



## Bellarmino Preparatory School

### Course Selection Directions for Freshmen

2020-21

Advisors will be available at registration to review and discuss course selections. The following guidelines and recommendations are made to assist you in preliminarily choosing courses. Parents and students are encouraged to discuss course selection options prior to the registration meeting. The Bellarmine Course Catalog may be found by going to our website at [www.bellarmineprep.org](http://www.bellarmineprep.org) and selecting *Course Catalog* under *Academics*.

#### ***English:***

English is required of all freshmen. All students are enrolled in college preparatory English. Placement in an honors English program may begin the sophomore year.

#### ***Mathematics:***

Two semesters of mathematics are required of all freshmen. Students should consider the sequences outlined in the catalog in terms of their backgrounds and post-high school plans. Courses should then be chosen from within the sequence that seems most appropriate as determined by current work and placement exam scores. This ensures a solid four-year sequence at Bellarmine.

#### **Mathematics Guidelines**

**Algebra Lab:** Students will be placed based on invitation through the school counselor and with parent consent. Algebra is a gateway course for all students in high school. Algebra 1 builds upon several key algebraic topics that will later lead into both Geometry and Algebra 2 courses. The Algebra 1 Math Support Lab is designed to support 9<sup>th</sup> grade Algebra 1 students by providing daily pre-teaching experience focusing on the same essential math content they will encounter in their Algebra 1 class. Algebra Lab is not a remedial program. Students acquire transferable knowledge in Algebra content allowing them to draw on these experiences with confidence and persistence when they are in their Algebra 1 classroom. The course provides a math elective credit towards graduation but does not replace the math requirements for graduation.

**Algebra 1:** For students who have not taken Algebra. These students should have finished above the 50<sup>th</sup> national percentile in the math section of the HSPT and should be earning at least a C grade in 8<sup>th</sup> grade math (usually Pre-Algebra). Students are required to take the Pre-Algebra Competency Exam (PACE) in May to demonstrate readiness for Algebra.

**Enriched Algebra:** Algebra E is for students who have taken Algebra. Students with HSPT scores below the 75<sup>th</sup> national percentile and students that wish, or are recommended for, additional preparation and/or additional topics in Algebra before moving to Geometry may be enrolled in this course. This course is a review and extension (not a repeat) of Algebra. Students are required to take the Pre-Algebra Competency exam and students registering for Algebra E may also choose to take the Algebra Competency Exam if they wish to consider Geometry placement.

**Geometry (A):** For students who have completed one full year of algebra with B grades or above and scored in the 75<sup>th</sup> national percentile or above in mathematics on the HSPT. Students are required to take the Algebra Competency Exam (ACE) in May to demonstrate readiness for Geometry.

**Geometry Honors:** For students who have completed one full year of Algebra and scored in the 93<sup>rd</sup> national percentile or above in the math section of the HSPT. These students should be earning A/A- grades in Algebra, and are required to take the Algebra Competency Exam (ACE).

**Advanced Algebra/Trigonometry (college prep or honors):** For students who have completed a full year of Algebra and Geometry and who scored in the 75<sup>th</sup> national percentile or above in the math section on the HSPT (93<sup>rd</sup> national percentile or above for honors). Students are required to take the Algebra/Geometry Competency Exam to demonstrate readiness for Advanced Algebra/Trigonometry.

NOTE: IN MAY OF THE 2019-20 SCHOOL YEAR, ALL STUDENTS ARE REQUIRED TO TAKE A BELLARMINI COMPETENCY EXAM TO MEASURE READINESS FOR MATH PROGRAMS. THE EXAMS ARE SCHEDULED FOR MAY 1 OR MAY 4 AT 3:00 PM. MATH AND SCIENCE PLACEMENT WILL BE DETERMINED FOLLOWING THIS EXAM.

### *Science:*

Freshmen who have HSPT scores in the 74<sup>th</sup> national percentile or above and a strong math background including Algebra may be recommended for Biology. Freshmen with test scores below the 74<sup>th</sup> national percentile and registered for Algebra, Enriched Algebra or Geometry are recommended to take Investigative Laboratory Science. The four-year math/science program should be considered when registering for ninth grade science.

### *Physical Education/Health:*

All freshmen are required to take a full year of P.E./Health.

### *Theology:*

All freshmen are required to take two semesters of religious education courses in their freshman year.

### *World Language:*

Freshmen may choose to begin world language during their freshman year. They must have a firm foundation of English grammar. Two years of the same language are required for graduation. Most college admission requirements are fulfilled by enrolling in 2 consecutive courses of the same language; 3 or 4 years are encouraged. Freshman students should not take a language unless they plan to take it during both ninth and tenth grades. All students beginning a language are asked to list their first and second choice of a language. If enrollment in one language program is impacted, the student will be placed in his/her second choice. Students with a year of language prior to admission will be recommended for 2<sup>nd</sup> year placement. Bellarmine does not transfer credit earned in the eighth grade. Language choices offered include French, Mandarin Chinese, and Spanish.

### Electives

#### *English*

**Humanities Honors** is a one semester elective students will be recommended for based on High School Placement Test (HSPT)\* scores in English and Reading, 8<sup>th</sup> grade recommendations, and grades in English. Designed to prepare students for sophomore honors courses in Social Studies and English, this course requires a recommendation as an elective option. Note: The course is not required for future honors placement and students not meeting criteria as entering 9<sup>th</sup> graders may be recommended by Bellarmine English teachers at semester.

**Creative Writing** will engage students in daily creative writing in a workshop atmosphere. They will learn techniques for more inventive and distinctive writing, and will strengthen their powers of imagination and observation.

**Introduction to Theater** “All the world’s a stage...” Students will explore the world of theater in this class. The course is designed to provide students with the basic drama activities and exercises. Stage terminology and the history of the theater will be taught.

**Introduction to Public Speaking** teaches students the fundamentals of public speaking in a creative and fun environment.

#### *Visual Art*

Creating art requires the utilization of all human aspects: spiritual, intellectual, emotional, and physical, and the Art Department hopes to assist each student in reaching his/her potential. Classes offered for freshmen are **Design, Ceramics, Crafts, Sculpture, Drawing, Printmaking, Painting, and Photography**. Design is a prerequisite for all courses except Ceramics. Two semesters of Fine Arts are required for graduation; one semester of visual art is required. Music or Theater can fulfill the other .5 credit requirement.

#### *Math*

**Introduction to Computer Graphics** will introduce students to a variety of graphics programs and presentation media.

**Introduction to Computer Science Principles** is offered in partnership with the Technology Education and Literacy in Schools program hosted by Microsoft YouthSpark. Based on the UC Berkeley CS10 course, students experience a hands-on introduction to computer sciences that surrounds us every day. The course focuses on some of the “Big Ideas” in computing such as abstraction, design, recursion, concurrency, simulation, and the limits of computation.

**Introduction to Python Programming** is an introductory project-based programming course is offered in partnership with the TEALS (Technology Education and Literacy in Schools) program hosted by Microsoft YouthSpark. Python is a user-friendly language, and is taught as an introductory language at many universities. At Bellarmine, students may take this course as their first introduction to computer science or as a secondary course to study Python as a new language. Algorithmic thinking and problem solving are used to learn the fundamentals of programming with Python as well as some advanced features of the

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\* The High School Placement Test is not required for out of state applicants.

language. Projects focus on solutions to real-world problems, simple interactive applications and console-based games to put students' new computer science knowledge into practice.

### *Music*

Music fulfills an Arts requirement(s).

**Concert Band and Concert Choir** are registered as full year courses. Ordinarily, freshmen will be placed in these courses.

**Chamber Orchestra** is registered as a full year course and is open to freshmen by audition.

**Percussion Ensemble** is registered as a full year course and is open to freshmen by audition.

**Wind Ensemble and Vocal Ensemble** are offered by audition and instructor recommendation only.

**Jazz Band** is by audition and is scheduled at 7:00 a.m. (M, T, Th, F). Students must also be enrolled in a concert performance group or have instructor permission.

### *Science*

**Electronics**, with a prerequisite of Algebra 1, is an introduction into the rapidly expanding and important field of electronics. The course consists of an examination of the basics and an overview of applications of solid-state technology in audio and digital electronics.

**Environmental Science** Environmental Science is a one semester elective class open to freshman or sophomore students who have taken or are currently taking Biology and who are interested in learning more about the environment. The course will provide students with the scientific principles, concepts, and methodologies required to understand the interrelationships of the natural world. The aim of the course is to encourage students to become stewards of the earth. We will think critically and intelligently about global change as it impacts environments, economies, and societies. Topics include human population growth, natural resources, pollution, and climate change. Class time is spent primarily doing hands-on activities, performing experiments, and discussing current event.

### *Non-Departmental*

#### **Integrated Study:**

This course is designed to support students identified as needing additional and intentional support for successful high school and college readiness. The focus of the course brings together multiple disciplines, covering math, science, language art classes, as well as study skills and habits of the mind. Placement is determined by the Vice Principal of Curriculum & Instruction based on academic recommendation by the Director of the Learning Resource Center or at admission, summer school, academic review, or parent request.

#### **Strategic Learning:**

Fall Semester: This course is designed to provide learning assistance and strategies, emphasize study skills, and support the college preparatory program with tutorial assistance. Placement in the course is determined by the Vice Principal of Curriculum & Instruction based on academic recommendation at admission, summer enrichment, academic review, or parent request. The course is graded pass/fail.

Spring Semester: The second semester continues to support the college preparation program, strengthen study strategies, and prepare for the more academically rigorous sophomore curriculum. The course is graded pass/fail.

**Study Hall** is a one semester library study (no credit). Students who have significant time commitments outside the school may choose this course to allow study time during the school day.

**Leadership** is a practicum course where students are exposed to characteristics of Ignatian leadership, as well as a number of other leadership models. Skills that students will learn include critical thinking, relationship building, goal-setting, communication, project planning, and organization.