

West Academy High School

Course Descriptions

2019-2020

TABLE OF CONTENTS

West Academy Diploma Requirements	4
Careers: Exploration & Development	4
Computer Applications	4
Health	4
Personal Finance	4
Possible Selves	4
English Requirements and Offerings	4
English 1	4
English 2	5
English 3	5
English 4	5
American Authors	5
Popular Literature	6
Creative Writing 1/Creative Writing 2	6
Publications	6
Independent Reading	6
Math Course Descriptions	6
Algebra 1A	6
Algebra 1B	7
Algebra 2A	7
Geometry 1A	7
Geometry 1B	7
Statistics	7
PE Requirements	7
Physical Education	7
Science Requirements	7
Animal Biology	8
Cell Biology	8
Earth Science	8
Human Biology	8
Plant Biology	8
Social Studies	8
American History I	8
American History II	8

US Government	9
Contemporary American History	9
Psychology	9
Sociology	9
US Geography	9
World History I	9
World History II	10
Additional Learning Opportunities	10
Work Credit	10
Learning Skills	10

West Academy Diploma Requirements

All students are required to earn one credit from each of the five required courses listed below.

Careers: Exploration & Development

Junior/Senior status preferred

Students will explore three major themes to determine where their career interests lie. The first area students will explore include interests, values, and the ideal lifestyle and how these items will influence their career choice. Next the student will develop an individual career plan and from there the student will research the skills needed on the job and gain valuable insight on how to develop these skills. Students will use the information and research from above to further develop their employability skills. In this course, time will be spent on developing job-hunting skills, creating an employment portfolio, and pursuing job interests, as well as planning for post-secondary education if it is in the student's career plan.

Computer Applications

The purpose of this course is to give students an in-depth introduction to Office 2010. Students will learn the fundamentals of Word, Excel and PowerPoint. This course will acquaint students with the proper procedures to create documents, worksheets, databases and presentations suitable for coursework, professional purposes and personal use. Students who take this course will learn these skills by completing hands-on activities.

Health

The health course is to help students recognize the value of attaining and maintaining good health. If students know the benefits and rewards of good health, they are more likely to find the motivation to achieve it. Students need the knowledge in order to get healthy and to stay healthy.

Personal Finance

Junior/Senior status preferred

The basic objectives of this course are to help students explore all aspects of financial life: personal development, decisions affecting their future finances, lifestyle options and consequences, managing family living, personal finance and money management.

Possible Selves

The Possible Selves program is designed to increase student motivation and to work on goal setting. Students will examine their future and determine what goals are important to them. They will then set goals, create plans and work toward their goals as part of the WEST program. Students will also complete the Socially Wise program which focuses on building relationships, handling difficult situations and what to do in various situations.

English Requirements and Offerings

All students are required to have 8 credits of English

English 1

Required

This course provides foundational English skills for students and allows opportunities for reading, writing, and speaking. Students will read short fiction and nonfiction texts of different genres to analyze key ideas and details, practice paragraph and essay-level writing, and refine grammar and vocabulary skills. Students will also complete a speech presentation.

English 2

Required

This course focuses on building students' ability to understand, analyze, and respond to nonfiction. Students will read a wide variety of text formats from cross-curricular subject areas, with an emphasis on building vocabulary, questioning the text, and using evidence to support conclusions when writing. Students will also practice judging the validity of arguments as well as the credibility of sources. Major assessments include a research paper and an argumentative presentation.

English 3

Required

As a complement to English 2, this course focuses on building students' ability to understand, analyze, and respond to fiction. Students will explore how messages are conveyed through fictional media, from literature to drama to film and video. Moving from simpler texts to more complex ones, students will build their ability to discern what is being conveyed by a piece of media, how and why those messages are constructed, and how to think critically about what they hear, read, and watch. Major assessments include a narrative essay, a compare-contrast essay, and an analytical essay.

English 4

Required

To prepare for college and career writing, this is a project-based class where students will develop real-world writing skills as they create a product for a specific audience. Awareness of purpose, audience and task will be emphasized as students practice conducting research (including citing sources), drafting, revising, and writing effectively. Writing tasks include a process essay and workplace documents such as emails, instructions, and reports. English grammar and usage will be reviewed and applied.

American Authors

This literature-based class emphasizes the major periods of American literary history and the accompanying social climate. Short stories, plays, and poetry are areas of concentration. Areas of emphasis include: an author's purpose for writing, social/period influences,

gender/racial/socio-economic issues, and literary elements.

Popular Literature

In this class, students will examine various genres of literature and media (including but not limited to: novels, magazine articles, films, podcasts, and video games) from contemporary authors and creators surrounding a particular theme/topic. Students will analyze how authors and creators alike use literary elements in their works and draw conclusions about how texts relate to current societal or personal issues. Frequent class discussions and technology-enhanced projects will allow students to develop a deeper understanding of and connection to literature.

Creative Writing 1/Creative Writing 2

Both of these courses are intensive writing courses designed for students who want to improve their creative writing skills. Students will journal daily and complete exercises to practice writing poetry and short stories as well as engage in revision and critique. Creative Writing 2 students will expand upon these skills to write plays, more involved short stories, and additional forms of poetry. At both levels, mentor texts will be analyzed to deepen understanding of creative techniques. Students will be required to develop a portfolio and will have the option of submitting pieces to a literary magazine.

Publications

Students enrolled in this class will help with the production of the yearbook for WEST Academy. Publications students will learn how to develop a unifying theme for print as well as the basics of journalistic writing, interviewing, photography, and how these elements combine to tell a story and create a record of the school year. Students may repeat this class for elective credit.

Independent Reading

This class is offered by teacher approval only as an independent study for a student who enjoys reading and/or is interested in discovering new authors and titles/genres to read. **Students who enroll in this class MUST be available and willing to meet for 30 minutes on Friday afternoons to complete a weekly reading conference.** Reading logs, reflections, and a number of creative novel projects will be required to receive a passing grade.

Math Course Descriptions

All students are required to have 6 math credits.

Algebra 1A

Algebra 1A covers the first half of Algebra 1. It provides the necessary foundation for students for the rest of their math classes. Algebra 1A covers linear functions, graphing, algebraic equations, and linear inequalities.

Algebra 1B

Prerequisite: Algebra 1A

Algebra 1B covers the second half of Algebra 1. Algebra 1B covers polynomials, factoring, quadratics, and systems of equations. Everything will be covered more in depth in Algebra 2A.

Algebra 2A

Prerequisite: Geometry 1B

Algebra 2A covers the first half of Algebra 2. It briefly reviews the topics covered in Algebra 1 and introduces the student to higher level topics in mathematics. Topics will include linear functions, quadratic functions, and polynomial functions.

Geometry 1A

Prerequisite: Algebra 1B

Geometry 1A covers the first half of geometry. Geometry 1A covers a basic introduction to geometry and proofs, ratios and proportions, and triangle congruences. Students will apply a variety of problem solving procedures, mathematical thinking and reasoning to solve problems involving geometric concepts.

Geometry 1B

Prerequisite: Geometry 1A

Geometry 1B covers the second half of Geometry. Geometry 1B covers polygons, parallelograms and transformations. Students will apply a variety of problem solving procedures, mathematical thinking and reasoning to solve problems involving geometric concepts.

Statistics

Prerequisite: Geometry 1B

Statistics covers descriptive and inferential statistics. Statistics covers central tendencies, probability and how to read statistics. Students will apply learning to analyze data and will be expected to create a Carnival Game at the end of the trimester.

PE Requirements

All students are required to have 4 PE credits

Physical Education

Required

All students are required by state law to participate in physical education classes each year they are in attendance. An effort is made to provide a variety of activities to meet the needs and interests of as many students as possible. The major goal is to provide activities that are life long.

Science Requirements

All students are required to have 6 science credits

Animal Biology

Animal Biology is about the study of the animal kingdom and how organisms adapt, evolve and how they are classified based on characteristics. The main focus is on Charles Darwin and his theory on Natural Selection and Evolution.

Cell Biology

Cell Biology is about the study of living things, while understanding cellular life and how they are affected by environmental factors. The 4 major units are the scientific method, microscope, cells and genetics.

Earth Science

Earth Science is about the study of Earth's history and how physical and chemical processes have helped shape the land and atmosphere we live. This should be one of the first science classes taken at WEST Academy, if the student has less than 2 credits.

Human Biology

This course is about the body systems, their structures and functions and how they are interconnected in order for the body to work together as one unit. Should have completed Cell Biology or Applied Biology before taking this course.

Plant Biology

Plant Biology is a course designed to teach students about the evolution of plants/trees and how they are classified. They will grasp an understanding of interdependence and interrelationships among organisms in their ecosystems. Students will learn about matter, energy flow, conservation and photosynthesis. Must have completed Cell Biology and this class is most often taken as a senior.

Social Studies

All students are required to have 6 social studies credits (Including US History I, US History II and US Government)

American History I

Required

In American History 1 students will study from the beginnings of America during colonial times and its evolution through expansion as well as the division of the Civil War and their effects on society and culture and how they still impact us today. This course will meet the requirements needed to earn a high school diploma from WEST Academy, DMACC, or transfer to any high school served by WEST Academy.

American History II

Required

Prerequisite: American History I

American History 2 covers the expansion in size and population of America and expansions effect on society and culture from the 1870's to the early 1900's and how it still impacts us

today. This course will meet the requirements needed to earn a high school diploma from WEST Academy, DMACC, or transfer to any high school served by WEST Academy.

US Government

Required

Junior/Senior status preferred

The class will meet the requirements to earn a high school diploma from Basics and Beyond, DMACC, or transfer to any high school served by Basics and Beyond. Students will learn the make-up of the United States government systems from local to federal governments and how each is intertwined. Those students eligible to vote will register and exercise his/her right to vote on Election Day.

Contemporary American History

Contemporary History will cover the beginning of the twentieth century through present times. This class will focus on American society and how many changes occurred socially and politically. Emphasis will be placed on WWI, WWII, Korea, and Vietnam Wars.

Psychology

This course exists to help the students analyze and solve their problems with themselves and others. Basically, it tries to answer the question: "Why do people act the way they do?" Emphasis is placed on the biological and environmental influences on one's behavior, covering areas such as: Personality, Behavior Modifications, Learning, Social Psychology, Dream Analysis, and Intelligence. The course is open to all students and becomes a valuable tool in helping them to manage their lives.

Sociology

In Sociology we will discover the meaning behind behavior and society's impact on an individual. Through the text, quick labs, case studies, projects, and discussions students will have the opportunity to analyze current social issues relevant to an adolescent student. Major themes the course will discuss are: Cultural Diversity and Conformity, The Adolescent and Adult in Society, Social Stratification, Gender, Age and Health, Family, Education, and Religion in Society.

US Geography

This class will meet requirements for high school diploma from WEST Academy, DMACC diploma, or transfer to any high school served by WEST Academy. In the United States Geography students learn the 5 basic themes of geography; location, place, human-environmental interaction, movement and regions. It also includes how the U.S. relates to other parts of the world as well as local geography.

World History I

In World History I, we will begin to know and understand the "thinkers" who wanted to use reason to improve society. This may include composers, writers, and rulers within the society. We will focus on the industrial revolution and see how this revolution changed the lives of workers. In addition, we will see how change led to revolutions in Europe as well as Latin

America. Lastly, we will examine the consequences of nationalism and imperialism throughout the world.

World History II

In World History II, we will examine how people of the world are all linked together. As the global economy becomes more interdependent culturally, economically and politically, we will look at the events that put into motion our world interdependence. The topics we will talk an in depth look at are the following: World War I (causes, the alliances, fighting, consequences (political, social, etc.), the in between years in Europe, World War II (causes, the Holocaust, results, United Nations), and lastly the Cold War and its effects on the world.

Additional Learning Opportunities

In addition to courses taught directly by WEST Academy teachers, students may also take classes in the following ways:

- Students may enroll in classes taught at Newton Senior High School.
- Students may enroll in online classes approved through Newton CSD and supervised by a certified teacher.
- Students may enroll in DMACC Career Academy for dual-enrollment credit.

Work Credit

This course is designed for West Academy students who have acquired a job that demonstrates a positive career choice. The student will be in contact with their advisor weekly during the work experience. The student will be under the supervision of their advisor and the community employer. Weekly work summaries will be required. West Academy credits are earned by completing required assignments and the number of on-site working hours engaged. The course must be taken during the school year. Work Credits: 120 hours/trimester = 1 credit

Learning Skills

Learning Skills class is for students with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP). Students enrolled in this class will work on academics and behavioral goals outlined in their IEP. Progress towards goals will be graphed to provide information to parents at annual reviews/parent-teacher conferences. Students will be allowed to receive assistance in other classes as mentioned as accommodations in each student's IEP.