

Choosing your courses

There is not a bad course taught at the Governor's Honors Academy. Every teacher will do a good job; your job is to choose the courses from which you will most benefit or most enjoy. Each student takes one intensive course and one broad-based course. The intensive courses last about three hours daily, and the broad-based classes about 90 minutes daily.

There are three distinct course categories: STEM topics, the arts, and the humanities. The intensive course and the broad-based course must come from two separate categories.

When the selection form is published (TBA), you will see that you are to select five intensive and five broad-based classes in order of preference.

Now it is time to read about your choices and make a list that you can use for registration.

INTENSIVE COURSES

Humanities

1. Yes, Your Honor

Like to debate? Thinking about law school? Ever binge-watched Law & Order and thought you would make a good trial attorney? If any of those apply to you, or you're just interested in learning about legal advocacy, check out this class!

This course will allow students to engage as attorneys in a mock lawsuit from beginning to end. Students will meet with "clients," uncover information about the case, and negotiate with opposing counsel in an effort to reach a settlement. The class will end with a full-blown mock trial. The lawsuit will involve the issue of cyber bullying, so students will be given the opportunity to examine how the digital world intersects with America's legal system.

No prior experience with mock trial or civics is needed – just come ready for a class that will be fast-paced, hands-on, and that will better your ability to advocate for someone who needs your help!

2. Rights. Wrongs. And in-betweens.

A beautiful, spirited, smart, rowdy, three-ring circus. That may be the best way to describe this class.

In it, we'll tackle virtually every hot button issue of our time and debate it with the Bill of Rights as a background. Those first 10 amendments to the Constitution, together with the 14th Amendment, ensure the right of every American to a fair trial, free speech, religious choice and due process among many other rights.

The Bill of Rights also fits naturally within our theme. Just one example, we all know online can be a mean environment. What rights are in play? What freedoms are at stake? What should young leaders be doing to balance expressive freedom with responsibility?

It would be fair to say the majority of Americans and certainly most high schoolers don't fully understand and appreciate all of our rights and freedoms. Even members of the Supreme Court disagree with each other about what they mean. Just how extensive is the right to bear arms? Is the death penalty cruel and unusual punishment? How do we square individual privacy with national security? Those are just a few of the myriad of discussions we'll have.

Be warned, even though respect for others and what they think is a requirement, the class might be noisy on occasion and possibly even approaching raucous because students are encouraged to bring the full force of their convictions to class. It is not for the mild mannered.

The class won't tell you what to think. Its goal is merely to get you thinking, talking and appreciating the opportunity to hear what your intellectual peers think. The class is a natural for students interested in law, journalism, religion, history, political science or any number of other college majors.

3. Shaping Reality: Constructing the World through Art, Literature, and the News

Do you see the world differently than other people do? Are these other people wrong? Are you? How is it possible that you can see the world one way and I can see it differently but we both think we're correct? Is it possible that we are both correct? In this course, we'll examine our slippery grasp of reality, looking at how people depict the world in art and literature, how a storyteller might, as Tom says in *The Glass Menagerie*, use "tricks" to "give you truth in the pleasant disguise of illusion." And we'll look at depictions of current events in the media. By the end of the course students have a better sense of the ways in which we each construct our own sense of reality and what happens when these realities conflict.

4. BEST Discoveries to Survive the Existential Threat to Society Arts: Movement Communication

Explore yourself as an incredible functioning machine! Enjoy a fun, healthy and intellectually analytical approach as you connect your body, mind and emotions through movement communication. Body language, visual art and music communication will be examined as powerful communication tools that are being used to express and manipulate within the digital world. No prior dance or movement is needed! This movement is a result of what each individual's body and mind has to offer instantly. Class discussions will follow as the special collaboration between the communicator and the viewer is experienced. This is an opportunity for one of the BEST (Body, Energy, Space, Time) experiences possible to aid you in having a healthy, well-rounded benevolent life! Bring clothing that will be comfortable to move in and let's get started!!!

5. Analyzing the Marvel Cinematic Universe through Digital Humanities

In our digital age, the analysis of pop culture has been democratized and the digital mediums through which the average person can present their opinions and perspective about the latest film release or television show has grown significantly. Digital genres such as podcasts, vlogs, and video essays offer their own creative and analytic possibilities. With that in mind, this course will explore and examine the films of the Marvel Cinematic Universe and consider how to develop insights through various digital media.

STEM Courses

6. Exploring Engineering Design Today: A Case Study

Learn how everyday products are designed and manufactured. In this course you will learn how to connect your analytical left-side brain with your creative right-side brain through the design process. In this course you will experience a collection of interesting and fun exercises and projects to learn how the engineer of today solves design problems.

7. There's an App for That

If you're like most students, you use "apps" on a daily basis. New apps are popping up so rapidly that the Apple Company trademarked the tagline "There's an app for that" to market its App Store. Have you ever thought about creating your own app? App is simply short for application, or software program application. In this class, you will be introduced to fundamental programming logic concepts using complete, real-world apps programmed in the Visual Basic (VB) language. By the end of the course, you will apply the programming concepts learned to ultimately create your own app.

8. Discrete Math, Competition Math and the Math of Casinos squire

Is math almost too easy for you? Do think you need more of a challenge in your math classes? If so, this class is for you. We will examine some advanced math ideas that are the basis of your digital world.

Every device you use has to be programmed, and the math behind that is discrete math. Discrete math is also used frequently in brain teasers, math competitions, and in college level mathematics. We will focus our studies on theoretical underpinnings discrete mathematics, combinatorics and even some calculus – topics much more difficult than those in a standard high school math curriculum. We will also look closely at casino games and the math behind them.

9. Can we predict the future? Using the convergence of statistics, big data, and computing to make significant estimates of future occurrences.

Are you interested in forecasting future events? In particular, would you be interested in acquiring the skill to help you forecast the result of sports and games, electoral contests, the weather, or the likelihood of a stock performing? If you are, then this class is tailor made for you. After taking the class, you will have acquired the knowledge and skill to collate, clean, analyze, and understand archival data; you will then be able to make future projections based on any trends you observe from the data analysis.

10. Programmer's Paradise

Programming is one of the most valuable skills an emerging adult can have in our society. Even more valuable than this skill are the thought processes and perspectives on life gained through the use of programming. No matter what your interests are, being able to have a mindset of a programmer will allow you to approach all aspects of life more logically, allowing you to achieve whatever goals you may have. While learning how to use the programming language MatLab, we will be examining real life scenarios from perspectives that aren't necessarily visible at first glance. By having the ability to see issues from multiple perspectives you will have gained an invaluable advantage over anyone or anything that comes to hold you back from achieving your dreams.

The Arts

11. Art in the Age of the Interwebs

Over the past 30 years, the internet has radically changed our way of life—from how we shop, make friends, and share experiences. The interwebs has changed almost everything about our culture...including ART! This class will look at the changes in contemporary art that have developed alongside the rise of the internet, and examine our understanding of identity, privacy, community, and space, through an artists' lens! We'll also look at art that is intentionally unplugging – and succeeding! Come make ART with us! #itsgonnabegreat #topulgorunplug #toconnectordisconnect #artintheageoftheinterwebs!

12. Music and Power from Beethoven to Beyoncé

Classical music has long been held as a moralistic pursuit; the works of Beethoven, and Mozart are not just “good,” they’re “good for you.” But who says? Why can't Beyoncé be just as good for the soul as Mozart? Students in this class will explore the tastemaking processes that led to formation (and veneration) of the classical music composers with special attention to the ways power dynamics—especially tensions between majority and minority groups—continue to shape how music is discussed today.

More specifically, four main objectives frame the course: 1) To examine the ways nationalism has shaped and continues to shape twentieth- and twenty-first- century history (Beethoven's music became an especially dark propagandist tool during WWII, but today serves as the European Union's national anthem); 2) To learn to recognize opinions- expressed-as-facts (that “Beethoven is great,” for example); 3) To explore the ways politics still inform how we hear music today (why is Beethoven's music so much “better” than Beyoncé's?); and perhaps most importantly: 4) To practice thinking carefully and with complexity about the ways power relationships continue to frame today's political conversations, especially at the

level of social advocacy. In the end, students will harness their critical thinking skills towards developing their own advocacy campaigns. What issues are important to you? Whose voices might be underrepresented in today's digital age and in what ways are they marginalized?

13. The Theatre Of Knowledge and “The Digital World”

Come prepared to work as a team to promote a cause of your choice. What is knowledge? What is its purpose? How and why do we acquire and attempt to record and transfer it? How and why do we attempt to control it? How and why do we use – and misuse – it? How and why do we lose it? What are its limits? What are its costs and liabilities? What is the connection between intelligence, education, and knowledge? What is the connection between knowledge and power? How does knowledge differ from wisdom? Are there things we can – but shouldn't – know?

Pull back the curtain to consider these questions – and more – as we examine a variety of plays (in a variety of styles), including works by Christopher Marlowe, Henrik Ibsen, and Suzan-Lori Parks, all with an eye toward sustainability and all exploring the nature and function of knowledge throughout history and in our digital world today. Along the way, we'll also meet the authors who wrote them, examine the issues and events that helped inspire them, and consider the ways in which our relationship to knowledge continues to evolve.

14. Dysgital Fictions

Does fiction feed reality or reality feed fiction? This course will examine dystopian digital narratives in sci-fi films to try to answer that question. Computers have made the travel of our fictions into realities: through space (*2001: A Space Odyssey*), into virtual worlds (*Tron*, *Ready Player One*), alternate realities (*The Matrix*), and even through time (*Primer*). Viewing these films as texts, we will explore how science fiction movies tell stories about computer interactions, what that means for human convenience, and how those narratives have changed over time. What do these films tell us about ourselves, our fears, and our dreams? Perhaps we will make one of our own to find out.

15. Creative Writing for the Digital Media

In the media world, content is king. How does the creative writer translate their ideas into shareable content? This course explores creative writing from poetry to creative nonfiction and how our words can be crafted into audio visual projects. Starting with pen and paper, we will produce good, powerful writing and learn how to translate that into exciting multimedia content.

Broad-Based Courses

The Arts

1. From Selfie to Self Expression

In 2013 “selfie” was announced as the word of the year by the oxford dictionary, and in many ways, represents the epitome of contemporary culture’s transition into a highly digitalized and technologically advanced age...but selfies aren’t new to the 21st century, they’re just easier to create now!

#thankssmartphone #portraitmode #nofilter #trending #latergram everyoneisaphotographernow. Selfies have become a social phenomenon, an industry and regular form of expression. Simply documenting our lives with selfies is no longer enough, but a greater sense of ourselves can be projected to the world using these tools. This course will examine the past, present and future possibilities of the selfie, and we’ll also put those selfie skills to good use!

2. Electric Ears: A Brief History of Digital Music and Its Consumption

Do you love the soundtrack to *Stranger Things*? Have you set your phone to play your favorite alerts? Could you live without iHeartRadio or Spotify underscoring the background of your life? Digital music and computer-generated sounds weren’t always the norm. This class will explore the science behind digital sound production and its history, from early electronic experiments to psychedelic sounds of 60s rock to the age of the keytar and beyond. We will also examine the shift in how people consume music, including why your grandparents would likely never stream Drake or the Chainsmokers

3. Creative Writing in a Digital World

This is a course for writers of any genre at any level. If you’ve never written a story, or if you’ve been writing for years, this course will provide a structure and a space in which you can push your skills in fiction, nonfiction, poetry, drama, graphic narrative, or any genre you choose. We’ll look at examples of writing we admire and talk about how it works. We’ll share writing of our own. We’ll explore the ways in which digital formats affect our definition of what literature actually is and where we can find it. (or have the ears for them), and what happens to sound when it is digitized. Like how that sounds

4. Make Some Noise: Popular Music and Political Advocacy

This class focuses on political protest and Civil Rights advocacy during the Vietnam War. We’ll explore moments like Jimi Hendrix’ performance of the national anthem at Woodstock and the release of Aretha Franklin’s “Respect” to learn how people have harnessed “noisy” sounds, visuals, and texts as political tools in history. In the end, students will produce a podcast that examines politically charged music from their own time and place. What is today’s protest music? What do its sounds reveal about the expectations—sonically or socially—of contemporary listeners? And what does it claim needs to change in today’s digital age?

5. Do You Really Want To Know? – Three Plays of “Forbidden Knowledge”

In this course, we will consider the never-ending human quest for knowledge. First, we'll explore the mythological and religious concept of “forbidden knowledge.” Then, we'll read, watch, and discuss several plays that bring science to the stage as they address that concept in different historical, intellectual, social, and technological contexts. Together, these plays will help us consider a range of essential questions related to our own complicated relationship with knowledge in an ever-changing digital world.

What is knowledge? What is its purpose? What makes some knowledge “forbidden”? How and why do we acquire and attempt to record and transfer knowledge? How and why do we attempt to control (and even manipulate) it? How and why do we use – and misuse – it? How and why do we lose it? What are its limits? What are its costs and liabilities? What is the connection between intelligence, education, and knowledge? What is the connection between knowledge and power? Are there things we can – but shouldn't – know?

Along the way, we'll also meet the authors who wrote the plays and examine the issues and events that helped inspire them. We'll read. We'll watch. We'll discuss. We'll debate. We'll ask questions. And maybe, just maybe, we'll even find some answers.

6. Examining Star Wars: Influences and Extrapolations

What could possibly be more fun than watching a good *Star Wars* film? Well, analyzing the films (both the good ones and the not so good ones), discussing them with friends and fans, and creating your own work inspired by *Star Wars* can sometimes be just as fun and fulfilling. In this course, we examine the works that influenced the *Star Wars* films and create our own digital texts inspired by *Star Wars*.

Students in this class will examine and create political messages by participating in a mock election. Students will learn about the different approaches that political actors use to influence elections, and will then test their creativity and oral advocacy skills by coming up with messages of their own. We will touch on issues regarding political law, issue advocacy, and how the changing digital world is impacting the electoral process.

The Humanities

7. Don't Shoot the (Political) Messenger

In 1928, Herbert Hoover became president using the campaign slogan “A chicken in every pot. A car in every garage.” Eighty years later, Barrack Obama entered the White House after receiving the support of a YouTube video that sang: “I've got a crush on Obama.”

This class will allow students to examine and create political messages like these by participating in a mock election. Students will learn about the different approaches that political actors use to influence elections, and will then test their creativity and oral advocacy skills by coming up with messages of their own. We will touch on issues regarding political law, issue advocacy, and how the changing digital world is impacting the electoral process.

8. The Old One-Two Punch

Fair warning. This class, based on the first and second amendments to the Constitution is bound to upset you at least a couple of times. You'll get mad at your professor, mad at your classmates and maybe even mad at yourself.

The First Amendment comprises a mere 45 words, but those words protect our most basic freedoms: religion, speech, press, assembly and petition. They make us the envy of the world, but they are much debated here at home.

Likewise, the Second Amendment has led to any number of debates about what it means and what it protects when it comes to the right of the people to keep and bear arms.

This class won't shy away from those debates. We'll embrace them, and it is likely to lead to some wild, loud and free-wheeling classes especially since our digital world has opened up so many questions. But our founders left us with a gift, and that gift is your right to voice an opinion. They had great debates as they determined the path for this country. We'll have great debates as we plot our way forward.

Freedom of religion versus nondiscrimination policies. National security versus freedom of the press. Right to protest versus public safety. Our debates will be ripped from today's headlines. It'll be so challenging and fun, you'll be mad if you didn't sign up for it.

9. Escape! Addiction! Recovery through Best!

Experience a fun, healthy and intellectually analytical approach to understanding your body as a high functioning scientific machine. The class will learn a series of physical movement exercises that can be used to sustain health through life. Various types of movement, sound and visual communications will be explored through your own body as you explore manipulation. This examination of specific energies, use of space and time will lead to individual response shared with the group to reflect on issues concerning digital escapism, addiction and manipulation. No prior movement or dance experience is needed! Get ready for an adventure that you might just feel is one of the BEST (Body, Energy, Space, Time) of your summer! Bring comfortable clothing to move in and let's get started!

10. Introduction to Digital Media

We are constantly streaming video content to our phones, computers, and televisions, wading through hours of video content daily. But what is it? How is video created? What techniques can we employ as critical viewers to understand video? And, how can we create it ourselves? We will watch, examine, and discuss a variety of interesting video texts and try our hand at introductory video editing.

11. Today vs. Tomorrow: The Inevitability of Change and the Role of Creative Destruction

The course is open to all students irrespective of discipline and subject preference. It is equally useful to every type of student whether science oriented, humanities oriented or arts oriented. If a blurb for the course was to be made, it may read as follows:

Are you interested in a dialogue on the dichotomy between Today and Tomorrow? Would you be interested in getting more aware about the underlying reason for innovation and change? If you are, then this class is for you. After taking the class, you will become more familiar with Creative Destruction and know a lot more about Charles Schumpeter, who popularized the term in his study of, and work in, economics.

12. Intro to Discrete Math: Symbolic Logic, Set Theory, and Probability

Did you know there is more to math than addition, multiplication, polynomials, and graphs? Discrete mathematics is not usually covered much in high school, but it includes logic and arguments. In this class, we will examine the fundamentals of symbolic logic. We will take arguments, analyze them, and decide whether they are valid or not. We will look further at how to improve our own arguments made in speeches, papers, and casual conversation. We will also learn mathematics related to set theory, probability and expected value. These topics are used in programming digital devices, games, and nearly every academic discipline.

13. An Introduction to Technology and Mathematical Preparedness for College

Today's student has been born into a world of technological advances and devices. However this technology will not overcome many of the difficulties that students encounter at a college level. While technology can help students, it doesn't cure the other issues that will challenge students. These issues will be addressed and reduce the difficulty of transitioning to the expectations and demands of College programs. This class will make you aware of the many opportunities in technology, help you overcome mathematical and algebra stumbling blocks, and give you helpful tips on how to succeed in college.

14. Living in a Digital World: A Look at Emerging "Smart" Technologies

Do you ever wonder what the future holds? IBM provides predictions for you with 5 in 5 - five technology innovations that will change the way we learn, work, live and play within the next five years. Recent predictions explore the future of artificial intelligence and the idea that everything will "learn". Imagine if your house could learn to maintain itself, or your car could learn to drive itself, or your classroom could get to know you to determine the best way to teach you. This course explores the evolution of technology and the pathway to this new era where machines learn, reason, and engage with us in a more natural and personalized way. The effects of technologies on society will also be examined

15. I'm Not Ready to Grow Up

It is simple to swipe a credit card. It is not as simple to understand how its interest rates are calculated, how credit scores are computed or how to determine if you can really afford that new phone. School is filled with algorithms and arithmetic that seem to have minimal use outside of the classroom. This course is designed to introduce us to numerous ways math will be encountered in our lives and others. From investing in the stock market, to getting a job, to buying a house, we will explore and understand how these processes work, from a logistical

perspective as well as a financial one. Knowledge and preparedness are so important to living a fulfilling life. By educating ourselves on some of these aspects of our life, we can better predict and shape our future for the better.