

Louis and Sarah Block Yeshiva High School
General Studies Course Descriptions

English

English 9/10

The material covered in this course includes the components of short stories and poems; several novels; an introduction to drama; and a unit on speech and debate. Writing is emphasized as a unit itself and is stressed throughout the course in the form of projects, essays and book reports. Spelling and vocabulary building are also included.

Required, Grade 9 and 10, 4 Semesters, 2.0 Credits.

American Literature

In this year-long survey of American literature the students read writers from the earliest Indians to the latest modern. Each quarter emphasizes a different period--the colonial, the federal and romantic, the realist, and the modern. Students write expository, argumentative, and literary analysis paragraphs and essays, including a research paper done in conjunction with their American history class. Other skills spotlighted include note-taking, critical listening, debating, extemporaneous speaking, discussion leadership, and both objective and essay test taking.

Required, Grade 11 or 12, 2 Semesters, 1.0 Credits.

World Literature

Students undertake a historically based, chronological study of the significant works of British literature including representatives of the British Commonwealth nations. Among the teaching strategies are journals, peer-editing, collaborative writing, critical thinking, computer-based instruction, and independent reading. Students write a clear thesis statement about a literary work and develop the idea with clear examples and citations from the texts discussed; they prepare an essay which describes some aspect of a literary period and relate it to a text; they write creatively in conjunction with the study of a literary work, modeling important characteristics of the literature of the period under discussion; and they occasionally keep a reader response journal based upon information being discussed.

Required, Grade 11 or 12, 2 Semesters, 1.0 Credits.

Introduction to Journalism

This course is a semester-long overview of the skills required of a journalist. The student enrolling in this course should expect to be writing almost every day. Units will cover news writing, feature writing, editorial writing, and sports writing. Editing (including proofreading) will also be a crucial part of the class. Also included will be units in page design and layout, and photography. A final project, in addition to any quizzes and exams, will be the production of one issue of a school newspaper.

Elective, Grade 11 or 12, 1 Semester, 0.5 Credits.

Drama

In this course students will explore acting and scene production. Areas to be explored will include how to create characters through body and voice, meaningful realistic interaction between characters, and the shape of a dramatic scene. These goals will be accomplished through theater games, improvisation, and actual performance. Homework will include line memorization and some rehearsal.

Elective, Grade 11 or 12, 1 Semester, 0.5 Credits.

Creative Writing

This course, as the name suggests, will focus on writing of a more "creative" nature. The student enrolling in this course should expect to complete short- and long-term assignments such as character portraits, short stories of various types, and poetry. Students should expect to be writing almost every day.

Elective, Grade 11 or 12, 1 Semester, 0.5 Credits.

Fine Arts

Studio Art

This is an introductory course designed to expose both experienced and neophyte students to the fundamental principles and concepts of drawing and painting. Development of individual creativity will be explored through such projects as rendering and figure drawing, portraiture, architectural drawing, and still-life composition. Various artistic media such as graphite and pen studies, watercolor, and acrylic painting will be employed.

Required, Grade 9 or 10, 2 Semesters, 0.5 Credits.

Music Appreciation

The Music Appreciation is a one-semester survey course covering Western Europe from medieval times to the present. The course includes an introduction to music terminology, a history of cultural and technical musical developments throughout each century and a brief discussion of the major composers of each period. The course ends with a discussion of modern jazz, rock and ethnic musical traditions. The course should provide students with an enhanced understanding of classical Western music, and European and American Cultural history.

Required, Grade 9 or 10, 2 Semesters, 0.5 Credits.

Foreign Languages

French I

This course is an introduction to the French language and to the culture of French-speaking countries. Dialogues concerning cultural differences serve as an integral part of the class. Students learn basic vocabulary, grammatical structure, and pronunciation. An emphasis is placed on writing, speaking, reading, and listening proficiencies through various individual, paired, and group activities.

Elective, Grade 11, 2 Semesters, 1.0 Credits.

French II and III

These courses continue to strengthen writing, speaking, reading, and listening proficiencies. Students review grammar of the past, present, and future tenses of regular, irregular, and reflexive verbs. Vocabulary mastery is expanded through student compositions and projects. Students begin to learn idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms, and dialogues continue to be an important aspect of the course.

Electives, Grade 11 or 12, 2 Semesters, 1.0 Credits.

Ivrit (Hebrew) I-IV

A intensive four-year language course which develops skills in reading, writing, and conversation. Vocabulary enrichment is achieved through a multimedia instructional approach, and the culture of contemporary Israel is an integral part of the curriculum.

Required, Grades 9-12, 2 Semesters, 0.5 Credits.

Mathematics

Algebra I

This class introduces students to basic concepts of algebra and forms a transition between arithmetic and algebra. The major topics presented in the class include: fractions, signed numbers, evaluation of expressions, solutions of equations with one unknown, adding like terms, number word problems, natural number exponents, factoring, percent word problems, value word problems, addition of rational expressions, simplification of radicals, linear equations, simultaneous equations, and uniform motion word problems.

Required, Grade 9, 2 Semesters, 1.0 Credits.

Geometry

The course provides abundant opportunities for the student to learn to reason logically and mathematically, and to try new ideas to solve problems. The emphasis in the first semester is on algebraic applications and formal deductive proofs in the study of angle relationships, perpendicular and parallel lines, congruent triangles and quadrilaterals. The second semester covers similar triangles, right triangles, circles, and area and volumes of geometric figures.

Required, Grade 9 or 10, 2 Semesters, 1.0 Credits.

Algebra II

This course begins by reviewing and strengthening the mathematical techniques learned in Algebra I and Geometry. Some of the topics studied are inequalities and proofs, linear equations and functions, polynomials, rational expressions, and irrational and complex numbers. In the second semester the course continues with quadratic equations and functions, variations and polynomial equations, analytic geometry (conic sections), exponential and logarithmic functions, sequences and series, and trigonometry.

Required, Grade 10 or 11, 2 Semesters, 1.0 Credits.

Pre-Calculus

The objective of Pre-Calculus is to form the bridge between Algebra II and Calculus. This is done by challenging students with the fundamental concepts necessary for success in Calculus. These concepts include sets, order, inequalities, coordinate geometry, conic sections, sequences, series, functions, limits, polynomial solutions, derivatives, maximum/minimum problems, vectors, matrices, antiderivatives, trigonometric functions, solving triangles, trigonometric identities and graphs, polar equations, parametric equations, trigonometric limits and derivatives, exponential functions, and logarithmic functions.

Elective, Grade 11 or 12, 2 Semesters, 1.0 Credits.

Algebra III

The course is designed for the student who wants a fourth year of mathematics without the rigors and the abstract thinking of pre-calculus. The course will provide a strong foundation of pre-calculus concepts, techniques, and applications to prepare students for more advanced work. Topics covered are functions, graphs, applications, and in-depth study of trigonometry and probability. The graphing calculator is used extensively in the course.

Elective, Grade 12, 2 Semesters, 1.0 Credits.

Calculus

This course is intended for students who have a thorough understanding of previous college preparatory mathematics courses. It covers such topics as functions and their graphs, analytical geometry, limits and continuity, derivatives, differential calculus, and integral calculus. Techniques of differentiation and integration are emphasized relative to applications and problem solving. Graphing calculators are required.

Elective, Grade 12, 2 Semesters, 1.0 Credits.

Physical Education

Physical Education

Physical Education is an activity-oriented program. Emphasis is placed on improving fitness levels through daily activity. A variety of individual and team sports is played during the year, with time devoted to knowledge of the rules and basic skills necessary to play these games. Physical Education also incorporates lifetime activities in an effort to help students develop wellness plans for their future.

Required, Grade 9 and 10, 4 Semesters, 1.0 Credits.

Practical Arts

Computer Applications

Computer Applications is designed to provide the student with the fundamental concepts of microcomputer applications, including spreadsheet, database, word processing, desktop publishing, and telecommunications. Recognizing that students enter high school with a wide range of computer skills, this course will be highly individualized.

Required, Grade 11 or 12, 1 Semester, 0.5 Credits.

Marketing

This course exposes students to product distribution and promotion. The nature of marketing is discussed, including the role of marketing in today's economy. Students study marketing mix, product life cycles, and the future of marketing in a global society. They review and analyze electronic and print advertising, and study the consumer strategies of individuals, households, and both for-profit and not-for-profit organizations.

Required, Grade 11 or 12, 1 Semester, 0.5 Credits.

Science

General Biology

Topics covered include the basic principles of life, the five kingdoms of living things, and a survey of cell structure and function, basic genetics and gene engineering. Lectures are supplemented by textbook readings, bi-weekly presentations by students from current articles, laboratory experiments, and field trips.

Required, Grade 9 or 10, 2 Semesters, 1.0 Credits. Fee: \$25.00

General Chemistry

General Chemistry is the study of various forms of matter and the changes which occur among them. Topics include atomic structure and bonding; elements, compounds, and mixtures; solids, liquids, and gases; nuclear chemistry; chemical equilibrium systems; and solutions. For most students, chemistry is the first course which combines science and mathematics, and laboratory work is an integral part of the course.

Elective, Grade 11 or 12, 2 Semesters, 1.0 Credits. Fee: \$25.00

General Physics

General Physics is primarily the study of the various forms of energy and the changes which occur among them. Success in the course depends a great deal on the ability of the student to apply mathematics, particularly geometry and algebra, to real physical situations. Topics studied include rectilinear and rotational kinematics; statics and dynamics; work, energy, and power; electricity and magnetism; and waves, sound, and light.

Elective, Grade 11 or 12, 2 Semesters, 1.0 Credits. Fee: \$25.00

Advanced Biology

The goal of this course is to prepare the student for advanced studies in biology beyond high school. Topics studied are cytology, biological and organic chemistry, cellular respiration and fermentation, photosynthesis, cellular division, molecular genetics, genetic inheritance patterns, nutrition and transport in vascular plants, regulation and response in plants, and structures and functions of invertebrates and vertebrates including comparative anatomy.

Elective, Grade 11 or 12, 2 Semesters, 1.0 Credits. Fee: \$25.00

Social Studies

World History

This is a broad introductory course which surveys world history from its earliest periods through the nineteenth century. The aim of the course is to introduce the students to the major civilizations in world history. The students will become acquainted with the major movements in history, the historical framework of our current political systems, the geographical changes made by historical events and the prevailing world views of civilizations other than our own. The course should provide the students with a sound basis for understanding historical developments covered in other courses of study.

Required, Grade 9 or 10, 2 Semesters, 1.0 Credits.

American History

This is a survey course which traces the history of our country from its Native American origins until the present day. The readings trace the history of the country from its earliest European settlers, emphasizing life in colonial America, the reasons for the independence movement, the early era of nation-building, and the events leading to the Civil War. We will discuss the Reconstruction, America's rise to economic and political preeminence, the social changes of the nineteenth century, and the dramatic events of the twentieth century. For those students interested in studying the subject in more depth, there will be an optional additional reading list and discussion groups, outside the usual class schedule. These extra assignments will prepare students to take an Advanced Placement test in U.S. History.

Required, Grade 9 or 10, 2 Semesters, 1.0 Credits.

Twentieth Century History

Twentieth Century History is a more advanced course which covers world history throughout this century. The lectures trace the major developments in each region and focus on recurring themes in modern studies. The topics covered include the devastating effects of the two World Wars, the rise of totalitarian governments, both communist and fascist, the decline of imperialism, the origins of the Cold War, the United States' role as a major world power, wars for national liberation in the developing nations, the modernist intellectual movement in cultural history, the fall of communism, and challenges for the future. The texts include a modern survey, as well as some primary sources. Term papers based on original documents from the period are assigned both semesters.

Elective, Grade 12, 2 Semesters, 1.0 Credits.

Political Science

This one-semester course introduces the students to the fundamentals of American government. It covers the Constitution's basis in Enlightenment thought, the controversies surrounding its design, and the changes that have occurred through amendments. The lectures discuss both the theoretical and actual operations of the three branches of government, the historical basis of our legal system, basic legal terminology and landmark legal decisions, as well as the United States' role in international affairs and in multi-national organizations.

Elective, Grade 11, 1 Semesters, 0.5 Credits.