

All About Electives

AT NEW TRIER HIGH SCHOOL

Frequently Asked Questions

GENERAL QUESTIONS ABOUT ELECTIVES

How do I decide which elective courses to take?

Choosing your courses is a personal decision that should be based on your interests and goals. Freshman year is a time to explore. If your interests change, there will be opportunities available to you in all elective departments in your sophomore year.

How many elective courses can I take each year?

It is possible to take two or more electives depending on the number of core academic classes you take. As you begin your four-year planning, it may be possible to take a core academic course in summer school or as an early bird class in order to make room in your daily schedule for multiple elective courses.

What graduation requirement do elective courses fulfill?

All courses in Applied Arts, Art, Business Education, and Music & Theatre fulfill the graduation requirement for fine and/or practical arts.

Are there any extracurricular performances limited to students enrolled in particular elective courses?

Some performances are limited to students enrolled in particular elective courses. For example, cast members of the Freshman Play must be enrolled in Theatre 1; cast members of the Choir Opera junior-senior musical must be enrolled in Choir Opera; Kinesis Dance Company members must be enrolled in Dance Lab I or II; senior directors of the Spring Plays Festival must be enrolled in Theatre 4. The Program of Studies provides the best information for future planning.

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Questions About Elective Departments



APPLIED ARTS

Creative Cuisine
Fashion Construction
Introduction to Architecture
Introduction to Design Technology/Computer Coding
Introduction to Engineering Design
Geometry, Design & Construction



CULINARY, FASHION, GEOMETRY AND CONSTRUCTION

What do students prepare in Creative Cuisine? Will we get to eat what we cook?

The course is taught by food genres, and students prepare a variety of quick breads, yeast breads, appetizers, soups, sauces, casseroles, beef, and poultry. There is a new lab done daily and groups of 4-5 students cook and taste their recipes.

Do I have to know how to sew, and do I need to have a sewing machine to take Fashion Construction?

No, students will learn basic sewing skills and build upon those skills throughout the year. We have sewing machines as well as basic sewing materials such as scissors, measuring equipment, and pins for student use.

Should I take Creative Cuisine if I have a food allergy?

Yes, you should feel comfortable taking this course. Teachers are informed of students' food allergies by the school nurse, and adjustments are made to recipes to ensure the safety of everyone in the class.

Can freshman take Geometry, Design and Construction?

Freshman who are eligible for geometry can enroll in Geometry, Design and Construction. Students who take this course earn math and fine/practical arts credit at either level 9 or 4.

Do Applied Arts courses fulfill any graduation requirement?

Each course fulfills the **fine/practical art graduation** requirement. Go to www.newtrier.k12.il.us/appliedarts/ for more info on college dual credit.

ENGINEERING, ARCHITECTURE, CODING

What's the difference between Architecture, Engineering and Computer Coding?

Introduction to Architecture is an introductory architecture course, in which students learn how to think like a designer and create 2D and 3D architectural drawings such as a final dream house design challenge. *This course is eligible for college dual credit.*

Introduction to Engineering Design is the foundation course of the Project Lead the Way engineering sequence of courses, in which students use engineering skills and computer modeling software to learn the engineering process for making products and solving real-world problems. Students will be presented with product design challenges. *This course is eligible for college dual credit.*

Introduction to Design Technology/Introduction to Computer Coding introduces students to two areas: computer coding and design technology. In the semester of computer coding, students will learn fundamental computer science concepts such as Python. *This course is eligible for college dual credit.*

Are students expected to own the software used in architecture and pre-engineering courses? No, we do not expect students to own the elite industry software programs, such as Revit, AutoCAD, Inventor, Photoshop, and Sketchup Pro. Students are able to complete design assignments at school.

Is there homework in an Applied Arts course?

No, we want you to have a focused fun experience in our labs and studio.

Do you need previous experience in any of our classes? Our courses are inclusive and create belonging for all. You do not need prior experience and all students are welcomed. It all starts here!

Questions About Elective Departments



ART

Art Essentials 1
Art Exploration
Drawing and Painting 1
Introduction to Photography



Should I consider taking an art class if I do not have previous experience in art?

Absolutely! All of New Trier's art courses are designed to accommodate all ability levels. Previous experience is not necessary. We welcome all incoming beginning and experienced artists.

What is the reason for teaching wet darkroom? How much digital is taught in Introduction to Photography?

Students have reported in course surveys that they understand digital image making and processing better because of their wet darkroom experience. The Art Department believes that there are sound curricular reasons for providing wet darkroom instruction to students both for the sake of understanding the darkroom process and for providing a foundation for gelatin silver or digital work. Digital technology is explored in Introduction to Photography after students have a solid understanding of the camera, processing, and printing. Students can enroll in semester or year-long digital photo options once they get to the Winnetka Campus.

What is the difference between Art Essentials and Art Exploration?

While both classes explore a wide range of media (ceramics, collage, design, drawing, glass, painting, photography, and sculpture), Art Essentials brings together students with and without disabilities who work collaboratively, exploring art techniques and materials while learning to express themselves individually as artists.

Can I register for a semester photography class at Winnetka if I have already taken a photography course at my junior high?

The technical and aesthetic development in our yearlong Introduction to Photography course goes well beyond what students experience in a junior high school course or a summer enrichment program. All students interested in studying photography at New Trier during 9th grade must begin with Introduction to Photography. Students in 10-12th grade can enroll in any of the semester or yearlong photography offerings available.

Will I be able to take any of the art courses offered at the Northfield Campus later at Winnetka?

Yes, all the courses offered at Northfield are also available at the Winnetka Campus in addition to other art courses. Course descriptions and examples of student artwork can be found on the Art Department website: <https://www.newtrier.k12.il.us/art>

Is there homework in an art course?

The short answer is no. However, in some courses, students may have occasional assignments outside of class. For example, in photography, students need to shoot film for each unit of study during the year.

Do I need to bring my own camera to Introduction to Photography?

Students learn how to use a SLR and DSLR camera in Introduction to Photography. Since every camera is different, it is advantageous for student to learn how to use their own equipment, as this is a life-long skill they can continue after high school. However, we do have a limited number of cameras we can loan students during the year.

Questions About Elective Departments



BUSINESS EDUCATION

Introduction to Business
Web and Multimedia Development I



What do students do in Introduction to Business?

Students learn about all aspects of business, including marketing, law, ethics, international business, and the stock market. Students will participate in a Shark Tank competition resulting in the formation of a business run by the class.

Does Introduction to Business fulfill the Consumer Education graduation requirement?

Yes, this course can fulfill either the Consumer Education or the Fine/Applied Arts graduation requirement. The decision on which graduation requirement it fulfills can be made during a student's Four-Year Planning process.

Is Web and Multimedia Development a gaming course?

No, it is a course that focuses on various types of media, utilizing programs such as Adobe Photoshop, Flash, and QuickTime Virtual Reality to create video, photos, audio, and animation products.

Do I have to take a business class at the Northfield Campus if I am interested in taking a business class that is only offered at the Winnetka Campus?

No, Introduction to Business is not a prerequisite for taking any of the other business courses that are offered at the Winnetka Campus. We offer semester and yearlong courses in marketing, accounting, business law, financial management, iOS app development, and entrepreneurship. There are NO prerequisites in our department.

Do I need to have the software programs used in Web and Multimedia Development on my computer at home?

No, you don't need to have those programs at home because there are many computer labs with those programs available for student use at school.

Questions About Elective Departments



MEDIA and JOURNALISM SPEECH and DEBATE

Freshman Media Production
Freshman Speech and Debate



MEDIA AND JOURNALISM

How do I get involved with Media and Journalism at New Trier?

You should register for Freshman Media Production to learn how to create a variety of media products, including advertisements, podcasts, short films, and websites. Technical skills introduced in this course lay the groundwork for taking Film & TV, Broadcast Journalism, and WNTH Radio.

SPEECH AND DEBATE

Why take Freshman Speech and Debate? Speech and debate will develop strong social, academic, and critical thinking skills. Students will have the chance to work individually and in small groups to construct persuasive arguments, become effective leaders, and outwit opponents in a fun environment. Students have the option of participating in the after school competitive debate program as an extension of the course. This course is the gateway for Congressional Debate, Lincoln-Douglas Debate, Policy Debate, and Public Forum Debate at the Winnetka Campus.

But I already took this in junior high school.

Not like this you haven't! You will learn enhanced argument strategy with new and engaging formats. Take your basic skills to the next level, learn about tournament competition, and take advantage of opportunities to debate at university campuses.

Do I need to take the class to compete and/or participate in the extracurricular debate program?

No. Students who are in fall sports usually benefit from the class when joining later in the year and some students and parents have appreciated the social comradery of being in the class and the after-school program.

Does being in the class require me to compete in extracurricular tournaments?

No. Students in the class are reminded of the extracurricular and competition opportunities available to freshmen.

Does Freshmen Speech & Debate fulfill any graduation requirements?

Yes. This course fulfills the graduation requirement for fine and/or practical arts.

What if I have never done debate before?

Most students have not done debate before entering New Trier. All are welcome! There is a wide range of students in the class: students who have/have not done debate before, students who are/are not outspoken, etc.

Questions About Elective Departments



MUSIC & THEATRE

Northfield Chorus
Beginning and Returning Instrumental Music
Freshman Concert Band
Freshman Jazz Ensemble
Freshman Orchestra
Theatre 1: Freshman Theatre Workshop
Technical Theatre and Design



CHORAL MUSIC

How do I get involved in singing at New Trier?

You should register for Northfield Chorus, which is a choir for anyone who wants to sing. These choirs include students of all levels of experience and abilities and do not require an audition. You must be in a choral music course in order to sing in choral performances at New Trier.

How do I prepare to be in upper-level choral courses and musical theatre productions?

Freshman choral courses prepare students to enter Choraliers, Trevian Glee Club, Concert Choir, Choir-Opera, and Swing Choir. Vocal technique, sight-singing, and music theory are components of the freshman choral curriculum and are also criteria for placement auditions for those choral courses. Choral students work on developing these skills every day in class and, as a result, are more confident auditioning for upper-level ensembles, solos, and musical theatre productions. In addition, students often have time to practice audition material in class. In musical theatre productions most cast members are also in chorus classes, especially those students cast in principal roles.

Are private lessons available?

Yes, students interested in studying voice or an instrument may take a lesson during their study hall, lunch period, or music class. Private lessons are also available during the summer. For more information, contact the Music & Theatre office at 847-784-7521

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

What course should I take if I am interested in learning to how to play an instrument?

Anyone can register for the Beginning and Returning Instrumental Music class, including students who would like to play an instrument for the first time ever and students who have taken a break from their instrument for a year or more.

What course should I take if I am interested in the orchestra program?

You should register for Freshman Orchestra. Adjustment to your orchestra placement will be made after your audition.

What course should I take if I am interested in the band program?

If you played in band through your 8th grade year, you should register for Freshman Concert Band. Additional information about the wind ensembles can be found at <https://www.newtrier.k12.il.us/Page/1676>

What course should I take if I am interested in the jazz program?

You should register for Freshman Jazz Ensemble. Read the FAQs about joining our jazz program by clicking on the "8th Graders" menu item at www.newtrier.k12.il.us/ntjazz

Is it true that I also need to register for Freshman Band or Freshman Orchestra if I register for Freshman Jazz Ensemble?

Yes! Saxophone, trumpet, trombone, and drum set players also register for Freshman Concert Band. Bassists in Freshman Jazz Ensemble also register for Freshman Orchestra. Guitarists and pianists do not register for another ensemble unless they are interested in playing a band or orchestra instrument in one of those

ensembles. There are several ways to make two electives work. Feel free to reach out to Mr. Meyer (meyern@nth.snet) if you would like guidance on the schedule options.

If I am enrolled in an upper-level instrumental music course at the Winnetka Campus, how will I go back and forth between the campuses?

A shuttle bus will be provided between campuses.

THEATRE

Do I need to have previous theatre experience to be in a theatre course?

No, we welcome students at all levels of experience and skill. We focus on individual students and tailor our instruction and assignments to make sure that every student is challenged and supported.

If I have had a lot of experience in a children's theatre group or in junior high productions, can I skip Theatre 1 and take Theatre 2?

No, all freshmen, regardless of experience, begin with Theatre 1. The course is designed to meet students at their own level of expertise and challenge the most experienced student while remaining accessible to students without any previous theatre experience.

How can I prepare to be in upper-level theatre courses?

Theatre 1 will prepare you for all other theatre courses. Text analysis, characterization, voice, and audition techniques for plays and musicals are components of the freshman theatre curriculum.

How can I prepare to be in the crews and casts of plays and musicals?

Enrolling in Technical Theatre and Design is a good first step for students who are interested in being in stage crew and would like to have leadership opportunities in design and stagecraft in the future. With the exception of the Freshman Play and the Choir Opera junior-senior musical, there is no course enrollment requirement for participation in plays and musicals. However, most cast members are also in theatre classes, especially those students cast in principal roles. Theatre students build their acting skills every day and also have opportunities to practice audition materials in class. As a result, they are generally more comfortable and prepared during the audition process.

What is Technical Theatre and Design? Can freshmen take it?

Yes, this course offers hands-on experience in stagecraft and design for freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and seniors. Since Technical Theatre and Design is only offered at the Winnetka Campus, a shuttle will be provided for Freshman at end of the day in order to take the course. Freshmen who do not wish to commute should consider taking Theatre 1 instead.



NEW TRIER
Music & Theatre