a college education and how to apply for financial aid, and numerous other topics are included within the site. As always, we encourage you to contact our office with any questions and the opportunity for continued dialogue.
Nichols School
2013-2017
College Destinations

University of Alabama
Alfred University
Allegheny College
American University
Amherst College
Arizona State University
University of Arizona
Assumption College
Babson College
Bard College
Barnard College
Baruch College of CUNY
Bentley University
Binghamton University
Boston College
Boston University
University of British Columbia
Brown University
Bucknell University
UC Berkeley
UC Davis
UC Riverside
UC San Diego
UC Santa Barbara
Canisius College
Carnegie Mellon University
Case Western Reserve University
University of Central Arkansas
Champlain College
College of Charleston
Chatham University
University of Chicago
University of Cincinnati
Clarkson University
Clemson University
Coastal Carolina University
Colby College
Colgate University
College for Creative Studies
University of Colorado at Boulder
Colorado College
Columbia College Chicago
Columbia University
Connecticut College
Cooper Union
Cornell University
Dartmouth College
Davidson College
Denison University
University of Denver
DePaul University
Dickinson College
Duquesne University
D’Youville College
Eckerd College
Elmira College
Elon University
Emory University
Erie Community College
Fairfield University
Florida Gulf Coast University
Florida State University
Fordham University
Franklin and Marshall College
Franklin Pierce University
Furman University
George Washington University
Georgetown University
Gettysburg College
Goucher College
Hamilton College
Harvard University
Haverford College
High Point University
Hilbert College
Hobart & William Smith Colleges
College of the Holy Cross
Houghton College
Howard University
Ithaca College
John Carroll University
Kenyon College
Lafayette College
Le Moyne College
Lehigh University
Lourdes University
Loyola University Chicago
Loyola University Maryland
Loyola University New Orleans
Macalester College
University of Maine
Manhattan College
Manhattanville College
Marist College
Marquette University
University of Maryland
Marymount Manhattan College
MA College of Art and Design
MA Institute of Technology
McGill University
Mercyhurst University
Miami Dade College
Miami University, Oxford
University of Miami
Michigan State University
University of Michigan
Middlebury College
Muhlenberg College
Nazareth College
University of New England
University of New Hampshire
New York University
Niagara University
UNC – Chapel Hill
Northeastern University
Oberlin College
Ohio State University
Ontario College of Art & Design
University of Ottawa
Pace University
Palm Beach Atlantic University
Parsons The New School
Pennsylvania State University
University of Pennsylvania
University of Pittsburgh
University of Pittsburgh at Bradford
Pomona College
Potomac State College
Princeton University
Providence College
Rampone College of New Jersey
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
University of Rhode Island
University of Richmond
Roanoke College
Rochester Institute of Technology
University of Rochester
Rollins College
Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology
Sacred Heart University
San Diego State University
Sarah Lawrence University
Skidmore College
University of South Carolina
University of Southern California
Southern Methodist University
Southwestern University
University of St. Andrews
St. John Fisher College
St. Joseph’s University
St. Lawrence University
Stanford University
SUNY Albany
SUNY Alfred State College
SUNY Brockport
SUNY Buffalo
SUNY Buffalo State College
SUNY Fredonia
SUNY Geneseo
SUNY Maritime College
SUNY Oswego
SUNY Plattsburgh
SUNY Potsdam
Swarthmore College
Syracuse University
Temple University
University of Tennessee
Texas Christian University
University of Texas, Austin
University of Toronto
Trinity College
Tufts University
Union College
United States Naval Academy
University of Utah
Vanderbilt University
Vassar College
University of Vermont
University of Virginia
Wake Forest University
Washington and Lee University
Wellesley College
Wentworth Institute of Technology
Western University
Westminster College
Wheaton College IL
Williams College
University of Wisconsin, Madison
Worcester Polytechnic Institute
Xavier University
Yale University
Athletics

An overall goal of the extra-curricular athletic program is to promote the Nichols School mission. We endeavor not only to develop the students’ athletic skills, but also to encourage students to be good citizens, to challenge their intellectual skills, and to teach them the value of teamwork. An important goal of any school should be to provide students with opportunities to practice leadership, and participation in athletics provides many such opportunities. Teamwork and how students relate to one another is essential for future success in school and in life. There are few places where such skills can be better learned than on the sports field. Participation in athletics is therefore not separate from the educational process, but rather an integral part of it. The Athletic Department at Nichols is committed to developing successful programs that will fulfill these objectives, and provide a challenging, competitive environment in which the ideals of sportsmanship, personal integrity, moral character and teamwork are stressed. While winning is important, participation in athletics goes beyond winning and losing games. Coaches have a tremendous influence on young men and women and our goal is to employ coaches who are not only experts in their field, but also excellent role models to our students. We expect our coaches to instill proper attitudes toward fair competition, and to teach student athletes the importance of a healthy lifestyle. The lessons learned through competitive athletics will remain with students for a lifetime.
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<tr>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Winter</th>
<th>Spring</th>
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<tr>
<td>Cross Country – Boys</td>
<td>Basketball - 5 &amp; 6 Boys</td>
<td>Baseball - 7 &amp; 8</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Basketball - 7 &amp; 8 A Boys</td>
<td>Crew - Boys &amp; Girls</td>
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<tr>
<td>Field Hockey – JV</td>
<td>Basketball - 7 &amp; 8 A Girls</td>
<td>Golf - Varsity Girls</td>
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<tr>
<td>Field Hockey – Varsity</td>
<td>Basketball- 7 &amp; 8 B Boys</td>
<td>Lacrosse - 5 &amp; 6 Boys</td>
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<tr>
<td>Football - 7/8/9</td>
<td>Basketball - JV Boys</td>
<td>Lacrosse - 5 &amp; 6 Girls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Football – Varsity</td>
<td>Basketball - JV Girls</td>
<td>Lacrosse - 7 &amp; 8 Boys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Golf - Varsity Boys</td>
<td>Basketball - Varsity Boys</td>
<td>Lacrosse - 7 &amp; 8 Girls</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sailing – Varsity Boys &amp; Girls</td>
<td>Basketball - Varsity Girls</td>
<td>Lacrosse - JV Boys</td>
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<td>Hockey - 5 &amp; 6 A Coed</td>
<td>Lacrosse - JV Girls</td>
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<tr>
<td>Soccer - 5 &amp; 6 Girls</td>
<td>Hockey - 5 &amp; 6 B Coed</td>
<td>Lacrosse - Varsity Boys</td>
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<tr>
<td>Soccer - 7 &amp; 8 A Boys</td>
<td>Hockey - 7 &amp; 8 A</td>
<td>Lacrosse - Varsity Girls</td>
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<td>Hockey - 7 &amp; 8 B</td>
<td>Softball - 7 &amp; 8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Soccer - 7 &amp; 8 Girls</td>
<td>Hockey - Club Boys</td>
<td>Softball - Varsity Girls</td>
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<tr>
<td>Soccer - JV Boys</td>
<td>Hockey - Prep A Boys</td>
<td>Tennis - 7 &amp; 8 Boys</td>
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<tr>
<td>Soccer - JV Girls</td>
<td>Hockey - Prep A Girls</td>
<td>Tennis - Varsity Boys</td>
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<td>Soccer - Varsity Boys</td>
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<td>Tennis - 7 &amp; 8 Girls</td>
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<td>Tennis - Varsity Girls</td>
<td>Squash - Varsity Boys</td>
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<tr>
<td>Volleyball – JV</td>
<td>Squash - Varsity Girls</td>
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<td>Volleyball – Varsity</td>
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Student Clubs and Organizations

Nichols provides students with many extracurricular clubs, activities, trips and community service opportunities to enrich their School experience and make them more global individuals upon graduation. We encourage our students to explore their community and a variety of interests, to get involved, and to discover their passions.

UPPER SCHOOL CLUBS

- American Sign Language
- Amnesty International
- Anti-Gravity Club - Climbing and Outdoors
- Art Activism for Social Change
- Babel Book Club
- Backgammon Club
- Bioinformatics
- Chess Club
- Chinese Culture Club
• Conservative Club
• Fashion Design Club
• Feminism Club
• Fight Club
• Film Club
• Forensics and Chemistry Club
• Fragrance Club
• Free Draw
• French Club
• Fundraising Around the World
• Gang Green
• Gleaner - Literary Magazine
• Green Key
• HEART - Health Education
• Investment Club A&B
• Jewish Cultural Awareness Club
• Linguistics Club
• Master Minds
• Math Club
• Mock Trial Club
• Model UN
• Naked Voices
• Nichols News
• Poetry Club
• Political Debate Club
• Robotics Club - Electric Mayhem 4930
• SAGA (Sexuality and Gender Awareness)
• Science Olympiad
• SEA - Students for Environmental Awareness)
• See Art Run - Student Art
• Skate Club
• Soup Kitchen Club
• Student Union for Multicultural Awareness - SUMA
• The Big Cheese Club
• Uberbells
• USA Biology Olympiad
• Veridian – Yearbook
• Water for the World
• West Hertel Helpers
• Young Democrats of Nichols School
Community Service and Outreach

The School’s Community Outreach Program exposes our students to the issues and problems that face many communities, especially in Buffalo and Western New York. This exposure emboldens the heart and we hope that each student’s compassionate efforts produce a sense of empowerment. By participating in service, our students realize that they can change the world for the better.

In the Upper School, students approach service in depth by researching, volunteering and work together on creating projects and presentations surrounding various issues: Freshmen focus on the environment; sophomores aid poverty; juniors center on refugee issues; and seniors treat education and literacy problems in society.