



THE PRAIRIE SCHOOL

Upper School Curriculum Guide

2025-2026

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Dear Upper School Family,

The purpose of The Prairie School Upper School Curriculum Guide is to provide families with a succinct, informative, and transparent document that details our academic and co-curricular requirements.

Please take a moment to read the opening pages for brief descriptions of the four main requirement categories and an overview of courses for grades 9-12. Concise descriptions of courses offered within the respective disciplines follow.

With every new year, our course offerings are likely to change slightly because we believe our academic offerings should never be stagnant. Curriculum in a school like ours is a living entity, representative of students' needs and interests and of best practices in an independent school education.

I hope you will find this guide useful as your main source of information about the Upper School curriculum and graduation requirements.

Mari Grobschmidt
Head of Upper School

Graduation Requirements at The Prairie School

To graduate from The Prairie School, a student must fulfill requirements in four areas each year: academic (including J-Term), co-curricular, service, and exercise.

Academics

Students must take five core courses each semester. Students seeking further challenge may take up to six core courses in any given semester. Courses in English, Social Studies, Science, Math, and World Language qualify as core courses. Due to their challenging, time-consuming nature, it is strongly advised students enroll in no more than two AP courses as a junior and three as a senior. Sophomores may take one AP course unless their academic trajectory requires them to take two. Students must earn additional credits in Performing or Visual Arts courses and Health & Fitness courses. Seniors may not fail any senior-year course. Students must accumulate a total of 22.75 credits. Beginning with the class of 2028, students must accumulate a minimum of 22.50 credits.

To ensure students attain a well-rounded foundation, the following minimum credits per discipline are required.

- English: 4 credits + Public Speaking: .25 credit
- Math: 3 credits
- Science: 3 credits (1 each in biology, chemistry, and physics)
- Social Studies: 3 credits
- World Languages: 3 credits/levels in a single language *
- Visual/Performing Arts: 1.75 credits
- Health & Fitness: .75 credit **

* Exceptions will be made for students entering the Heritage Language Program.

** Class 2028 and beyond will be required to have a minimum of .50 credits in Health and Fitness

Additional Requirements and Opportunities

Camp Manito-wish: Each school year begins with a required, four-day experience at Camp Manito-wish in northern Wisconsin. The program is designed to develop leadership, cooperation, situational analysis, and problem-solving skills. According to grade level, students are in camp or out on trail.

January Term (J-Term): Immediately following winter break, students engage in a two-week alternative learning experience that provides hands-on, deep-dive focus on topics the School cannot offer in the regular curriculum. Course options vary widely and may be on or off campus. J-Term is a graduation requirement for all Upper School students each year and will appear as a graded course on students' transcripts. The J-Term course catalog and registration are separate from this curriculum guide and regular course registration.

MSON: Juniors and seniors have the opportunity to take Malone Schools Online Network (MSON) courses in lieu of Prairie courses or in addition to a full Prairie course load. Students may take one MSON course at a time. In the rare case that an exceptional student has a *particularly compelling reason* to take two courses at a time, the student may submit a written appeal to Prairie's MSON Academic Liaison. Appeals may be approved or denied. Students who *must* take one or more MSON courses because they have surpassed Prairie's course offerings (e.g., in math or world language) may take the necessary MSON course plus an additional one without submitting an appeal. The MSON course catalog and registration process are separate from this curriculum guide and regular course registration.

Advanced Placement (AP): AP students may elect to take any AP Exam in May. A score of 3, 4, or 5 on these national exams may qualify the student for advanced placement or course credit at many colleges.

Co-curricular (3 points annually)

Participation in theatre, music, athletics, Science Olympiad, Model UN, and other School-sponsored activities supports students' personal growth and enhances their applications to competitive colleges. Students must earn at least 3 points (75 hours) of co-curricular activity each year. Students are strongly encouraged to commit to one major co-curricular activity per year (see Appendix).

Co-curricular pursuits outside of school — e.g., club sports; private music, dance, or martial arts lessons; community theater; civic organizations; and the like — also generally qualify to satisfy the requirement. In such cases, students must submit to the US Office a waiver detailing how they will satisfy the co-curricular requirement.

Service (25 hours annually)

Students are required to be active in community service throughout their Upper School career. Service is defined as volunteer work for the School, community organizations, religious organizations, and the like. Service does not include work for family and friends.

Students are expected to complete 25 hours of service by May 15 of each academic year. A desirable goal is partial completion (12 hours) by February 15. Students are encouraged to accrue hours during the summer for the upcoming year and to earn at least 20% of their hours through organizations other than Prairie School.

Exercise (required each semester)

In the interest of health and wellness, students must be physically active throughout the academic year by exercising three times a week for twenty minutes per session. Students may satisfy the exercise requirement in one of three ways: participation in interscholastic sports, enrollment in a fitness class, or commitment to an approved personal fitness program (see Appendix).

Graduation and Transcript Implications

J-Term is graded as High Pass/Pass/Low Pass/Fail on the transcript. Co-curricular, service, and exercise requirements are graded as Pass/Fail on the transcript. Students who do not meet the co-curricular, service, and exercise requirements may be placed on Academic Probation until the deficits are resolved. Eligibility for graduation depends upon timely fulfillment of all requirements, including academic, Manito-wish, J-Term, co-curricular, service, and exercise.

UPPER SCHOOL CURRICULUM FLOWCHART 2025-26

Grade	Computer Science & Information Systems	English	Health & Fitness	Math	Performing Arts	Science	Social Studies	Visual Arts	World Languages
9	Computer Science Discoveries	English 9	PE for Lifelong Fitness	Algebra 1 Inter. Algebra Geometry	Concert Choir Fall Play Cast Intro. Tech. Theatre Spring Play Cast String Orchestra Tech. Theatre Design Tech. Theatre Wkshp. Wind Ensemble	Biology	Hst. of Classical World	Adv. Art Ceramics Drawing Glass Studio Painting Photography Visual Art Princ. Visual Storytelling	Chinese 1 French 1 Spanish 1 ----- Chinese 2 French 2 Spanish 2 ----- Spanish Heritage Speakers
10	Computer Science Discoveries Intro. to Data Science AP Comp. Science Principles	English 10 Publ. Speaking (Gr. 10 or 11)	Healthy Choices Strength/Condition	Acc. Algebra 2 Algebra 2 Geometry Inter. Algebra	Concert Choir Fall Play Cast Intro. Tech. Theatre Spring Play Cast String Orchestra Tech. Theatre Design Tech. Theatre Wkshp. Wind Ensemble AP Music Theory	Chemistry Honors Chemistry Physics Architectural Eng. Earth Science	Hst. of Modern World AP World History	Adv. Art Ceramics Drawing Glass Studio Painting Photography Visual Art Princ. Visual Storytelling	Chinese 2 French 2 Spanish 2 ----- Chinese 3 French 3 Spanish 3 ----- Spanish Heritage Speakers
11	Computer Science Discoveries Intro. to Data Science AP Comp. Science Principles	English 11 Publ. Speaking (Gr. 10 or 11) Lit. Labyrinths The Art of Film	Strength/Condition	Acc. Algebra 2 Algebra 2 Calculus Discrete Math Precalculus A Precalculus AB AP Calculus AB AP Calculus BC AP Statistics	Concert Choir Fall Play Cast Intro. Tech. Theatre Spring Play Cast String Orchestra Tech. Theatre Wkshp. Tech. Theatre Design Wind Ensemble AP Music Theory	Chemistry Honors Chemistry Honors Physics Physics Adv. Anat. & Phys. Architectural Eng. Earth Science AP Biology AP Chemistry AP Enviro. Science	U.S. History AP U.S. History	Adv. Art Ceramics Drawing Glass Studio Painting Photography Visual Art Princ. Visual Storytelling AP 2-D Art & Design	Chinese 3 French 3 Spanish 3 ----- French 4 Spanish 4 ----- Spanish Heritage Speakers
12	Computer Science Discoveries Intro. to Data Science AP Comp. Science Principles	English 12 AP English 12 Lit. Labyrinths The Art of Film	Strength/Condition	Acc. Algebra 2 Algebra 2 Calculus Discrete Math Precalculus A Precalculus AB AP Calculus AB AP Calculus BC AP Statistics	Concert Choir Fall Play Cast Intro. Tech. Theatre Spring Play Cast String Orchestra Tech. Theatre Design Tech. Theatre Wkshp. Wind Ensemble AP Music Theory	Honors Chemistry Honors Physics Adv. Anat. & Phys. Architectural Engr. Earth Science AP Biology AP Chemistry AP Enviro. Science AP Physics 2	Economics Govt. & Politics History of Warfare Comp. Religions History on Film AP Comparative Govt. & Politics	Adv. Art Ceramics Drawing Glass Studio Painting Photography Visual Art Princ. Visual Storytelling AP 2-D Art & Design	Chinese 4 French 4 Spanish 4 ----- AP French 5 AP Spanish 5 ----- Spanish Heritage Speakers

COMPUTER SCIENCE & INFORMATION SYSTEMS

Computer Science courses may count toward math or science credit beyond the minimum graduation requirements in those disciplines.

Computer Science Discoveries I (.5 credit)

Mapped to CSTA standards, the course takes a wide lens on computer science by covering topics such as problem-solving, programming, physical computing, user-centered design and data, artificial intelligence, and machine learning, while inspiring students as they build their own websites, apps, games, and physical computing devices. Open to any student in grades 9-12 who has not taken the MS Comp Sci course.

Introduction to Data Science II (.5 credit)

This course will focus on teaching students how to find and communicate meaning in data, and to think critically about arguments based on data of all forms that are relevant in the real world. The course will emphasize data regularly presented on present-day news, articles, and online forums, and the category of "Big Data." Students will learn through a more algorithmic approach, rather than a traditional formulaic approach, using modern randomization and simulation techniques, aided by the use of R/Rstudio. **Prerequisite:** Algebra 2 or Accelerated Algebra 2.

AP Computer Science Principles (1 credit)

AP Computer Science Principles is an introductory college-level computing course that introduces students to the breadth of the field of computer science. Students learn to design and evaluate solutions and to apply computer science to solve problems through the development of algorithms and programs. They incorporate abstraction into programs and use data to discover new knowledge. Students also explain how computing innovations and computing systems—including the internet—work, explore their potential impacts, and contribute to a computing culture that is collaborative and ethical. **Prerequisite:** Computer Science Discoveries in US or a MS Comp Sci course. Sophomore, junior or senior standing required.

ENGLISH

4 credits plus Public Speaking required for graduation

English 9 (1 credit)

This course is designed to introduce students to literary touchstones through a variety of texts spanning from rich, historical classics to diverse, thought-provoking modern works. Emphasis is placed on vocabulary acquisition and application; literary analysis; paragraph construction using techniques such as narration, description, and exposition; formal and informal methods of composition; whole-class and collaborative discussion; and creative projects. The main focus of this course is to equip students with the necessary tools to grow as critical thinkers, effective

communicators, and accomplished writers. Students will build upon the foundational skills acquired in Middle School English as they enhance their abilities to construct knowledge purposefully in their study of literature, language, and writing.

English 10 – World Literature (1 credit)

This course challenges students through higher expectations and more intellectually demanding texts than in English 9. Students are expected to sharpen the skills practiced in English 9 as they explore a greater variety of writing styles and write more frequently. Students work more independently to develop their research skills in an essay integrated with History of the Modern World/AP World History. In tandem with the required Public Speaking course typically taken in Grade 10, different types of presentations and speaking opportunities are also a significant part of English 10. Ultimately, students pursue the study of world literature to better understand the core literary texts of human ideas and world culture through reading, writing, speaking, and listening, as well as gain greater awareness and knowledge of other times and places, leading to interest in and empathy toward other cultures and their people.

Public Speaking I, II (.25 credit)

This course focuses on oral presentation skills, including mature presence, poise, self-awareness, and projecting presence. Students analyze effective and ineffective speaking styles, learn to be aware of their own and others' habits as oral presenters, and prepare and deliver various types of speeches. Normally, students complete this one-term course in sophomore or junior year.

English 11 – American Literature (1 credit)

This course explores the definition of the American story and questions the concept of shared experience. Does "America" mean the same thing to everyone? What voices are most prominent? Which gets forgotten? Students in this course read texts featuring characters with a variety of experiences within the American landscape. Emphasis is placed on informal and formal writing (expository, reflective, and creative), formal discussion and debate, oral presentations, and creative projects. Students also engage in a college-preparatory research process integrated with their US History course.

English 12 – Seminar (1 credit)

This course culminates students' English preparation for college/university study. As a seminar, students are expected to exhibit significant independence and initiative in their critical reading, inquiry, learning strategies, and writing process. Students fashion their own questions and objectives for reading, lead discussion according to their textual insights and evidence, and pursue polish and sophistication in all forms of classroom communication. Students expand their repertoire for comparative analysis, and they strengthen their communication skills by addressing lingering uncertainties with conventions. In doing so, students seek to ensure their communication is not only correct but also persuasive. Core texts are literary in nature, augmented by comparative works that differ by genre, media, or context. Along with discussion,

students have ample opportunity for outlining, drafting, and presentation. Students who enroll in AP English 12 may not also enroll in this non-AP English 12 course.

AP English 12 – Literature and Composition (1 credit)

This Advanced Placement course is open to seniors seeking a rigorous curriculum of literary analysis and writing similar to many college freshman classes. Designed and structured as a seminar, the course is organized around various genres, themes, and writing styles in major works of world literature. Emphasis is placed upon reading, analysis, discussion, and writing, with ample opportunities for students to practice their writing skills. The syllabus incorporates the recommendations of the College Board AP Program. Senior standing required. Students who enroll in AP English 12 may not also enroll in non-AP English 12.

English ELECTIVES

The English department offers two electives (one per term), open to students in grades 11-12. These electives may not replace the core English courses to fulfill graduation requirements in English.

Literary Labyrinths I (.5 credit)

Featuring innovative and complex fiction, this course draws students into a labyrinthine world of multiple layers, unreliable storytellers, and unexpected connections featuring stories designed to produce heated discussions, eye-opening realizations, and innovative responses about the nature of reality. Junior or senior standing required.

The Art of Film II (.5 credit)

This class comes with a warning: “The Art of Film” is not a popcorn class. It is, instead, a class in active thinking and viewing, helping students to develop tools for better appreciating the most powerful artistic medium of the last century. Students in this course will encounter some of the greatest and most influential films from around the globe, as well as think deeply about all the artistic, narrative, and visual choices that go into even the most basic filmmaking. Students will also be asked to engage in their own filmmaking activities, creating analytical homages to landmark moments from cinematic history. Senior standing required. **NOTE:** Students will be asked to subscribe to one or two unique streaming services for the duration of the class. Junior or senior standing required.

HEALTH & FITNESS

.75 credit required for graduation; .50 credit beginning with the Class of 2028

PE for Lifelong Fitness I, II (.25 credit)

Students learn the basic concepts of fitness goals through various activities. Emphasis is placed on learning/mastery of fundamental movement patterns and ability to use strength and cardiovascular equipment. Students will develop competence in the Fitness Center through exercise progression. This course is required in 9th grade.

Healthy Choices I, II (.25 credit)

This survey course is designed to assist students in obtaining and applying accurate information to their lives, developing lifelong positive attitudes and behaviors, and making wise decisions related to their personal health. Topics include but are not limited to mental, emotional, and social health; substances (alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs); and sexual health. This course is required in 10th grade.

Strength and Conditioning I, II (.25 credit)

This course is designed to help students maximize their physical potential both in sports and life. Students develop knowledge in foundational movements, exercise selection, and progression, and the “why” of how individualized exercise plans are developed. Athletes have the opportunity to prepare for their season by completing a sport-specific plan. Students not involved in athletics undertake a resistance training and conditioning program suitable to their fitness goals. This course is not open to freshmen.

MATHEMATICS

3 credits required for graduation

A final grade of C- (70%) or better is needed to proceed to the next level of study.

All students enrolled in an Upper School math course must have a TI 84, TI 84 plus or TI 84 plusCE (note: this is the best option for students enrolling in AP level course work).

Algebra 1 (1 credit)

This course introduces basic concepts of algebra while helping students develop their skills in symbolic manipulation and fluency in the “language of algebra.” This material provides a necessary foundation for many of the topics students will study in future mathematics and science courses. Emphasis is placed on problem solving and application. Linear functions are thoroughly investigated. Other topics include real numbers, quadratic functions, exponential functions, systems of equations, polynomials, radicals, and rational expressions.

Algebra 2 (1 credit)

This course incorporates a review and continuation of the core concepts developed in Algebra 1. The primary goal is to provide a solid foundation for future success in higher levels of mathematics. Students continue to develop their skills in symbolic manipulation and in communicating through mathematics. Students are encouraged to see problems from both a geometric and an algebraic viewpoint through the use of graphing calculators and problem-solving workshops. In addition to the study of linear, quadratic, polynomial, radical, logarithmic, exponential, rational, and trigonometric functions, the course includes an introduction to topics found in advanced courses. **Prerequisite:** Geometry.

Note: A final grade of A in this course is required to enroll in Precalculus AB.

Accelerated Algebra 2 (1 credit)

This advanced course incorporates a quick review of the basic concepts from Algebra 1 before diving into the introduction of topics found in higher levels of mathematics. In this rigorous and fast-paced course, students study linear, quadratic, polynomial, radical, logarithmic, exponential, trigonometric, and rational functions. Using graphing calculators as a tool, students explore the connections between the algebraic concepts/skills and their geometrical representations.

Throughout the course, emphasis is placed on developing skills in mathematical communication, abstract reasoning, critical thinking, and problem solving. A solid foundation in Algebra 1 is essential for placement in this course. **Prerequisite:** Geometry.

Note: A final grade of B or better in this course is required to enroll in Precalculus AB.

Calculus (1 credit)

In this course, students study the branch of mathematics that deals with rates of change in continuous and varying quantities. The course includes exercises in the graphical, numerical, analytical, and verbal representation of functions through the study of limits, differentiation, and basic integration. Students use technology to help solve problems, interpret results, verify conclusions, and determine the reasonableness of solutions. A graphing calculator is required.

Prerequisite: Precalculus A or Precalculus AB.

Geometry (1 credit)

This course introduces logic and the concept of an axiomatic system. Students learn to justify and communicate their reasoning both through formal proofs (two-column, flow and paragraph proofs) and informally as they solve a variety of problems. Geometry software is used to discover and reinforce many important concepts. Topics include reasoning and proof, area, perpendicular and parallel lines, triangles and congruence, quadrilaterals, transformations, similarity, right triangles, circles, surface area, and volume. **Prerequisite:** Algebra 1.

Intermediate Algebra (1 credit)

This course covers operations with real numbers, graphs of functions, domain and range of functions, linear equations and inequalities, quadratic equations, operations with polynomials, rational expressions, exponents and radicals, equations of lines. Emphasis is also on problem solving. This course is specifically designed to bridge skills between Algebra 1 and Algebra 2.

Prerequisite: Algebra 1 or Geometry. **Note:** Successful completion of Geometry and a final grade of A in this course are needed to enroll in Accelerated Algebra 2.

Precalculus A (1 credit)

This course continues the study of advanced algebra topics that begins in Algebra 2. Its primary goals are to improve students' algebraic and problem-solving skills while continuing to study polynomial, rational, exponential, and logarithmic functions. Students are also introduced to trigonometric functions. Graphing calculators are used where appropriate. **Prerequisite:** Algebra 2 or Accelerated Algebra 2.

Precalculus AB (1 credit)

This advanced course focuses on the study of functions and trigonometry in preparation for Calculus. Topics include polynomial, rational, exponential, and logarithmic functions, and an extensive study of trigonometry. This rigorous course aims to improve students' problem-solving skills, ability to work and think independently, and ability to reason logically in a fast-paced environment. **Prerequisite:** A final grade of A in Algebra 2 or B in Accelerated Algebra 2.

Note: This course is the prerequisite for AP Calculus AB.

Discrete Mathematics I (.5 credit)**Discrete Mathematics II** (.5 credit)

Discrete Math I: Discrete Math studies the “structure” of mathematics and reasoning. It is the mathematical building block of all computer science. In Semester 1, students will learn how logic is used to form formal arguments and proofs and will apply these ideas to the study of numbers, sets, and Minecraft circuits and calculators. Students will leave the course with a better sense of how to communicate ideas clearly and logically. These skills carry over into all areas of life, both social and professional. **Prerequisite:** PreCalculus A.

Discrete Math II: Semester 2 of Discrete Math is a continuation and exploration of the ideas covered in Semester 1. Students will continue to apply logic to more advanced topics and structures in mathematics. Depending on time and student interest, students will cover a wide range of topics, including advanced counting and probability, graph theory, game theory, and many other abstract concepts in math. **Prerequisite:** Discrete Math I.

Students may take one or both semesters but completion of semester I is required for enrollment in semester II.

AP Calculus AB (1 credit)

This course represents the equivalent of one semester of college calculus, including differential and integral calculus and their applications in science. Graphing calculators are used for exploration of new ideas and as aids in problem solving. Throughout the course, emphasis is placed on developing ideas analytically, graphically, numerically, and verbally. The syllabus incorporates the recommendations of the College Board AP Program for the “AB” syllabus.

Prerequisite: Precalculus AB.

AP Calculus BC (1 credit)

This course represents both first- and second-semester college calculus courses and extends the content learned in AB to different types of equations and introduces the topic of sequences and series. Topics include differential and integral calculus, including concepts and skills of limits, derivatives, definite integrals, the Fundamental Theorem of Calculus, and series.

Students learn to approach calculus concepts and problems when they are represented graphically, numerically, analytically, and verbally, and to make connections among these representations. Students learn how to use technology to help solve problems, experiment, interpret results, and support conclusions. The syllabus incorporates the recommendations of the College Board AP Program for the “BC” syllabus. **Prerequisite:** AP Calculus AB.

AP Statistics (1 credit)

This course acquaints students with the major concepts and tools for collecting, analyzing, and drawing conclusions from data. Students frequently work on projects involving the hands-on gathering and analysis of real-world data. Computers and calculators allow students to focus deeply on the concepts involved in statistics. The syllabus incorporates the recommendations of the College Board AP program. **Prerequisite:** Algebra 2 or Accelerated Algebra 2.

PERFORMING ARTS

1.75 credits of Performing Arts and/or Visual Arts (p. 20-22) required for graduation

With the exception of introductory and AP courses, students may enroll repeatedly in performing arts courses.

Music

Concert Choir I, II (.5 credit)

Open to all Upper School students, the Concert Choir performs vocal music from various styles and periods. The course explores the fundamentals of singing and incorporates musical theatre and basic music theory. Performances include the Ardent Arts, Jubilate, and Finale concerts. Students are encouraged to enroll for both semesters in repeated years.

String Orchestra I, II (.5 credit)

String Orchestra students work as an ensemble to learn various instrumental techniques and concert repertoire. Performances include Ardent Arts, Jubilate, and Finale concerts. Students are encouraged to enroll for both semesters in repeated years. **Prerequisite:** Recent experience playing violin, viola, cello, or bass.

Wind Ensemble I, II (.5 credit)

In this course, students who play wind and percussion instruments will learn technical, rhythmic, listening, analytical, and performance skills through advanced literature in the band repertoire in a historical and multicultural context. Students will also learn the fundamentals of tone production, articulation, music reading, and scales. Performances include the Ardent Arts, Jubilate, and Finale concerts. Students are encouraged to enroll for both semesters in repeated years. **Prerequisite:** High school proficiency (Class B or better) on the student's instrument.

AP Music Theory (1 credit)

In AP Music Theory, students study music's structure, design, and language. In addition to historical perspective, the course content includes composing, sight singing, analysis, and dictation. This college-level course is open only to students with strong musical backgrounds. AP Music Theory is an academic class; however, if it is taken as a sixth academic class, it can fulfill one credit of the Arts graduation requirement. **Prerequisite:** Instructor approval.

Theatre

Fall Play Cast I (.5 credit)

In this production ensemble class, students will rehearse and perform a one-act play at Prairie and the Wisconsin High School Theatre Festival at various schools throughout the state. All rehearsals will be in class except for a final dress rehearsal. Festival performances occur outside of class hours.

Spring Play Cast II (.5 credit)

In this production ensemble class, students will rehearse and perform a play at Prairie. All rehearsals will be in class except for a final dress rehearsal. The performance occurs outside of class hours.

Technical Theatre

Introduction to Technical Theatre I, II (.5 credit)

This course examines all technical theatre elements, including basic theatre history, theatre architecture, props, scenery, costumes, lighting, sound, projection, and special effects. Students will study these elements through a backstage view and analyze their implementation in the musicals *Hamilton*, *Beetlejuice*, *Wicked*, *Hadestown*, and *Dear Evan Hansen*. Enrollment limited to 10.

Technical Theatre Workshop I, II (.5 credit)

Students in this course will execute the technical elements of the current Prairie School mainstage production. These elements include but are not limited to construction, painting, lighting, props, and sound. Students will refine their abilities in these areas and gain a deeper understanding of the technical theatre process. Students will also gain a basic knowledge of the use and practices of every tool in the scene shop and have some time to explore their own projects at the end of the musical run. Enrollment limited to 8.

Technical Theatre Design I, II (.5 credit)

In this course, students will learn how to design for the theater. We will read scripts, create tension plots, and learn how our work as designers can support the story being told. While we will talk about lighting and costumes, designing a set for a play we have read is the final project in the course. Students will gain a deeper understanding of the elements of design, how to read and analyze a script for production, how to research for design, and how to write a design statement. Enrollment limited to 8. **Prerequisite:** Intro Technical Theatre or past crew experience of a Prairie Show.

SCIENCE

3 credits required for graduation, one each in Biology, Chemistry, and Physics

Biology (1 credit)

This course is designed to survey basic concepts and principles of life. Emphasis is placed on understanding topics through various laboratory activities to develop analysis and reasoning skills. Areas covered include the organization and classification of living organisms (plants, protists, animals, fungi, bacteria), cellular biology, genetics, forensics, and ecology.

Chemistry (1 credit)

In this course, students are exposed to the fundamentals of chemistry through the investigation of chemical topics pertinent to everyday life. Emphasis is placed on a qualitative understanding of the basic principles with only a minor emphasis on mathematical relationships. Topics include atomic structure, moles and chemical reactions, and the chemistry of everyday materials. Students will conduct problem-based projects where they apply their chemical knowledge to the behavior of matter and energy. This class is not open to seniors. **Prerequisite:** Biology.

Honors Chemistry (1 credit)

In this course, students study the chemical and physical behavior of matter from both a quantitative and qualitative point of view. Considerable time is spent in the laboratory reinforcing concepts and discovering new relationships. Because of the quantitative nature of many concepts, students must have sound, basic algebra skills. **Prerequisite:** Biology and Algebra 1.

Physics (1 credit)

In this course, students experience the science of motion, light, energy, and sound in a highly interactive and conceptual way. Through a series of labs and extended projects, students learn many practical applications of physics to daily life. The concepts covered mirror those of the Honors Physics course, but the level of mathematics is less demanding. This class is not open to seniors. **Prerequisite:** Prior or concurrent enrollment in Algebra 2 or Accelerated Algebra 2, or departmental approval.

Honors Physics (1 credit)

Physics is a study of the basic laws of nature and is the foundation for all other sciences. This is a traditional high school physics course that makes extensive use of mathematical problem-solving techniques. A course of this type is a prerequisite for beginning science or engineering studies in college. The major difference between this course and the Physics course described above is the level of mathematical rigor. Students spend a considerable amount of time in the laboratory and use computers to help collect and analyze data.

Prerequisite: Algebra 2 or Accelerated Algebra 2.

Advanced Anatomy and Physiology I (.5 credit)

Advanced Anatomy and Physiology II (.5 credit)

This is a challenging pair of sequential courses in which students learn the structures of the body systems, their functions, how they interact, and what can go wrong. Students will learn new science terminology, must be able to analyze and apply information in the laboratory setting, and must be ready and willing to work at an advanced level. Animal dissection is required in both courses; semester II will end with a culminating weeks-long cat dissection. Both courses are designed for students considering a major in health care, athletics, or veterinary medicine. Students may take one or both semesters but completion of semester I is required for enrollment in semester II. Junior or senior standing required.

Architectural Engineering I: Structure and Representation (.5 credit)

Architectural Engineering II: Construction and Design (.5 credit)

Throughout history, architectural engineering has helped humanity redefine the concept of dwelling. This course introduces students to the basic terms, materials, and systems used in the design and construction of buildings. Through a series of hands-on exercises, students will develop a working knowledge of plans, sections, and elevation; foundation and floor systems; wall and roof systems; moisture and thermal protection; and mechanical and electrical systems. Activities will include analyzing and modifying existing structures, building representative models, and designing original structures. These courses are not sequential; students may take only AE I, only AE II, or both. Enrollment limited to 12. **Prerequisite:** Geometry. Sophomore, junior, or senior standing required.

Earth Science I: Land and Water (.5 credit)

Earth Science II: Air, Weather and Climate (.5 credit)

Earth Science is the study of the composition, structure, processes and history of our planet. Earth Science I: Land and Water will cover such topics as plate tectonics, rock cycles, geological features and watersheds including groundwater, rivers and lakes. Earth Science II: Air, Weather and Climate will cover such topics as the atmosphere, weather patterns, climate change, and ocean currents. Both courses are designed to help students develop and expand scientific critical-thinking and understanding cause-and-effect relationships. Students will explore earth science through modeling activities, projects, lab activities, field studies, and discussions. These courses are not sequential; students may take only ES I, only ES II, or both. Junior or senior standing required; sophomores may take the course with department approval.

AP Biology (1 credit)

AP Biology is a college-level introductory biology course in which students explore evolution, cellular processes, energy and communication, genetics, information transfer, ecology, and interactions. Using modeling activities, inquiry-based investigations, independent projects, analogies, and puzzles, students expand their content knowledge to develop science process skills. Students work collaboratively and independently to develop their ability to design

investigations, collect and analyze data, and make claims that are well-supported with evidence, reasoning, and statistics. The syllabus incorporates the recommendations of the College Board AP program. **Prerequisites:** Biology and Honors Chemistry.

AP Chemistry (1 credit)

This course duplicates the experiences and rigor of a college-level introductory chemistry course designed for science and engineering majors. In addition to topics studied in Honors Chemistry, students study reaction kinetics, equilibrium, acids and bases, redox reactions, electrochemistry, and thermodynamics. Lengthy, complex lab experiments designed to complement the classroom portions of the course are conducted approximately once every rotation and begin at 7:30 a.m. The syllabus incorporates the recommendations of the College Board AP program. **Prerequisites:** Honors Chemistry and prior or concurrent Honors Physics.

AP Environmental Science (1 credit)

This course provides students with the scientific principles, concepts, and methodologies required to understand the interrelationships of the natural world. Students will identify and analyze environmental problems both natural and human-made, evaluate the relative risks associated with these problems, and examine alternative solutions for resolving and/or preventing them. The syllabus incorporates the recommendations of the College Board AP program. **Prerequisites:** Biology and prior or concurrent Chemistry or Honors Chemistry.

AP Physics 2 (1 credit)

This is an algebra-based, introductory college-level physics course that provides students with a solid foundation in thermodynamics and kinetic theory; electrostatics; DC and RC circuits; magnetic fields and electromagnetism; physical and geometric optics; and quantum and nuclear physics. Through inquiry-based learning and hands-on lab explorations, students will develop critical thinking and reasoning skills. The syllabus incorporates the recommendations of the College Board AP program. **Prerequisites:** Honors Chemistry, Honors Physics, and Accelerated Algebra 2 or Algebra 2.

SOCIAL STUDIES

3 credits required for graduation

History of the Classical World (1 credit)

This course for freshmen surveys the development of complex civilizations in the ancient Mediterranean world from the Paleolithic period through Late Antiquity. Emphasis is placed on the major developments in the political, social, and economic history of the ancient Near East, Egypt, Greece, and Rome, with special attention to those institutions and ideas that significantly influenced the development of Western civilization. Students examine and evaluate human interaction, learning why and how people from various cultures and places have behaved. From

the most ancient times to the Middle Ages, we will analyze their influences on the world we live in now.

History of the Modern World (1 credit)

This course for sophomores examines the period from 1450 to the present through an in-depth study of the forces that created the 21st century, such as economic globalization and interdependence, political and ideological conflicts, global and national identities, and the power of culture and technology to shape human events. Students develop analytical skills to read primary and secondary sources, analyze connections between historical and current events, and produce independent research. As a learning community, students also engage in civil discussion and collaboration with their peers. Each student completes a major research project with collaborative components.

AP World History (1 credit)

As the AP World History materials note, “The purpose of the AP World History course is to develop a greater understanding of the evolution of global processes and contacts in different types of human societies. This understanding is advanced through a combination of selective factual knowledge and appropriate analytical skills. The course highlights the nature of changes in global frameworks and their causes and consequences, as well as comparisons among major societies. Specific themes provide further organization to the course, along with consistent attention to contacts among societies that form the core of world history as a field of study.” The period studied is 8000 B.C.E. to the end of the 20th century. Assessments are shaped by the AP exam and consist of primary and secondary source analyses, essays, and multiple-choice tests. The syllabus incorporates the recommendations of the College Board AP program. Sophomore standing required.

United States History (1 credit)

This course for juniors gives students a broad overview of United States history and the political, economic, and social processes that combined to create this country. A textbook and a variety of supplemental materials stress critical and analytical thinking skills. Through the careful investigation, analysis, and examination of primary and secondary sources, students formulate a coherent understanding of those factors that shaped the United States. Students are guided through the basics of formal research in a major essay integrated with their English 11 course.

Note: Either U.S. History or AP U.S. History is required for graduation.

AP United States History (1 credit)

In this course, students undertake a rigorous exploration of United States history with an emphasis on independent thought. The course focuses on the areas of United States history that are stressed in the AP exam and utilizes a college-level textbook and a variety of supplemental materials. Advanced analytical writing skills and student initiative are stressed. Students must be prepared for college-level expectations in the study of U.S. history and a substantial reading and writing load. Students are guided through the basics of formal research

in an essay integrated with their English 11 course. The syllabus incorporates the recommendations of the College Board AP program.

Note: Either U.S. History or AP U.S. History is required for graduation.

Economics I (.5 credit)

“Everyone must, to some extent, act as his own economist—in his private life and as a citizen—and both he and the community will be better served if he is well informed and can think clearly and objectively about economic questions” (National Task Force on Economic Education). This course is a survey course that focuses on how economic policies impact our nation and its people by focusing on several themes that will allow students to make connections between economic principles and current events. Economics serves as a basic introduction to macroeconomics and microeconomics emphasizing critical thinking using economic reasoning. Senior standing required.

Government and Politics I (.5 credit)

This course focuses on the structure and dynamics of American government and examines citizenship and civic responsibility. Particular emphasis is placed on the Constitution and Constitutional Convention, the evolution and growth of the modern federal government, and contemporary American politics. Students study federalism, individual political participation, civil rights and liberties, and the expansion of the size and scope of the federal government during the 20th century. Students also engage in a series of informed debates on current political issues to better form their own educated opinions on both specific issues and broader political ideologies. Senior standing required.

History of Warfare I (.5 credit)

This course introduces students to how warfare has been practiced throughout history. Students examine the institutions of armies and how the position of the warrior has evolved, the impact on the history of warfare and the weapons used to wage it, and the tactical, strategic, and logistical decisions that have separated history’s war-winners from its war-losers. The course also examines ways in which people have tried both successfully and unsuccessfully to prevent wars, and how lasting peace has historically been achieved. Senior standing required.

Comparative Religions II (.5 credit)

In this course, students analyze the major world religions, with particular attention to the origins, historical development, and principal themes/belief systems of nine major world religions that have played an enormous role in shaping world civilizations and human cultures. As globalization creates an increasingly intertwined and interdependent world, students need to understand how these belief systems have contributed to it. Therefore, this course focuses on current events and controversies surrounding the great religions and familiarizes students with this material to help them become more compassionate, empathetic, and understanding, yet careful to recognize the conflict and danger that often accompany religious zealotry. Senior standing required.

History on Film II (.5 credit)

This course examines various films to examine the popular interpretations and revisions of history as shown by Hollywood. Students will analyze both the films themselves and the historical events they purport to portray, diving deeply into questions such as, Why were these films made? How closely do the events of the film correspond to what is known and documented in historical sources? What choices did the directors make to please or influence their audiences? What influences and biases, both overt and subconscious, put pressure on the writers and directors to slant, modify, or outright change the documented historical facts? Students will gain a new appreciation for the deep facts of history, and how film has been and can be used as a social and political tool. Selected films may include but are not limited to *Gladiator*, *Kingdom of Heaven*, *Aleksandr Nevskii*, *Braveheart*, *Glory*, *Lincoln*, *Birth of a Nation*, *1917*, *Battleship Potemkin*, *Casablanca*, *The Great Escape*, and *Saving Private Ryan*. Senior standing required.

AP Comparative Government and Politics II (.5 credit)

This survey course in comparative politics examines six countries: Britain, Russia, Mexico, China, Iran, and Nigeria. The course focuses on political and economic institutions in the modern era and asks students to compare both function and outcome. The course is relevant and dynamic as it is closely tied to current events. It also requires students to reflect on political and economic choices in the United States. This course makes an excellent companion to two fall electives: Government & Politics and Economics. The syllabus incorporates the recommendations of the College Board AP program. Senior standing required.

VISUAL ARTS

1.75 credit of Visual Arts and/or Performing Arts (p. 13-15) required for graduation

With the exception of AP, students may enroll repeatedly in Visual Arts courses.

Visual Art Principles I, II (.5 credit)

This course is designed primarily for freshmen and sophomores, but is open to any Upper School student as an introduction to the Visual Arts program. Students will be introduced to basic skills, techniques, and vocabulary with a variety of visual art materials. Media used may include but is not limited to drawing, painting, printmaking, ceramics, digital design, and fiber. Visual Art I and II differ in coursework, so students are welcome to enroll in both semesters. However, students need to complete only one semester to enroll in advanced classes.

Advanced Art I, II (.5 credit)

This course is designed for students who want to advance their curiosity in artmaking. We focus on *why we make art* in pursuit of individuality and creative expression. Students are offered skill-building project challenges while being encouraged to explore their curiosity in mediums of their choosing. An emphasis is put on what it means to be an active and productive member of

an art studio community. Students are given opportunities to exhibit their work and leave prepared to excel in A.P. Studio Art. **Prerequisite:** Visual Art Principles.

Ceramics I, II (.5 credit)

Ceramics is an introduction to working with clay and understanding the ceramic process from start to finish. The relationship between form and function will be critically examined as students learn basic hand-building techniques. Students are taught how to build pottery by use of pinch, coil, and slab methods of construction as well as how to throw on the wheel. Enrollment limited to 12. **Prerequisite:** Visual Art I or II, or junior or senior standing.

Drawing II (.5 credit)

This upper-level art course is designed to explore the art of drawing and mark making with various materials, including graphite, charcoal, and ink. During the latter portion of the semester, students will also explore color application through colored pencils, chalk, and oil pastel. Students will take a deeper dive into skill practice including perspective, observational work, grid manipulation, and abstraction. **Prerequisite:** Visual Art I or II.

Glass Studio I, II (.25 credit)

In this course students will be introduced to several glass making processes, including fusing, hot working/blowing, cold working, bead making, and casting. Emphasis will be placed on studio safety, skill building, collaboration and developing ideas from two-dimensional sketches into three-dimensional glass pieces. Enrollment limited to 6. **Prerequisite:** Visual Art I or II, or junior or senior standing.

Painting I (.5 credit)

This upper-level art course is designed to further the exploration of painting techniques and approaches using acrylic and watercolor. Students will be introduced to a deeper understanding of color mixing and color theory. Students will also explore and practice brush work, and various painting styles through the lens of notable historical and contemporary artworks. **Prerequisite:** Visual Art I or II.

Photography I, II (.25 credit)

This elective offers students an introductory experience in the art of Photography. After hands-on instruction on camera operations, students complete a sequence of project challenges that explore the formal and expressive aspects of picture-making and ink-jet printing. Field trips are included to give students opportunities to take photographs beyond our campus. Students conclude this course by compiling a portfolio of pictures that they are encouraged to share and submit to exhibitions, contests, and applications. Cameras are available for students to use throughout the course along with access and basic instruction in Adobe Bridge, Photoshop, and Lightroom. Enrollment limited to 10. **Prerequisite:** Visual Art I or II.

Visual Storytelling I, II (.25 credit)

Visual Storytelling is a video production course that offers hands-on experience in the practicalities and expressive qualities of video production. In a pursuit of creating outstanding short films, this course provides instruction for creating high-quality videography by exploring pre-production, principal photography, and post-production through a series of creative project challenges. An emphasis is put on learning to operate equipment and design scenes to tell compelling stories in the documentary, narrative, and fine-art traditions. Students are encouraged to submit their work to a wide network of student-led film festivals, nationwide. Equipment and software are available for students throughout the course, including access and basic instruction in Adobe Premiere Pro, Audition, and After Effects. **Prerequisite:** Visual Art Principles or teacher approval.

AP 2-D Art & Design (1credit)

The AP Studio Art Program is a yearlong course to guide students in the development of a visual art portfolio. Students' portfolios should demonstrate skills and ideas developed, refined, and applied throughout the course to produce visual compositions of 2-D Design. Portfolios are evaluated based on standardized scoring descriptors aligned with skills and understanding developed in college foundation courses. Students should be able and willing to dedicate ample time outside of class to their portfolio work. **Prerequisite:** Visual Art I or II, two additional Visual Art courses, and instructor approval. Junior or senior standing required.

WORLD LANGUAGES

3 credits/levels in one language required for graduation. An exception can be made for students entering the Heritage program.

A final grade of C- (70%) or better is needed to proceed to the next level of study.

Chinese (Mandarin)

Chinese 1 (1 credit)

This is an introductory course designed for students who have had no previous study of Mandarin Chinese. Speaking and listening skills are emphasized through the use of multimedia, classroom exercises, and other teaching methods. Chinese writing, pinyin and tonal systems are introduced. Culture, history, and other aspects of the language are taught.

Chinese 2 (1 credit)

Students who have successfully completed Mandarin Chinese 1 continue their study of grammar, vocabulary, writing, reading, and culture. Conversation, writing, and speaking are emphasized. **Prerequisite:** Chinese 1.

Chinese 3 (1 credit)

In this course, students attain a solid grasp of the basic vocabulary and grammar needed to carry on a conversation. Students practice reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills, using a variety of multimedia, workbook exercises, composition topics, short readings, movies, and listening exercises. **Prerequisite:** Chinese 2.

Chinese 4 (Mandarin) (1 credit)

This course develops functional, communicative language ability using reinforcement and expansion. Students are expected to begin the course with knowledge of grammatical structures and vocabulary from previous courses. Students are exposed to more Chinese words, and can recognize and use them correctly. Emphasis is placed on speaking, reading, and writing.

Prerequisite: Chinese 3.

French

French 1 (1 credit)

This course is for students who have had no previous study of French. The course uses an oral-aural approach that emphasizes speaking and listening through classroom exercises, videos, and a workbook. Basic vocabulary, reading, and writing skills are taught through the study of French-speaking cultures.

French 2 (1 credit)

Students who have successfully completed French 1 continue their study of grammar, vocabulary, writing, reading, and culture. **Prerequisite:** French 1.

French 3 (1 credit)

This course completes the presentation of grammatical structures at the beginning level and introduces intermediate concepts. Testing is proficiency based, requiring competence in reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Students practice the four skills through pair work, written workbook exercises, compositions, short readings, and listening exercises.

Prerequisite: French 2.

French 4 (1 credit)

This course offers a combined course of grammar, oral expression, and literary study to promote the advancement of the four language skills. Review and study of intermediate and advanced grammatical concepts prepare students to use a higher level of language in both spoken and written contexts, and French 4 prepares the more conscientious student for success in the French 5 AP Language course. Emphasis is placed on self-expression in paired activities and group discussions relevant to the literature or thematic material being studied. Throughout the year, students read and discuss a short novel and several short stories. **Prerequisite:** French 3.

AP French 5 - Language (1 credit)

This course is designed for students who have a strong grasp of the vocabulary and grammatical structures taught in previous courses and prepares them to take the AP French Language exam. Students read a selection of authentic texts. A discussion format emphasizes speaking and listening skills. In addition, students are expected to increase their vocabulary and improve their grammatical skills through essay writing and oral presentations. Thematic units provide topics of class discussion designed to enhance contemporary vocabulary and reading comprehension as well as an up-to-date view of French culture. The syllabus incorporates the recommendations of the College Board AP program. **Prerequisite:** French 4.

Spanish

Spanish 1 (1 credit)

This course is designed for students who have had little or no previous exposure to Spanish. It emphasizes listening and speaking skills and introduces the study of Spanish-speaking cultures.

Spanish 2 (1 credit)

Students who have successfully completed Spanish 1 continue their study of vocabulary, grammar, and culture. Communication is also emphasized in this course. **Prerequisite:** Spanish 1.

Spanish 3 (1 credit)

In this course, students attain a solid grasp of the basic vocabulary and grammar needed to express themselves at an elementary level. Students practice reading, writing, listening, and speaking through pair work, written workbook exercises, compositions, short readings, and listening exercises. **Prerequisite:** Spanish 2.

Spanish 4 (1 credit)

In this course, students develop functional, communicative language ability at the intermediate level, using reinforcement, expansion, and synthesis. Students are expected to begin the course with knowledge of grammatical structures and vocabulary emphasized in previous courses. Class time focuses on practicing grammatical structures and vocabulary in meaningful conversation. **Prerequisite:** Spanish 3.

AP Spanish 5 - Language (1 credit)

This course is intended for students who have a strong grasp of the vocabulary and grammatical structures taught in previous courses and wish to develop high-level proficiency in all four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Students read a selection of authentic texts. A discussion format emphasizes speaking and listening skills. In addition, students are expected to increase their vocabulary and improve their grammatical skills through essay writing and oral presentations. Thematic units provide topics of class discussion designed to enhance contemporary vocabulary and reading comprehension as well as an up-to-date view

of Spanish culture. The syllabus incorporates the recommendations of the College Board AP program. **Prerequisite:** Spanish 4 or Department Chair's approval.

Spanish for Heritage Speakers I (1 credit)

This course is designed for students who grew up informally learning Spanish at home. It is also well-suited for students who have a strong background in a romance language and for whom a traditional Spanish track would not adequately address their needs. In this course, students will develop their Spanish skills while gaining a greater understanding of the history and culture of the countries they represent. Students will learn to analyze and dialogue in Spanish about topics such as Hispanic and Latin American identity, music, heroes & villains, immigration, and education. They will learn to speak, listen, read, and write in Spanish through paired practice, small group work, and role play. This course is delivered entirely in Spanish thus preparing students to live and work productively in an increasingly Spanish speaking global society. For Heritage Speakers, this course is the first step towards readiness for participating in the AP Spanish program. **Prerequisite:** Department Chair's approval.

Appendix

Co-Curricular Opportunities and Points

Athletics	General Points
Team Member	3*
Manager	1
Performing Arts	
Plays, Musicals (actors)	3*
Stagecraft/Tech	1-3*
Pit Orchestra Musicians	1-2*
Jazz	1
Regional and State Solo & Ensemble Contests	1
Chorale	1
Publications	
Yearbook	1
Editor-in-charge	3
Academic Competitions	
Forensics	1-2*
Model UN	1-2*
Science Olympiad	1-3*
Regional and State World Language Contests	1
Upper School Leadership	
Student Government Officers	1*
Outside-of-School Activities*	
Music Lessons	
Scouts	
Youth Groups	
Club Sports	
Leadership Activities (with pre-approval of Upper School Head)	
Other activities submitted for pre-approval (dance, martial arts, equestrian training, etc.)	

*Credit assigned by coach/teacher based on participation

Exercise Requirement Opportunities

Exercise Requirement Guidelines are linked [here](#).

Exercise requirement forms are available in Google Drive.

Approved On-campus Exercise Activities (involvement based on program)

- School-sponsored interscholastic sports
- Health & Fitness or Dance class
- Dance role in musical theater production

Process to meet the Exercise Requirement with Off-campus Personal Fitness Program or Activities

- Fill out the [Exercise Document](#) each semester

Personal Fitness Program (3 days/week- 20 minutes a day throughout the school year)

- Weight training
- Walking/Running program
- Open sports (tennis, basketball, or soccer)
- Off-campus activity

Examples of Off-campus Personal Fitness Activities

- Dance lessons at a professional studio
- Martial arts lessons at a professional studio
- Supervised personal fitness training
- Club sports (basketball, soccer, volleyball, curling, hockey, ice skating, gymnastics, etc.)
- Horseback riding

Interscholastic Sports

Fall

- Girls' tennis
- Girls' volleyball
- Girls' golf
- Girls' swimming & diving
- Boys' soccer
- Boys' volleyball
- Cross country (co-ed)

Winter

- Girls' basketball
- Boys' basketball
- Boys' swimming & diving

Spring

- Girls' soccer
- Boys' baseball
- Boys' tennis
- Boys' golf
- Track & field (co-ed)