



# DARROW SCHOOL

## 2023-2024 Course Descriptions

### English Department

#### **Writing & Literature I**

Writing & Literature I introduces students to the English Department and Darrow. Expectations for discussion, writing process and critical reading are introduced and practiced. Students explore a sense of place and its effect on identity both personally and through the experiences of the characters in the books read. Through Ninth Grade Experience programming, thematic and experiential content overlaps with Environmental Science and Historical Methods courses. Essential questions to be explored include: What are my approaches, practices, methods to/for reading and writing? What does it mean to have a “sense of place?” How do I begin to know a place? What is community? What communities do I belong to? What are the expectations of those communities? How do I resist or conform to those expectations? What is identity? How is identity shaped, formed, changed? How do our social and natural environments shape our identities, and how do we influence our natural surroundings and communities? Diverse whole-class novels build community through shared experiences and inspire a variety of personalized creative and analytical writing prompts. Students also engage in independent reading projects designed to allow for the pursuit of personal interest, choice, and challenge and to create a lifelong reading habit.

#### **Writing & Literature II: Persuasion and Perspective**

Writing & Literature II is a deep dive into perspective. What shapes our perspective on the world, and how can we help others understand it? How and why can we learn from those with different worldviews? How can we connect with and persuade an audience who disagrees with us? In addition to analyzing perspective in literary works including graphic novels, poems, and plays, we will build our skills in personal and persuasive writing and debate and discuss real-world issues. Throughout the year, students will also read books of their choice in an independent reading project designed to build engagement and stamina.

Prerequisite: Writing & Literature I or equivalent from another school.

#### **Writing & Literature III: Inquiry and Analysis**

Writing & Literature III uses literature as a window into diverse American experiences. Reading texts that challenge and complement each other prompts students to generate questions about American history, culture, and identity — as well as human nature more generally. In this class, students can expect to take increasing ownership of their learning through presentations, student-led discussions, longer writing projects, and the final capstone essay. Students should leave this class empowered to engage in debates about America or their home countries, with the writing and speaking skills to make their voices heard and the learning and research skills to continue deepening their understanding.

Prerequisite: Writing & Literature II or equivalent from another school.

### **Writing & Literature IV: College Writing (Fall)**

Have you ever listened to an inspiring TedTalk and wished you could write that well or be that convincing? Have you tried to tell your story or convince someone of something you believe in? This course focuses on developing students' writing skills and helping them internalize their own writing processes. Students will be encouraged to think like writers by increasing their awareness of the writing process AND to write like writers through a self-reflective daily writing practice. Students will read both fiction and non-fiction works to look at how great writers approach their craft and to break down writing into its elements to better understand the process. *Who am I as a writer? What is my writing process? What is my writing style? What are my tools? Where do my ideas and/or inspiration come from? What is my story, and how do I tell it? How do I use my writing to create change?* These questions will inform much of our discussion this semester. Course texts span a number of genres and will allow us to consider the writing process and the writer's experience.

Open to all seniors and to juniors with permission of the Department Chair.

### **Writing & Literature IV: Utopia/Dystopia (Fall)**

What drives humans to create perfect communities and speculate about disastrous ones? How do these imagined (and sometimes real) societies serve as responses to urgent social, political, and environmental issues? What kind of community does each of us want to live in, and what power do we have as individuals and as a society to get closer to that ideal? As we learn together on the site of the Shakers' utopian community, we will discuss and analyze films, novels, podcasts, essays, and short stories that explore the blurred lines between utopia and dystopia. Major assignments will include an analytical essay, an original short story, a manifesto and prospectus for a utopian community, research presentations, and student-led discussions. Texts studied may include films like *Get Out* (2017) and *The Stepford Wives* (1975); novels like *Parable of the Sower* by Octavia Butler, *The Dispossessed* by Ursula K. Le Guin, or *Station Eleven* by Emily St. John Mandel; and episodes from *Nice Try!*, a podcast about real-life attempted utopias from Levittown to Disneyland.

Open to all seniors and to juniors with permission of the Department Chair.

### **Writing & Literature IV: Playwriting\* (Fall) – Cross-listed with Performing Arts**

Students will receive a strong foundation in the playwriting craft, theatrical tools, play and scene structures, textual analysis, and constructive peer feedback models. To that end, this course includes prompts and free writes; scene writing and monologue writing; reading aloud and performance; collaborative group writing and devising; reading and analyzing plays; class discussions; peer feedback; ensemble-building; and personal aesthetic explorations. Students will choose to focus on their favorite piece to flush our full 10 minute play "staged reading" presentation style for their final exam. Students may also submit their plays for consideration to be in *Darrow on the Fringe* in the winter.

\*This course is cross-listed with Performing Arts. Students will need to choose which department to receive credit in.

Open to all seniors and to juniors with permission of the Department Chair.

### **Writing & Literature IV: Russian Literature A (Fall)**

"And strikingly different from them all is Petersburg" – Bely. This course will examine the development of the literary myth of St. Petersburg as an artificial, malevolent, and eerily fantastic place, that is also known as the "cradle of the Russian Revolution" as well as both a martyr and hero city. We will consider how the ideas, myths and enduring symbols that derive from the nature of the city itself serve to create something like an organic being that exists separately from the physical location that can be represented on a map or visited as a tourist. Selected works of Pushkin, Gogol, Dostoevsky and, if time allows, Blok and Akhmatova will serve as source texts. Major assessments in the course will include an analytical essay and a creative writing piece.

Open to all seniors and to juniors with permission of the Department Chair.

### **Writing & Literature IV: Race: Reality and Fiction\* (Spring)**

If race has no genetic or biological basis, why does it matter so much? How has the notion of race been created and maintained over the last 300 years of American history? What are the impacts of racial categories in society? This course will explore the development of the idea of race through anthropological and historical research, and will apply these insights to works of fiction. Students will gain valuable tools for interpreting and discussing a very thorny and problematic topic and for analyzing current events and everyday interactions. Students will choose whether to earn History or English credit through varied assignments, but all students will read the major assigned texts.

\*This course is cross-listed with History. Students will need to choose which department to receive credit in.

Open to all seniors and to juniors with permission of the Department Chair.

### **Writing & Literature IV: Storytelling: The Art & Craft\* (Spring)**

This course is an interdisciplinary synthesis of English and the Performing Arts Department. It incorporates essential elements of writing, reading, and speaking stories. The core of the course is in the interaction between the art and craft of storytelling. In this exciting creative process text is viewed from different angles in a way that goes beyond what is characteristic of either literary or theater studies as single disciplines. The course as a whole examines literary and dramatic texts and seeks to develop intellect, imagination and creativity. It encourages intercultural awareness through a study of texts from more than one culture. Students will gain understanding and practice in public speaking while adapting curriculum developed for building the skills in writing and performing our own life story moments. We will work to develop our storytelling life lens which provides the opportunity to engage with moments, even the most benign, and view them as access points to connect with others.

\*This course is cross-listed with Performing Arts. Students will need to choose which department to receive credit in.

Open to all seniors and to juniors with permission of the Department Chair.

### **Writing & Literature IV: Literature & Psychology (Spring)**

How do we define madness? How do people heal from trauma? Where does bias come from, and how can we reduce it? What are the secrets to a happy life? In this course, we will investigate questions that have been explored extensively in both psychology and literature. Students will analyze literary works through the lens of psychological research and studies. Short personal and creative writing assignments will complement our primary focus on analytical writing, scholarly research, and vigorous discussion.

Open to all seniors and to juniors with permission of the Department Chair.

# History Department

## Historical Methods

This yearlong, required course is an introduction to the study of history - not just what happened in the world of the recent past, but how to think like an historian. The aim of this class is to give students the skills they need to conduct their own authentic historical investigations. Students will practice these skills through a variety of thinking, reflecting and critiquing activities, through problem-solving and project design, and yes, through reading and writing. There is no core text - rather, the class will be using online resources and a variety of written materials to practice research and close reading skills as we examine major events from the recent past. This course is required for incoming 9th grade students.

## World Studies

This global history course provides students with the opportunity to examine contemporary issues in the modern global community and how the ideas of citizenship can be used to address major present day scenarios while preparing for the future. World Studies will also challenge students to understand the interconnected nature of our planet and how history, culture, economics and political forces shape our world. Through this understanding, students will develop a greater sense of their responsibility as citizens of the earth.

## United States History

United States History is a yearlong, in-depth study of the nation's history built around a close examination of three central episodes of American history through the interpretive lens of the broadly-defined concept of "revolution." These three episodes are the American Revolution (eighteenth century), the Civil War and Reconstruction (nineteenth century), and the Civil Rights Movement (twentieth century). Students will approach their investigation of these transformative periods as historians, exploring relevant primary source material, comparing perspectives, analyzing factors such as bias, causation and correlation, undertaking collaborative projects, and conducting original historical research, all with the goal of building up a nuanced, balanced and authentic understanding of why and how these pivotal changes occurred, and what they meant, at those times and now, for the evolution of the American nation and society.

## BIG History\* (Fall)

Big History is an interdisciplinary course that examines the place of humanity in the universe, for the entire 13.8 billion year existence of the known universe, and far ahead into its possible futures. "The concept arose from a desire to go beyond specialized and self-contained fields of study to grasp history as a whole. Big History explores how we are connected to everything around us and where we may be heading. It provides a foundation for thinking about the future and the changes that are reshaping our world." ("Introduction to BHP 2016")

\*This course is cross-listed with Science. Students will need to choose which department to receive credit in.

Prerequisites: Biology and Global Citizenship (or equivalent). Department Chair permission required.

## Social Animals? The Rise and Fall of Community in the 21st Century (Fall)

In the 1950's, civic engagement was at an all-time high...but what were the social implications? The class will read excerpts from *Bowling Alone* by Robert Putnam to discuss the dissolution of social attendance, coupled with the rise of technological achievements. The course will also have a civic engagement experiential element, consisting of the creation of a social compact regarding participation in government. We will also examine the Darrow community: its components, its mission, and its identity. We will collaborate as a group to create a visual representation of our conclusions.

Open to all seniors, and to juniors with permission of the Department Chair.

### **Race: Reality and Fiction\* (Spring)**

If race has no genetic or biological basis, why does it matter so much? How has the notion of race been created and maintained over the last 300 years of American history? What are the impacts of racial categories in society? This course will explore the development of the idea of race through anthropological and historical research, and will apply these insights to works of fiction. Students will gain valuable tools for interpreting and discussing a very thorny and problematic topic and for analyzing current events and everyday interactions. Students will choose whether to earn History or English credit through varied assignments, but all students will read the major assigned texts.

\*This course is cross-listed with English. Students will need to choose which department to receive credit in.

Open to all seniors, and to juniors with permission of the Department Chair.

### **Alternate History (Spring)**

“What if...?” Alternate history is a relatively new field of historical inquiry that attempts to deepen our understanding and appreciation of actual history by imagining alternate outcomes to pivotal historical events. What if... Lincoln had not been assassinated? Hitler had invaded and conquered Britain in 1940? John Adams had refused to relinquish the presidency to Thomas Jefferson in 1801? The Nationalists had won China’s civil war? Rather than Native Americans being decimated by European diseases, it had happened the other way around? Respected historians and accomplished fiction writers have contributed vivid and compelling historical scenarios to the growing body of alternate history work. Following a study of the real history of selected events, we will read and analyze corresponding alternate history accounts of these events. Students will also research, write, and present their own alternate history scenarios. Through answering the overarching question of “What if...?” students will develop their historical knowledge, critical thinking, and historical imagination.

Open to all seniors, and to juniors with permission of the Department Chair.

### **War and Peace since 1914 (Spring)**

This history elective will provide an introduction to the role of war and conflict on a global scale, as well as various efforts to secure peace through international cooperation, since the beginning of the 20th century. Students will analyze the causes and consequences of various types of conflicts, from the two world wars to regional insurgencies and from international conflicts to inter-ethnic ones. We will study the impact of armed conflict on various societies and cultures throughout the “violent 20th century”, the hopes for the end of great power conflict via post-WWII security structures, and the challenge to those structures during the 21st century, including Russia’s recent invasion of Ukraine. Simultaneously, we will discuss the question of war and peace from various moral perspectives, such as realism, just war theory, anti-colonialism, and pacifism. Overall, the course will attempt to foster critical thinking about the causes and consequences of armed conflict, as well as about various approaches to peace-making.

Open to all seniors, and to juniors with permission of the Department Chair.

### **Sports and Society (Spring)**

The purpose of this course is to have students examine how sports, teams and athletes both reflect and impact the culture and society in which they exist. Students will study landmark events in sports history, the evolution of sports, and individual athletes to break down the shaping of culture and how society reacts. In practice, the course would create its own sense of belonging with active game play and team building while examining different topics, showing how the class’s culture is impacted actively through teamwork and belonging. The overarching theme of the course would be to explore how issues such as economic inequality, racism, gender equity, social mobility, nationalism/propaganda, social justice, and aspiration and opportunity relate to the evolution and societal role of sports and athletes. By the end of the course students will have a layered understanding of how and why sports impact an individual, a team, a community, and a country, while also fostering a sense of belonging within a society.

Open to all seniors, and to juniors with permission of the Department Chair.

## **Math Department**

### **Algebra I**

Algebra I is a freshman-level math course designed to train important algebraic skills and to introduce elements of problem-based learning. This course, as with all Darrow core curriculum courses, will have a mixture of traditional content delivery mixed with elements of “discovery based learning” that comes with problem-based content delivery.

### **Geometry**

Geometry is a classic sophomore-level math course that serves as an introduction for students to the world of proofs and logical thinking. This course will eschew the traditional “two column proof”, however, and focus more prominently on spatial reasoning and problem solving. This course will be more heavily focused on problem-based and discovery-based learning.

### **Algebra II**

Algebra II is split into two different paths: Algebra II and Accelerated Algebra II. Algebra II will serve as either a “capstone” for a Darrow student’s graduation requirement, or a pathway to additional electives in the mathematics department. Students should expect content to be delivered with a mixture of traditional and problem-based learning, as with Algebra I.

### **Algebra II Accelerated**

This course will serve as either a “capstone” for a Darrow student’s math career or proceed to Precalculus. Students who complete Geometry may join Accelerated Algebra II based upon recommendations from the Math Department Chair and/or the Director of Studies. Accelerated Algebra II will focus less on Algebra I review and seek to go further in advanced algebra topics. Content will be delivered with a mix of traditional style teaching and problem-based learning.

### **Pre-Calculus**

Precalculus will serve as a bridge from Accelerated Algebra II to Calculus. The topics for Precalculus are varied and problem-based learning will serve well as a content delivery medium. Precalculus will go further and deeper on the above topics and will serve as not only a preparation for Calculus, but as an effective summative math course for the Darrow curriculum.

### **Calculus**

Calculus is an advanced mathematics topic that requires abstract thought. Topics include limits, derivatives, integrals, and the applications of these topics. Prerequisites: Pre-Calculus or permission of the Math Department Chair.

### **Calculus II**

Advanced Calculus students will continue where we left off in Calculus, beginning with conics, parametric equations, and polar coordinates. We will then continue on to an in-depth study of vectors and vector-valued functions, partial derivatives, multiple integration, and differential equations if time permits. Prerequisites: Calculus.

### **Programming 1 (Fall)**

Programming 1 is an introduction to computer science and programming. Students will learn the basics of variables, boolean operators, if-else statements, loops, arrays, and other key topics in programming. This course will be taught primarily in Python. Students will build their own programs and applications to solve various problems. The goal of this course is to have students take their first step into the world of computer science and programming. The skills students will learn from this course will be applicable to any number of future computer science courses or even in their own day-to-day lives. The basic ideas of computer programming are, in a sense, the basic rules of logic. The problem-solving skills learned in Programming 1 will have myriad applications in more than just STEM study.

\*This course is cross-listed with Science. Students will need to choose which department to receive credit in.

### **Statistics (Fall)**

Statistics is the mathematical science of collecting, describing, and analyzing data from the real world. The first half of the semester is devoted to descriptive statistics, which includes topics such as measurements of central tendency and dispersion, normal distribution, random sampling, coefficient of correlation, an introduction to linear regression, and discussions of causation vs. causality. The second half of the semester focuses on inferential statistics, which are used to test hypotheses and make generalizations about the strength of the data sample. Students will analyze and discuss current events in the media that rely on statistical information for their central message, and gain an understanding of how to both consume and present statistical information.

Prerequisite: Math II or Algebra II

### **Programming 2 (Spring)**

This course will pick up where Programming 1 leaves off, with room for students to set their own curricula. We will study advanced programming techniques such as recursive functions and object-oriented programming. At a given point in the semester, each student will be given the opportunity to study an advanced programming technique or topic of their choosing. Some examples are: learning a new programming language, web programming, app development for iOS or Android, algorithms, database management, and others. The goal of this course is to further motivate students' knowledge of programming and computer science. Students will be given the opportunity to learn new programming techniques and later study an area of computer science particularly interesting to them. This course will challenge students to learn problem solving and debugging skills. These skills will be useful for more students than only those interested in a future in computer science. Problem solving and critical thinking skills are imperative to all students, not just programming students. This course offers a unique way to learn those skills.

\*This course is cross-listed with Science. Students will need to choose which department to receive credit in.

### **Probability (Spring)**

This is a one-semester course which must be taken in conjunction with Statistics. In Probability, students will learn about questions such as: What is the probability of winning the lottery? What is the probability that my child will have blue eyes? What is the probability of a sports team winning if it goes into overtime? Together the class will discover the answers to these questions, as well as more that involve combinations, permutations, expected value, and how they relate to various other topics in mathematics.

Prerequisite: Math II or Algebra II

## Science Department

### Environmental Science

The Darrow campus and its surrounding community serve as a classroom and laboratory for students in Environmental Science. Students conduct field and laboratory investigations, apply scientific methods during investigations, and make informed decisions using critical thinking and scientific problem solving. Students study the interrelationships in the natural world including earth's ecosystems, atmosphere, climate, soils, energy, water, populations, and natural resources. In this project based learning class students analyze environmental problems, examine solutions for resolving them, and present their results to authentic audiences. The unifying themes are the exploration of the intricate miracle that is this living planet and the potential for science to leverage positive change in the community.

### Biology

In Biology, students will examine the living world around them and its structures and processes. They will delve into scientific research and ask 'How can I read and interpret scientific findings for myself?' They will learn laboratory skills and create their own investigations. Students study a variety of topics that include: structures and functions of cells and viruses; growth and development of organisms; cells, tissues, and organs; nucleic acids and genetics; biological evolution; taxonomy; metabolism and energy transfers in living organisms; living systems; and homeostasis. Students will identify how the processes of biology are interrelated and the significance to our daily lives.

### Chemistry

In Chemistry, students conduct laboratory investigations, use scientific methods during investigations, and make informed decisions using critical thinking and scientific problem solving. Students study a variety of topics that include: characteristics of matter; energy transformations during physical and chemical changes; atomic structure; periodic table of elements; behavior of gasses; bonding; nuclear fusion and nuclear fission; oxidation-reduction reactions; chemical equations; solutes; properties of solutions; acids and bases; and chemical reactions. Students will investigate how chemistry is an integral part of our daily lives.

### Topics in Chemistry

In Topics in Chemistry, students conduct laboratory investigations, use scientific methods during investigations, and make informed decisions using critical thinking and scientific problem-solving. Students study a variety of topics that include: characteristics of matter; energy transformations during physical and chemical changes; atomic structure; periodic table of elements; behavior of gases; bonding; nuclear fusion and nuclear fission; oxidation-reduction reactions; chemical equations; solutes; properties of solutions; acids and bases; and chemical reactions. Students will investigate how chemistry is an integral part of our daily lives. This course will require some basic algebraic manipulation, but with less emphasis on quantitative algebraic work than in Chemistry, and will instead focus on the qualitative evaluation of chemical phenomena.

### Physics

Have you ever thought about what it would be like to play a sport on the moon? Or have you wanted to design a roller coaster ride? Physics allows you to understand how matter and energy interact so that you can meaningfully engage in exploring these questions and more. This class will be organized around a series of design challenges that will be based upon your growing knowledge of mechanics, acoustics, optics, and other aspects of this science called physics. We will investigate these concepts of physics together and apply engineering practices to meet the goals of each challenge.



## **Robotics (Fall)**

A robot is an embedded configuration of software and hardware designed to interact with its surroundings autonomously and or via human input. This includes everything from a vending machine to the Mars Exploration Rovers. Robotics is a hands-on introduction to the concepts and applications of robots. Students use Lego Mindstorms Robotics to develop computer programming logic and reasoning skills as they design, build, and program robots within an engineering context. Students work in teams to build a variety of fixed and mobile devices focused upon meeting the criteria of design challenges such as simulating a fire rescue or making a peanut butter and jelly sandwich. This class is designed for students of any grade level and is open to students of all levels of experience.

## **Programming 1 (Fall)**

Programming 1 is an introduction to computer science and programming. Students will learn the basics of variables, boolean operators, if-else statements, loops, arrays, and other key topics in programming. This course will be taught primarily in Python. Students will build their own programs and applications to solve various problems. The goal of this course is to have students take their first step into the world of computer science and programming. The skills students will learn from this course will be applicable to any number of future computer science courses or even in their own day-to-day lives. The basic ideas of computer programming are, in a sense, the basic rules of logic. The problem-solving skills learned in Programming 1 will have myriad applications in more than just STEM study.

\*This course is cross-listed with Math. Students will need to choose which department to receive credit in.

## **Forensic Science (Fall)**

A basic overview of forensic science, covering fingerprinting, observation, crime scene processing techniques, data collection, microscopic evidence analysis, blood analysis, footprints, and other areas of interest. Students will gain an understanding of forensic science terminology, techniques, and skills. Students will improve skills such as observation, microscope and slide handling, research, analysis, and critical thinking.

## **Mechanical Science (Spring)**

Have you ever wondered what's inside the machines we use on a daily basis? Mechanical Science will allow you to access the inner workings of some basic tools and machines to gain a deeper understanding of how humans have engineered some elegant solutions to make our lives easier. We will learn to use simple hand tools as well as manual and electronic measuring instruments to take apart and put back together basic mechanical devices. We will focus on gears, motors, engines, and simple electronic circuits in devices to understand how these tools and machines function. Historical perspective will be gained through learning about Renaissance-era work with simple machines and we will use algebraic equations that allow us to calculate mechanical advantage based on these simple concepts. Lastly, we will focus on furthering our manual competency as we learn how to physically take something apart, problem-solving when we can't immediately solve a problem in front of us, and good teamwork skills when a third or fourth hand, or second pair of eyes, is needed.

## **Programming 2 (Spring)**

This course will pick up where Programming 1 leaves off, with room for students to set their own curricula. We will study advanced programming techniques such as recursive functions and object-oriented programming. At a given point in the semester, each student will be given the opportunity to study an advanced programming technique or topic of their choosing. Some examples are: learning a new programming language, web programming, app development for iOS or Android, algorithms, database management, and others. The goal of this course is to further motivate students' knowledge of programming and computer science. Students will be given the opportunity to learn new programming techniques and later study an area of computer science particularly interesting to them. This course will challenge students to learn problem solving and debugging skills. These skills will be useful for more students than only those interested in a future in computer science. Problem solving and critical thinking skills are imperative to all students, not just programming students. This course offers a unique way to learn those skills.

\*This course is cross-listed with Math. Students will need to choose which department to receive credit in.

## **World Languages, Cultures and Linguistics Department**

### **Spanish I/Spanish II**

These year-long courses provide students with an opportunity to develop their Spanish language skills in classes that group students of similar proficiency levels. Instruction in these courses will be conducted mostly in Spanish. Students will be expected to contribute, to the best of their ability, to the maintenance of the classroom immersion environment. Proficiency in all major areas (speaking, listening, writing, and reading) will be developed through a variety of activities. Both individual and group work will be included. The teacher will provide classroom instruction, assign homework and administer assessments.

### **Spanish III**

This course is a continuation of Spanish II. It continues to build upon intermediate Spanish language skills with regard to oral communication, reading and writing. Students will continue to collaborate often, begin more challenging projects and work on their fluency and ease with which they speak in the language. Emphasis is placed on conversation, storytelling, dialogues, and introductory stories in Latin American literature, vocabulary and correct usage of the language. Correct pronunciation and oral proficiency are primary goals.

### **French I**

In this course, students begin their study of French through listening, speaking, reading and writing activities based on pedagogically proven methods of foreign language instruction.

In the first semester, topics include greetings, numbers 0-30, likes and dislikes, leisure activities, physical descriptions, family and pets.

Second semester topics will include school subjects, the calendar, telling time, sports, weather and foods. Through these topics students will learn to express themselves using vocabulary, present tense verbs, articles and adjectives. Grammar is introduced and practiced in innovative and interesting ways with a variety of learning styles in mind

### **French II**

This course is a continuation of French I with the goal of helping the students improve their skills in French. Students will increase their command of the language through listening, reading, speaking and writing activities based on pedagogically proven methods of foreign language instruction.

In the first semester, topics will include clothing and accessories, chores, house and furnishing, places in a city, transportation and travel. In the second semester, topics will include describing others, activities after school, parties and celebrations, foods, cooking and grocery, shopping, school places and events, and computers.

## **ESoL**

### **ESoL Language Arts**

ESOL Language Arts develops students' vocabulary and language skills in English through intensive reading and speaking practice, and explicit instruction in reading strategies, pronunciation, and writing in order to effectively prepare students for English and Humanities courses at Darrow and beyond.

### **ESoL American Literature**

ESOL American Literature is a skill building course for English Language Learners that explores different genres of literature written in the U.S. In this course, students practice reading, writing, listening, and speaking in order to get better acclimated to the American classroom and to begin producing essays in English. Students read two novels, and many short stories and poems. Discussion on topics touched upon in fiction and nonfiction texts and films is a focal point of the class, as is writing. This class helps prepare these students for the work of Writing and Literature.

### **Bridge Writing & Literature**

This course parallels the mainstream Writing and Literature 1 class, but provides extra support to ELLs.

## **ESoL History and Culture**

What does it mean to survive and what does it mean to thrive? What does it mean to be a citizen of the world? This course tackles questions such as these while building a skill set including: observation, interpretation, developing research questions, paraphrasing, leading discussions, citing sources, thinking critically, determining the reliability of sources, making connections, recognizing patterns in history. This practical course incorporates a hands-on active curriculum where students help guide the curriculum based on their interests.

## **ESoL Science**

ESOL Environmental Science prepares students for mainstream science courses at Darrow while covering the subject of Environmental Science. Topics include: diversity of ecosystems, taxonomy of living organisms, species' survival and interaction, our New England environment, energy in the atmosphere, climate change, solutions to global warming, and sustainable living. Students practice research skills, ask questions, record observations, analyze and present data, and learn strategies for reading and responding to informational texts.

## **Performing Arts**

### **Jazz Ensemble (Fall & Spring)**

Students involved in this ensemble will work to improve their ensemble playing as well as their individual musicianship. This group will work on a variety of music including standards, blues, funk as well as contemporary and original compositions. On and off campus performances will be included.

Prerequisite: Some musical experience encouraged

### **Darrow Music Collective (Fall & Spring)**

This course is designed for students seeking an advanced study of music. Students will participate in rehearsals and performances while learning about many of the aspects involved in the studio and the stage - live performance, recording, artist/venue relations, and more. Overall, this will be an immersive experience in what it means to be a working professional musician. Participation in on and off-campus concerts, recording sessions, and events is required.

Prerequisite: By audition or approval from Performing Arts Department Chair

### **Music Fundamentals (Fall)**

Music Fundamentals offers students the opportunity to gain a practical understanding of how music works while applying their learning to create music. Basic music theory will be introduced in order to learn music notation along with composing and analyzing simple melodies and harmonies. Listening exercises and ear training will be an integral part of the course as our reception and perception of music is essential to having a fulfilling musical life. Throughout Music Fundamentals, students will use what they have learned to be able to play instruments, compose, arrange, and enjoy music!

### **Music Production II (Spring)**

Students will utilize state-of-the-art technology to create, compose, remix, and record music. Students will use their skills from Music Production I to increase their understanding of programs including ProTools, Logic, and more.

Prerequisites: Students will need to have taken Music Production, or an equivalent, in order to take this next level course.

### **\*Performing Arts Management and Community Engagement (Year)**

This course provides an overview of arts management and offers students the chance to be ambassadors for all of the performing arts outreach and engagement opportunities at Darrow. Topics include arts leadership and management philosophy, organizational structure, financial management, strategic planning and programming, marketing and public relations, fundraising and development (including sponsorship and grants). Special attention is given to the application of management principles and skills in the performing arts. Students will learn skills related to being artist liaisons while hosting guest artists and facilitators, learn professional tools and language for reaching out to arts organizations and professionals, and be given the opportunity to connect with an organization in the Berkshire and Albany/Troy communities with the goal of developing a mini internship in the second semester. Students will also learn how to build and run our D-PAC social media presence that documents our work. Areas of interest examples: documentary filmmaking, technical theater, production management, arts outreach, and community event planning.

\*This course has adapted curriculum from Purchase College, and Management and the Arts by William J Brynes courses.

Prerequisites: At least one semester of a Performing Arts Department Elective

### **Writing & Literature IV: Playwriting (Fall) – \* Cross-listed with Performing Arts**

Students will receive a strong foundation in the playwriting craft, theatrical tools, play and scene structures, textual analysis, and constructive peer feedback models. To that end, this course includes prompts and free writes; scene writing and monologue writing; reading aloud and performance; collaborative group writing and devising; reading and analyzing plays; class discussions; peer feedback; ensemble-building; and personal aesthetic explorations. Students will choose to focus on their favorite piece to flush out a full 10 minute play “staged reading” presentation style for their final exam. Students may also submit their plays for consideration to be in *Darrow on the Fringe* in the winter.

\*This course is cross-listed with Performing Arts. Students will need to choose which department to receive credit in.

Open to all seniors and to juniors with permission of the Department Chair

### **Writing & Literature IV: Storytelling: the Art & Craft (Spring)-\* Cross-listed with Performing Arts**

This course is an interdisciplinary synthesis of English and the Performing Arts Department. It incorporates essential elements of writing, reading, and speaking stories. The core of the course is in the interaction between the art and craft of storytelling. In this exciting creative process text is viewed from different angles in a way that goes beyond what is characteristic of either literary or theater studies as single disciplines. The course as a whole examines literary and dramatic texts and seeks to develop intellect, imagination and creativity. It encourages intercultural awareness through a study of texts from more than one culture. Students will gain understanding and practice in public speaking while adapting curriculum developed for building the skills in writing and performing our own life story moments. We will work to develop our storytelling life lens which provides the opportunity to engage with moments, even the most benign, and view them as access points to connect with others.

\*This course is cross-listed with English. Students will need to choose which department to receive credit in.

Open to all seniors and to juniors with permission of the Department Chair.

## Visual Arts

### **Studio Art (Fall & Spring)**

Studio Art is an introductory art course offered in both the fall and spring semesters and is a prerequisite to all other art electives. Students have the opportunity to explore Drawing, Painting, Photography, Ceramics, and Graphic Design. With each new medium, students will explore and incorporate the elements and principles of art and design into their artworks. This course emphasizes process as a means to liberate students from preconceived notions of inability or lack of skills necessary to create. Students will learn how to craft an artist's statement, develop research and presentation skills, and study both historical and contemporary art practices. Studio Art is a prerequisite for all other Visual Arts courses. The requirement can be waived only with a demonstration of prior experience (portfolio of artwork) and a conversation with the Art Department Chair.

### **Studies in Art, Design, and Innovation (Fall)**

Studies in Art, Design, and Innovation is intended as an introductory course for students interested in the arts and sciences. Students will be exposed to various tools and techniques related to creation. Students will study topics including, but not limited to: digital photography, animation, graphic design, 3D modeling, CNC machining, and more. This will be a hands-on learning experience for students as they learn new skills. They will also meet and be taught by professionals in the field and see first hand how these skills are applied in the real world.

### **Advanced Mixed Media (Portfolio) (Fall & Spring)**

This class is designed to guide students through the process of preparing an art portfolio for entrance to BFA programs and liberal arts colleges that accept portfolios. Students will choose colleges, create some impressive original drawings, have their work photographed, and consult with various art admissions personnel to create the most effective presentation of their work. They will view various presentations by different art programs and apply to their choice of schools by the end of the semester.

**Prerequisite: Open to Juniors & Seniors with prior art experience or by permission of instructor**

### **Ceramics (Fall & Spring)**

Ceramics is designed for both students new to clay as well as students with experience in ceramics. Students new to clay will learn various hand-building techniques and basic wheel-throwing skills used to make both functional ware and ceramic sculpture. Students with ceramic experience will take a more independent approach to projects as they work to design projects that include handbuilding, wheel working and mold making to create their work. All students will research and analyze both historical and contemporary methods of surface design and apply these techniques to build up layers of design information on their own work. Students are encouraged to explore personal interests and aesthetics through the assignments. Projects assigned will require productive use of in-class time and additional time in the studio outside of class hours.

**NOTE: Prerequisite: Studio Art. This class can be repeated and the course renamed to note students' level of progression for transcripts.**

### **Dark Room Photography (Fall)**

This course is designed to introduce the foundations of black and white photography and darkroom techniques. Historical development and technical aspects of the photographic process will be studied. Assignments are designed to help budding photographers begin to look more carefully at the world around them and explore a vision of their place in it. Assignments will require productive use of in-class time and additional time in the studio outside of class. Historical exploration will require some research, analysis, and presentation.

**Prerequisite: Studio Art**

### **Drawing (Fall & Spring)**

This course is designed to help students develop their perceptual and rendering skills through sketching and drawing. Assignments will build upon each other as students grow in their perception of edges, spaces, relationships, and lights and shadows. A final project will explore contemporary drawing and develop a new definition of drawing. Students are required to keep a sketchbook for weekly, take-home assignments. Students are expected to participate fully, challenge themselves, apply their best effort, and have fun. NOTE: This class is a prerequisite to all Painting classes.

**Prerequisite: Studio Art**

### **Model Fabrication (Fall)**

Model Fabrication is designed to expose students to fabrication practices and applications of models in real-world fields. By exploring scale, strategy, materials, and technique, the course will allow students to create multiple models using various practices within particular disciplines (visual arts, architecture, theater). In October, students will go on a field trip to RPI's Architecture Department on a guided tour of facilities and have the opportunity to speak with students and faculty to learn more regarding career paths and how to prepare for architecture as a college choice.

**Prerequisite: Studio Art**

### **Sculpture: Installation Art (Fall)**

Installation Art is a sculpture based class where students will create works that reflect an investigation of materials and consideration towards installation methods. Projects (to name a few) will include creating large scale sculptures with everyday materials, repurposing found objects into altered books and using natural materials to construct site specific, temporary art works. Students will also research historical and contemporary artist's approaches in this genre.

**Prerequisite: Studio Art**

### **Woodworking (Fall and Spring)**

Woodworking is open to students with different levels of woodworking experience, from novices to experienced woodworkers, and provides the opportunity to work with wood as an artistic medium. Students will develop skills and undertake projects that correspond to the woodworking background they bring to the course. Novice woodworkers will develop basic woodworking skills by replicating an existing design through all the stages from rough lumber to a finished furniture piece. More experienced woodworkers will design and execute an original work in wood using more challenging design parameters and joinery techniques. Depending on their skill level and specific project, students will be introduced to the safe and correct use of a variety of hand, power and shop tools. Regardless of level of experience and skill, all students will be expected to exhibit a high level of awareness of safety, and a mindful focus on craftsmanship and skill development. Students can take the course more than once as they progress in their woodworking skills and knowledge, and transcripts will reflect the specific level(s) at which a student took the course (i.e., Introductory, Advanced, or both).

**Prerequisite: Studio Art (or similar prior experience and permission of the Department Chair)**

### **Painting (Spring)**

In Painting, students will be introduced to both watercolors and acrylics. The first half of the semester will be devoted to understanding and exploring watercolor as each assignment builds off the next, investigating the potential of this medium. The second half of the semester will be spent painting with acrylics on canvas. There will be a balance of in-class assignments along with students selecting their own images to depict and render. Research of both historical applications as well as contemporary approaches will be part of this course as students discover their personal aesthetic with the material. Concepts presented in class will be further explored through weekly sketchbook assignments.

**Prerequisite: Studio Art and Drawing**

**Printmaking (Spring)**

Printmaking is an elective course that explores the art of building imagery by using ink on various surfaces to produce a collection of work. Students will build a foundation of technical skills through experimentation with color, shape, texture, found-objects, and layering. Following an introductory study of monoprinting, the course will continue to cover additive and subtractive processes to aid in the creation of abstract and illustrative imagery using various transfer and carving methods.

**Prerequisite: Studio Art**

**Wearable Art (Spring)**

This class will introduce students to wearable art by exploring body adornment projects in jewelry making, textile design and a fabrication process of their choosing for a final project. Students will learn about both historical and contemporary approaches to wearable art, its significance and place within the field of art. This class will include artist studio visits to learn about different fabrication methods. At the end of the semester students will showcase their wearable art creations by having an exhibit/fashion show for the Darrow community.

**Prerequisite: Studio Art**

## **Additional Required Course**

**Financial Literacy for Seniors**

The Financial Literacy seminar uses a flipped classroom model to teach all seniors about being financially successful. Financial success means being in control of one's money instead of the other way around. Income doesn't necessarily determine financial success – one's choices and priorities do. The essential questions for the seminar: How do you know you are using your resources well? How do you know you are being responsible with your finances? How do you prepare for your own retirement? Units include financial planning and process, budgeting, managing personal debt, education planning, economic concepts, investment strategies, and other useful skills and information related to personal finances.