



ACADEMIC COURSE GUIDE

Welcome, Artists and Scholars!

The mission of SPCPA is twofold. The arts program prepares you for conservatory and professional life as an artist. The academic program prepares you for college. In terms of approach, the programs mirror each other. They are each active, collaborative, and student-centered. They encourage inquiry and curiosity. They acknowledge that failures function as steppingstones to success (and as such, are celebrated). Each program recognizes that it is not only our minds which have the capacity to grow but that our bodies, hearts and spirits also learn.

You will develop a pattern of lifelong learning through the courses you take in both the arts and academics. As it turns out, half of our students pursue the arts after high school. The other half focuses on a more traditional path of academic study. Our goal is to give you options after graduation. My advice as you begin your journey here: focus on the process. Be fully present daily in both your arts and academic classes. Engage completely in each moment. If you do, results will follow. Upon graduation you will be well prepared to attend college or conservatory, as well as pursue a life in the arts or engage in other scholarly endeavors.

Be bold, take risks, and hold each other up!

SPCPA Administration

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

4 Credits (Years)	English Language Arts On-Level, Advanced, & AP College Prep Pathways
3 Credits (Years) 4 Credits (Years)	Mathematics Minimum Requirement College Prep Pathway *Refer to Common Mathematics Pathways for Options
3 Credits (Years) 4 Credits (Years)	Science Minimum Requirement (Earth Science, Chemistry, & Biology) College Prep Pathway *Refer to the Example 4-Year Academic Plan for Graduation Year for Options
3.5 Credits (Years) 4 + Credits (Years)	Social Studies Minimum Requirement (World History, US History, Government, Economics, & Geography) College Prep Pathway *Refer to the Example 4-Year Academic Plan for Graduation Year for Options
Health (.4 Credit)	SPCPA adopted health standards are integrated into an arts course in each track annually.
Physical Education (.4 Credit)	MN standards and benchmarks are integrated into an arts course within each track annually.
Personal Finance	All students graduating in 2028 and beyond will take and pass a course focused on personal finance content and skills in grade 10, 11, or 12 for credit to graduate. This course does not meet graduation requirements in math or social studies. This course will not be offered during the 2025-2026 school year.
ARTS	20 CREDITS (Grades 9-12) (* 5 Credits Per Year *) * Required Credits Based on the # of Years (or Days) Enrolled at SPCPA at Time of Graduation *

ENGLISH

1410 & 2410 English 9: Foundations in Literature and Composition

Prerequisite: None

Credit: 1.0 Credit (two semesters); Required

Grade Level: 9

English 9 aligns with the Minnesota Academic Standards in English Language Arts. This course builds students' writing and critical thinking skills. Students obtain a foundation in composition and literary analysis while building vocabulary and increasing understanding of grammatical concepts. This course provides a survey of literature including drama, poetry and prose.

1415 & 2415 English 9 Advanced: Foundations in Literature and Composition

Prerequisite: None

Credit: 1.0 Credit (two semesters); Required

Grade Level: 9

English 9 Advanced aligns with the Minnesota Academic Standards in English Language Arts. This course is for motivated students seeking more rigorous expectations for learning. Students in this course must work outside of class to complete reading and writing assignments, have a strong interest in language arts and literature, and seek to improve as an English student. This course builds reading, writing, and critical thinking skills. Students obtain a foundation in composition and literary analysis while building vocabulary and increasing understanding of grammatical concepts. Students read both fiction and nonfiction texts. This course provides a faster pace as well as a greater depth of study, with considerable attention given to higher level critical thinking in preparation for AP courses.

1420 & 2420 English 10: Perspectives in Literary Analysis

Prerequisite: English 9 or English 9 Advanced

Credit: 1.0 Credit (two semesters); Required

Grade Level: 10

English 10 aligns with the Minnesota Academic Standards for English Language Arts. This course develops reading and viewing skills, writing skills (argument, research, and analysis), and critical thinking skills. Most of the course focuses on literary analysis. Students read short stories and novels of their choosing. Students write literary analysis essays and complete creative writing assignments that incorporate literary elements.

1425 & 2425 English 10 Advanced: Perspectives in Literary Analysis

Prerequisite: English 9 or English 9 Advanced

Credit: 1.0 Credit (two semesters); Required

Grade Level: 10

English 10 Advanced aligns with the Minnesota Academic Standards in English Language Arts. This course is for motivated students seeking more rigorous expectations for learning. Students in this course work outside of class to complete reading and writing assignments, have a strong interest in language arts and literature, and seek to improve as an English student. This course develops reading and viewing skills, writing skills (argument, research and analysis), and critical thinking skills. Throughout the year students study literary theory and philosophy, argumentative and analytical writing, social commentary, and literary staging or adaptation. In addition to a variety of short stories and novel excerpts, students often read *The Metamorphosis*, *Macbeth*, and two novels of their choosing.

1430 & 2430 English 11: Connections across American Literature

Prerequisite: English 10 or English 10 Advanced

Credit: 1.0 Credit (two semesters); Required

Grade Level: 11

English 11 aligns with the Minnesota Academic Standards in English Language Arts. The course focuses on the study of literature from various literary movements throughout America's history using a multicultural perspective. Students read and respond to seminal American nonfiction texts and creative texts as a starting place for gaining a broad understanding of points of view beyond their own. The course emphasizes reading, analyzing, discussing, and writing with particular emphasis placed on applying critical concepts in the understanding and interpretation of literature.

1435AP & 2435AP: AP English Language and Composition

Prerequisite: English 10 or English 10 Advanced

Credit: 1.0 Credit (two semesters); Required

Grade Level: 11

The AP English Language and Composition course aligns with the Minnesota Academic Standards in English Language Arts and is an introductory college course. In this course, students analyze a broad and challenging range of nonfiction prose and trace the use of rhetoric in making arguments and appeals. Students read and examine essays, letters, speeches, images, media messages, memoirs, and autobiographies from a variety of authors and historical contexts. Students write several papers, exploring and using the rhetorical techniques learned, skills that will transfer to writing they will do in college and other post-secondary settings. Students are prepared and expected to take the AP exam, for which there is a fee, upon successful completion of this course. The course may also enable students to gain advanced placement, college credit, or both.

1440 & 2440 English 12: Literature and Composition in a Social Context

Prerequisite: English 11 or AP English Language and Composition

Credit: 1.0 credit (two semesters); Required

Grade Level: 12

English 12 aligns with Minnesota Academic Standards in English Language Arts. This course builds on skills and knowledge acquired in previous courses while also emphasizing oral and written communication skills. English 12 focuses on studying literature such as short stories, poetry, drama, nonfiction, and the novel, reviewing and more deeply applying narrative elements and poetic devices to various texts within a social justice context. Students draw from their other courses (arts and academics) to explore national and international problems while emphasizing academic discussion. Students also engage in writing exercises in preparation for college and career.

1445AP & 2445AP: AP English Literature and Composition

Prerequisite: English 11 or AP English Language and Composition

Credit: 1.0 credit (two semesters); Required

Grade Level: 12

The AP English Literature and Composition course aligns with the Minnesota Academic Standards in English Language Arts and is an introductory college course. This course emphasizes perceptive readings of major British and American Literature representing all literary genres (poetry, drama, novel, and short story) covering the 17th to the 21st Century. Students write analytical and interpretive essays about the texts, examine the techniques writers use to create effects and enhance meaning, and generate independent, thoughtful and analytical discourse in writing and class discussion. Students are prepared and expected to take the AP exam, for which there is a fee, upon successful completion of this course. The course may also enable students to gain advanced placement, college credit, or both.

MATH

1110 & 2110: High School Algebra

Prerequisite: None

Credit: 1.0 (two semesters); Required

Grade Level: 9

High School Algebra aligns with the Minnesota Academic Standards in Mathematics and is the first course in the series of College Preparatory Mathematics (CPM). This course continues the extensive, connected, and applied study of Mathematics from Algebra 1. The topics covered in the course are functions, linear relationships, simplifying and solving, systems and equations, sequences, modeling two-variable data, exponential functions, quadratic functions, solving quadratics and inequalities.

1120 & 2120: Geometry

Prerequisite: High School Algebra or Equivalent

Credit: 1.0 (two semesters); Required

Grade Levels: 9 or 10

Geometry aligns with the Minnesota Academic Standards in Mathematics and continues the extensive, connected, and applied study of mathematics from College Preparatory Mathematics (CPM) Algebra course. The topics covered in the course include shapes and transformations, angles and measurement, justification and similarity, trigonometry and probability, congruent triangles, proof and quadrilaterals, polygons and circles, solids, circles and conditional probability.

1130 & 2130: Algebra 2

Prerequisite: High School Algebra or Equivalent and Geometry

Credit: 1.0 (two semesters); Required

Grade Levels: (9 or 10 – accelerated pathway) or 11

Algebra 2 aligns with the Minnesota Academic Standards in Mathematics and is a continuation of the extensive, connected, and applied study of mathematics from College Preparatory Mathematics (CPM) Algebra and Geometry. The topics covered in this course include transformations of parent graphs, equivalent forms, solving and intersections, inverses and logarithms, 3-D graphing and logarithms, trigonometric functions, polynomials, randomization and normal distributions.

Students will need a graphing calculator for this course.

1150 & 2150: Precalculus

Prerequisite: Algebra 2 or Equivalent

Credit: 1.0 (two semesters)

Grade Levels: (10 – accelerated pathway) or 11 or 12

Precalculus is designed for students who wish to pursue future pathways in mathematics and/or science. It is a fast-paced, rigorous course to prepare students for AP Calculus AB. The emphasis of the course is to have a deep understanding of the family of functions, exponential and logarithmic functions, and rational functions, including trigonometry.

Students will need a graphing calculator for this course.

1175AP & 2175AP: AP Calculus AB

Prerequisite: Precalculus

Credit: 1.0 (two semesters)

Grade Levels: 11 or 12

AP Calculus AB is the equivalent of a college course that focuses on differential and integral calculus and its applications. Limit theory is introduced to develop derivatives. A thorough study will be made of the definite and indefinite integral, functions and their derivatives, and applications of derivatives and integrals. Students come in with a firm foundation of higher math skills and able to recall and apply learning from prior math courses with little to no review. Students are prepared and expected to take the AP exam, for which there is a fee, upon successful completion of this course. The course may also enable students to gain advanced placement, college credit, or both.

Students will need a graphing calculator for this course.

SCIENCE

1210 & 2210: Earth Science

Prerequisite: None

Credit: 1.0 (two semesters); Required

Grade Level: 9

Earth Science aligns with the Minnesota Academic Standards in Earth and Space Science. This course provides students with an overview of the evolution of the Earth by studying the Earth's Hydrosphere, Atmosphere and Climate, Plate Tectonics, the Rock Cycle, and Earth Resources. This course also covers basic Astronomy along with fundamentals of the tools of science including the scientific method and basic laboratory techniques. Students should be prepared to engage in hands-on activities to explore and apply concepts.

1220 & 2220: Chemistry

Prerequisite: Earth Science

Credit: 1.0 (two semesters); Required

Grade Level: 10

Chemistry aligns with the Minnesota Academic Standards in Chemistry. Chemistry prepares the college-bound student whether choosing to study science or other fields after high school. Students engage in the study of the particle nature of matter and the changes these particles undergo. Foundational knowledge is obtained in modern atomic theory, the periodic table and its trends, chemical and physical properties of matter, bonding in chemical compounds, chemical reactions, solutions, and gas laws. Students apply these concepts to investigate topics such as acid-base chemistry, electrochemistry, thermochemistry, and the biochemistry of the human body. Additionally, the course emphasizes problem solving, lab activities, and computer simulations, often through small-group collaboration, with a real-world focus highlighting experiential learning.

1225 & 2225: Chemistry Advanced

Prerequisite: Earth Science

Credit: 1.0 (two semesters); Required

Grade Level: 10

Chemistry Advanced aligns with the Minnesota Academic Standards in Chemistry. A more rigorous, fast paced, and in-depth curriculum challenges the college-bound students interested in science or studying a STEM related field after high school. Students develop an understanding of the particle nature of matter and the changes these particles undergo. Foundational knowledge is obtained in modern atomic theory, the periodic table and its trends, chemical and physical properties of matter, bonding in chemical compounds, chemical reactions, solutions, and gas laws. Students apply these concepts to investigate topics such as acid-base chemistry, electrochemistry, thermochemistry, and the biochemistry of the human body. Additionally, the course emphasizes problem solving, lab activities, and computer simulations, often through small-group collaboration, with a real-world focus highlighting experiential learning.

1230 & 2230: Biology

Prerequisite: Chemistry or Chemistry Advanced

Credit: 1.0 (two semesters); Required

Grade Level: 11

Biology aligns with the Minnesota Academic Standards in Life Science. This course provides students with an overview of biological processes, from a cellular level to the biosphere. Students learn the various cellular activities required to support life, which include the following topics: biochemistry, cell structure and function, photosynthesis, growth and division, and genetics. Students also investigate evolution, ecology, and bioethical issues pertaining to scientific and technological advances. Students engage in laboratory experiences, projects, and discussions throughout the course.

1235AP & 2235AP: AP Biology

Prerequisite: Chemistry or Chemistry Advanced

Credit: 1.0 (two semesters); Required

Grade Level: 11

AP Biology meets the Minnesota Academic Standards in Life Science required for graduation and is designed to provide learning experiences equivalent to an introductory college biology course. Examination topics and required lab work for the course are framed around four big ideas: the process of evolution drives the diversity and unity of life, biological systems utilize energy and molecular building blocks to grow, reproduce and maintain homeostasis, living systems retrieve, transmit and respond to information essential to life processes, and biological systems interact, and these interactions possess complex processes. Students are prepared and expected to take the AP exam, for which there is a fee, upon successful completion of this course. The course may also enable students to gain advanced placement, college credit, or both.

1265 & 2265AP: AP Physics

Prerequisite: Algebra 2 (can be concurrently enrolled); Earth Science, Chemistry, and Biology

Credit: 1.0 (two semesters); Elective

Grade Level: 11 or 12

AP Physics aligns with the Minnesota Academic Standards in Physics and is the equivalent to an introductory college course in algebra-based physics but is designed to be taught over a full academic year, allowing time for AP teachers and students to develop a deep understanding of the content and to apply that knowledge through inquiry-based labs. The course covers Newtonian mechanics (including rotational dynamics and angular momentum), work, energy, power, and fluids. Algebra and Trigonometry are used throughout this lab-centered, technology intensive course. Strong emphasis is placed on building a deep conceptual and mathematical understanding of these main physics principles. The class also focuses on solving a variety of challenging problems and developing higher-level analytical problem solving and lab-based skills. Students are prepared and expected to take the AP exam, for which there is a fee, upon successful completion of this course. The course may also enable students to gain advanced placement, college credit, or both.

1245AP & 2245AP: AP Environmental Science

Prerequisite: Earth Science, Chemistry, and Biology

Credit: 1.0 (two semesters); Elective

Grade Level: 11 or 12

AP Environmental Science is a rigorous and academically challenging equivalent to an introductory college course designed to be taught over a full academic year, so students have the time to fully explore and investigate the interrelationships of the natural world and analyze environmental problems, both natural and human-made, through laboratory investigations and field work. This course spans 9 units of study with special emphasis placed on the seven science practices, which capture important aspects of the work that scientists engage in, with learning objectives that combine content with inquiry and reasoning skills. This course is interdisciplinary, embracing topics from geology, biology, environmental studies, environmental science, chemistry, and geography. Students are prepared and expected to take the AP exam, for which there is a fee, upon successful completion of this course. The course may also enable students to gain advanced placement, college credit, or both.

SOCIAL STUDIES

1320 & 2320: World History

Prerequisite: None

Credit: 1.0 (two semesters); Required

Grade Level: 9

World History aligns with the Minnesota Academic Standards in Social Studies, specifically World History. During the first semester, students examine comparatively and chronologically the evolution of selected cultures and societies before 1500 in Asia, India, Africa, Europe, the Middle East, and pre-Columbian America. Students explore such topics as religious practices and the birth of world religions, trade and interregional exchanges, human interaction with the environment, forms of political authority, and family life and gender roles. During the second semester, students examine, comparatively and chronologically, the evolution of selected cultures and societies after 1500 in Asia, India, Africa, Europe, the Middle East, and Latin America.

1330 & 2330: US History

Prerequisite: None

Credit: 1.0 (two semesters); Required

Grade Level: 10

US History aligns with the Minnesota Academic Standards in Social Studies, specifically US History. The study of US History helps students understand the democratic traditions of the United States, the establishment of these traditions, and how they carry forward in present times. During the first half of the semester students examine the development of American culture and society from the Columbian encounter through the Civil War and Reconstruction. The second half of the course covers the development of American institutions and society from Reconstruction to the present. Students examine economic, social, cultural, and political themes from the multiple perspectives that comprise the unique history of the United States. Class resources include the class text, primary source materials, and American biographies and autobiographies.

1335AP & 2335 AP: AP US History

Prerequisite: None

Credit: 1.0 (two semesters); Required

Grade Level: 10

AP US History meets the Minnesota Academic Standards in Social Studies, specifically US History, required for graduation and focuses on developing students' understanding of American history from approximately 1491 to the present. AP US History is the equivalent of two semesters of introductory college courses in US History. Students read a college-level textbook and write in-depth historical arguments. Students investigate the content of US history for significant events, individuals, developments, and processes in nine historical periods, and develop and use the same thinking skills and methods (analyzing primary and secondary sources, making historical comparisons, chronological reasoning, and argumentation) employed by historians when they study the past. Students also examine seven themes (American and national identity; migration and settlement; politics and power; work, exchange, and technology; America in the world; geography and the environment; and culture and society) to make connections among historical developments in different times and places. Students are prepared and expected to take the AP exam, for which there is a fee, upon successful completion of this course. The course may also enable students to gain advanced placement, college credit, or both.

1340: Government

Prerequisite: World History and US History

Credit: .5 (one semester); Required

Grade Level: 11

Government aligns with the Minnesota Academic Standards in Social Studies, specifically Citizenship and Government. This course provides an opportunity for students to gain the knowledge and skills needed for informed and responsible participation in public life. The course aids students in understanding political ideology and opposing viewpoints. It incorporates the study of constitutional principles and the democratic foundation of our national, state and local institutions. The course examines the political processes and structures of government grounded in an understanding of our constitution. Students learn how to participate to make a difference and acquire the skills required for competent participation in the political process.

2350: Economics

Prerequisite: World History, US History, and Government

Credit: .5 credit (one semester); Required

Grade Levels: 11 or 12

Economics aligns with the Minnesota Academic Standards in Social Studies, specifically Economics. This course provides an opportunity for students to gain knowledge and skills in a subject area that affects all areas of their life both today and in the future. This course introduces basic economic concepts and principles that demonstrate how our choices are affected by the role of scarcity. The course focuses on the following four units: Introduction to Economics, Microeconomics, Macroeconomics, and Personal Finance. In addition, students gain an understanding of the three basic economic questions, the mixed market system and the role buyers, sellers and government play, how the economy is measured and adjusted, as well as individual financial decisions.

1345AP & 2345AP: AP US Government and Politics

Prerequisite: World History and US History

Credit: 1.0 credit (two semesters); Required

Grade Level: 11

AP US Government and Politics meets the Minnesota Academic Standards in Social Studies, specifically Citizenship and Government, required for graduation when both semesters are successfully completed. It is an introductory college course that challenges students to cultivate their understanding of US government and politics through analysis of data and text-based sources as they explore topics like constitutionalism, liberty and order, civic participation in a representative democracy, competing policy-making interests, and methods of political analysis. Students read a college-level textbook and learn to write like political scientists. Students are prepared and expected to take the AP exam, for which there is a fee, upon successful completion of this course. The course may also enable students to gain advanced placement, college credit, or both.

1310 Geography

Prerequisite: None

Credit: .5 credit (one semester); Required

Grade Level: 12

Geography aligns with the Minnesota Academic Standards in Social Studies, specifically Geography. Students utilize physical and cultural perspectives to examine people, places, and environments at local, regional, national, and international levels. The focus is placed on how geography influences events of the past and present while highlighting contemporary issues. Students compare how components of culture shape the regional characteristics and analyze the impact of technology and human modifications on the physical environment. Students use a variety of interdisciplinary sources, both primary and secondary, such as maps, pictures, and documents to learn about the geography of different world regions. Each geography unit focuses on a particular region of the world. The units will be explored through examination of the five major themes of geography: Location, Place, Human/Environment Interaction, Movement, and Regions.

1360 or 2360 Psychology

Prerequisite: None

Credit: .5 credit (one semester); Elective

Grade Levels: 12

Psychology examines the basic principles and methods of psychological science from an evolutionary and cultural perspective. Students use critical thinking skills to examine fascinating topics: dreaming, cultural influences, identity, learning, thinking, and the biology of behavior. Applying basic research methods, students act as skeptical scientists. This course applies to almost any career choice in today's world and provides insight into self and others. Though not an AP course, the expectations and a significant portion of the curriculum aligns with an introductory college course and students may choose to prepare and take the AP exam, for which there is a fee. The course may also enable students to gain advanced placement, college credit, or both.

World Language

1511 & 2511 Spanish 1

Prerequisite: None

Credit: 1.0 credit (two semesters); Elective

Grade Level: Any

Spanish 1 focuses on the acquisition and mastery of listening, speaking, reading and writing skills at the beginning level. Students communicate about topics such as family, friends, food, school, time, and weather. Students learn to describe oneself and others, acknowledge one's feelings and health, talk about likes and dislikes, and leisure activities. The course topics align with the College Board's Advanced Placement Themes. By the end of the course students recognize and manipulate infinitives; understand and apply the concepts of number and gender in relation to noun and adjective agreement and placement; conjugate verbs in the present tense as well as some commonly used irregular verbs, and form and answer basic questions in Spanish.

1512 & 2512 Spanish 2

Prerequisite: Spanish 1

Credit: 1.0 credit (two semesters); Elective

Grade Level: Any

Spanish 2 is a continuation of the introductory study of the language begun in Spanish 1 and advances students to the intermediate level by continuing their study of present tenses and introducing them to past, future, and perfect tenses, as well as the conditional mood. Students further develop proficiency in reading, writing, speaking, and listening through a study of thematic units aligned with the College Board's Advanced Placement Themes. Students read basic texts, write simple paragraphs, and converse in real-world situations. Students continue to study the culture and history of the Spanish-speaking world.

1513 & 2513 Spanish 3

Prerequisite: Spanish 2

Credit: 1.0 credit (two semesters); Elective

Grade Level: Any

Spanish 3 is an introduction to the intermediate study of the Spanish language. Students build greater vocabulary, grammar, and cultural understanding. Successful students increase their ability to function in the Spanish-speaking world by improving their proficiency in reading, speaking, listening, writing, and cultural understanding. Students explore topics such as current events, art, media, environmental concerns, family, professions and social awareness. With the use of authentic texts, materials, videos, and music, students build skills learned in previous levels. This course is conducted mainly in Spanish.