

Kansas City Academy  
High School Course Description Overview  
Updated May 2020

**English Department**

**ELA 9**

**ENG-9**

Prerequisite:

Required for all 9<sup>th</sup> graders

When Offered:

Full Year Course

Course Description:

Students will develop essential high school-level literacy skills including the reading of literature and informational text; writing of memoirs, essays, and research papers; practicing grammar, spelling, and punctuation; and practicing speaking-and-listening skills. Students read classic and contemporary world literature along with nonfiction essays and multimedia selections. Students work along with the teacher to assess their learning, which is demonstrated through tests, writing assignments, class presentations, projects, and participation.

Teaching/Learning Style:

The class is conducted in a variety of modes including direct instruction, independent work, collaborative work, and discussion.

Credit:

.5 English per semester

**ELA 10**

**ENG-10**

Prerequisite:

Successful completion of English 9, Required for all 10<sup>th</sup> graders

When Offered:

Full Year Course

Course Description:

This course continues the development of essential high school-level literacy skills begun in 9<sup>th</sup> grade including the reading of literature and informational text; writing of memoirs, essays, and research papers; practicing grammar, spelling, and punctuation; and practicing speaking-and-listening skills. Students read classic and contemporary world literature along with nonfiction essays and multimedia selections. Students work along with the teacher to assess their learning, which is demonstrated through tests, writing assignments, class presentations, projects, and participation.

Teaching/Learning Style:

The class is conducted in a variety of modes including direct instruction, independent work, collaborative work, and discussion.

Credit:

.5 English

**American Literature**

**ENG-Am Lit**

Prerequisite:

Junior or Senior Standing

When Offered:

Semester 1 and/or 2

Course Description:

This course will explore the theme of “The American Dream” through the study of novels, poetry, short stories, and drama.

Teaching/Learning Style:

Text required. Ideas will be explored through daily reading, frequent writing assignments, lecture, class discussion, group work and films.

Credit:

.5 English per semester

**Gothic Literature****ENG-Goth Lit**

Prerequisite:	Junior or Senior standing
When Offered:	Semester 1 and/or 2
Course Description:	Are you intrigued by haunted spaces, vampires, ghosts, and psychological thrillers? If so, this is the course for you. Since the eighteenth century, Gothic tales have influenced fiction writers and fascinated readers. This class examines the origins, major themes, and common elements found in Gothic literature. We will study the themes of terror versus horror, the power of the supernatural, and the struggle between good and evil. We will look at how early Gothic works are still influencing horror writers and filmmakers today. By the end of the course, students will gain an understanding of and an appreciation for the complex nature of Gothic literature.
Teaching/Learning Style:	Text required. Class time will be spent in lecture, discussion and peer interaction. Daily reading, frequent writing assignments, and tests.
Credit:	.5 English per semester

**Creative Writing – Fiction****ENG-Creat Wrt**

Prerequisite:	Open to students in grades 9-12
When Offered:	Semester 1
Course Description:	This course will serve as an introduction to creative writing, focusing on short fiction. We will cover various long and short texts from 1900-present. Students will have required reading weekly, reading discussions, and response papers. We will discuss genre, fiction writing, and the editing process. Students will create a portfolio at the end of the semester. Students will be required to write short fiction pieces of their own and participate in editing workshops.
Teaching/Learning Style:	Students will work with the instructor to assess their own work. Learning will take place through direct instruction, discussion, writing exercises, critical reading, assessments, personal exploration, and interaction with peers.
Credit:	.5 English

**Special Topics in Literacy****ENG-ST Lit**

Prerequisite:	Open to students in grades 9-12
When Offered:	Semester 2
Course Description:	This course is designed to introduce students to the structure and understanding of non-traditional publications. Students will gain knowledge of the history behind graphic novels, comics, zines, and other non-traditional print media. Students will read and create their own texts.
Teaching/Learning Style:	Students should be prepared for 2-3 reading assignments each week, along with reading response papers and reading discussions.
Credit:	0.5 English

**Ancient World History**

**SS-World Hist 1**

Prerequisite:

Recommended for 9<sup>th</sup> Grade

When Offered:

Semester 1 and/or 2

Course Description:

This course examines the development of human history around the globe from the origins of humankind through the Middle Ages. Students will explore the development of, and interactions between, peoples, states, civilizations, and empires. Among the topics we will examine are the rise of cities, the evolution of technology and navigation, the development of communication and language, the importance of agriculture, the rise and fall of empires, the evolving conduct of warfare, and the emergence of intellectual thought and local and world religions.

Teaching/Learning Style:

Students will be expected to learn through hands-on projects, weekly reading assignments, projects, and a capstone research paper each semester.

Credit:

.5 Social Studies

**Modern World History**

**SS-World Hist 2**

Prerequisite:

Recommended for 10<sup>th</sup> Grade

When Offered:

Semester 1 and/or 2

Course Description:

This course studies world civilizations from the sixteenth century to the present, beginning with the Protestant Reformation. The central focus of the course is on technological, political, cultural, intellectual, and social revolutions and their impact on the modern world. We will examine the human experience through the analysis of first-hand accounts. We will explore power struggles, inequalities, and social divisions of ethnicity, class, and gender. Students will develop original projects that demonstrate understanding of the mentality behind the French Revolution, the cultural isolation of Tokugawa Japan, the competing political ideologies of modern nations, and the goals of propaganda during the First World War.

Teaching/Learning Style:

Students will be expected to learn through hands-on projects, weekly reading assignments, projects, and a capstone research paper each semester.

Credit:

.5 Social Studies

Credit:

.5 Fine Arts or Social Studies

## **United States History**

## **SS-US Hist**

Prerequisite:

Junior or Senior standing or permission of instructor – required for graduation

When Offered:

Full Year Course

Course Description:

**Semester 1** – A survey of early American history beginning with migration of early peoples to the continent and concluding with the end of Reconstruction. Additional topics that will be covered in this course include the Colonial Period, the American Revolution, the development of the Constitution, Jacksonianism, Westward Expansion, the Border War, the Civil War, and the Civil War in memory.

**Semester 2** – A survey of modern American history beginning with the Gilded Age and concluding with the end of the Cold War. Additional topics that will be covered in this course include rural activism, industrialization, urbanization, the Progressives, the rise of the American Empire, the 1920's, the Great Depression, World Wars I & II, the 1950's, and the Civil Rights Movement. Special consideration will be given to issues of race, class, and gender in American history, as well as the inclusion of cultural history.

Teaching/Learning Style:

This course will feature both lectures and discussion, with occasional viewing of films. Students must be prepared to read outside of class and take notes in class. Grades will be based on projects, quizzes & examinations, and participation.

Credit:

.5 Social Studies per semester

## **American Government**

## **SS-Govt**

Prerequisite:

Junior or Senior standing or permission of instructor – required for graduation

When Offered:

Semester 1

Course Description:

"All politics is local" is one of the maxims of political wisdom. We will follow that advice as we approach our study of the laws and the people who formulate them from the ground up. We will focus on individuals who have dedicated their lives to making a difference.

Teaching/Learning Style:

This class will focus on a hands-on approach through a variety of projects and activities in addition to text assignments and lecture/discussion.

Credit:

.5 Social Studies

## **Economics & Finance**

## **SS-Econ**

Prerequisite:

Junior or Senior standing or permission of instructor – required for graduation

When Offered:

Semester 2

Course Description:

This course is a basic introduction to economics and personal finance. The following topics will be covered: supply and demand; opportunity cost; monetary policy; interest and interest rates; credit; market structure; and the stock market. The course will explore these ideas through the creation and execution of a business plan.

Teaching/Learning Style:

A combination of lecture and hands-on projects will be utilized for this course.

Credit:

.5 Social Studies or Practical Arts

**Algebra 1A**

**MA-Alg 1A**

Prerequisite: Department Recommendation  
When Offered: Full Year Course  
Course Description: This course has been specially designed to increase student engagement and offer a hands-on exploration of a variety of math topics with an emphasis on algebra. Students will develop connections between concrete, representational, and abstract mathematical concepts.  
Teaching/Learning Style: Text required. Group instruction, teacher-directed, daily homework assignments, and hands-on discovery methods  
Credit: .5 Math per semester

**Algebra I**

**MA-Alg 1**

Prerequisite: Strong computational skills including fractions. Pre-Algebra or Department Recommendation  
When Offered: Full Year Course  
Course Description: Students will acquire skills in working with integers, translating real-life problems into algebraic equations, solving linear equations, graphing, and working with inequalities, polynomials and rational expressions.  
Teaching/Learning Style: Text required. Group instruction, teacher-directed, daily homework assignments, and hands-on discovery methods  
Credit: .5 Math per semester

**Geometry**

**MA-Geom**

Prerequisite: Algebra 1  
When Offered: Full Year Course  
Course Description: Students will be introduced to inductive and deductive methods of reasoning. They will acquire basic vocabulary and factual information about geometric and spatial relationships using discovery methods and conjectures. They will concentrate on the most practical and frequently used theorems in geometry. This course is required for all students. It is an important course to take prior to the PSAT, SAT and ACT tests.  
Teaching/Learning Style: Text required. Group instruction, teacher-directed, daily homework assignments, group and individual projects, and discovery activities.  
Credit: .5 Math per semester

### **Advanced Algebra**

Prerequisite:

When Offered:

Course Description:

Teaching/Learning Style:

Credit:

### **MA-Adv Alg**

Algebra 1 and Geometry

Full Year Course

Students will work on units dealing with algebraic functions, graphing, matrices, and the quadratic, exponential and logarithmic functions. Students will strengthen and extend their algebraic skills and will develop their ability to apply creative and analytical thinking to mathematics. This course is a required course for college-bound students.

Text required. Group instruction, teacher-directed, daily homework assignments, group and individual projects, and discovery activities.

.5 Math per semester

### **Advanced Math Topics**

Prerequisite:

When Offered:

Course Description:

Teaching/Learning Style:

Credit:

### **MA-Pre Calc / MA-Calc**

**Pre-Calculus:** Completion of Advanced Algebra with a letter grade of “C” or better  
**Calculus:** Instructor’s permission

Full Year Course

**Option 1: Pre-Calculus** – Students will explore topics of functions, analytic geometry, trigonometry and vectors. These topics are typical of a pre-calculus course. This course is highly recommended for any college-bound student. Students who expect a college program that will require college algebra or calculus are highly encouraged to take this course in order to prepare themselves for the rigor of college mathematics.

**Option 2: Calculus** – With permission, a student that has taken the pre-calculus topics may sign up for an additional year for an introduction to Calculus. Calculus is required for many majors in college. Exposure to Calculus in high school is highly recommended for those students.

Text required. Group instruction, teacher-directed, daily homework assignments, group and individual projects, and discovery activities.

.5 Math per semester / Advanced Core Elective

**Biology 1**

**SC-Bio 1**

Prerequisite:

Required for all 9<sup>th</sup> graders

When Offered:

Full Year Course

Course Description:

Biology is the study of living organisms and their interactions with each other and their environment. We will be looking at these interactions from an ecological perspective since ecological understanding will be crucial in solving some of the problems present today. Some of the themes we will explore are ecology, energy, evolution, genetics, cell theory, homeostasis, and reproduction. Cooperative learning, field work on the prairie, varied assignments, and educational technology will be used to help students fully develop their understanding.

Teaching/Learning Style:

Text and lab notebook required. Experiments, discussion, reading, lectures, and research will all be elements of the class.

Credit:

.5 Science per semester

**Chemistry**

**SC-Chem**

Prerequisite:

Successful completion of Algebra 1, recommended for college-bound students

When Offered:

Full Year Course

Course Description:

This class will focus on developing a model of matter that will explain increasingly complex observations. Beginning with very simple observations (such as sugar dissolving in water), we will progress in an historical fashion to the point where we can explain more complex observations, such as burning alcohol. This course is based on the Modeling Instruction Program at Arizona State University, designated as exemplary in 2001 by the U.S. Department of Education.

Teaching/Learning Style:

Laboratory work, small group problem-solving, group discussion, lectures and simulations will be included. Much of the important ideas will be developed through discussion of laboratory work.

Credit:

.5 Science per semester

**Env Science/Sustainability SC-Env Sci**

Prerequisite: Biology

When Offered: Full Year Course

Course Description: Environmental science and sustainability (ES&S) is a course intended to build understanding of scientific processes and concepts to prepare high school students to seek solutions to problems that they are likely to face in their lifetime. ES&S is designed to build an interest in the sciences, and allow students the opportunity to connect what they are learning with class to real-world issues and problems. The integration of the two will take place through the use of extensive laboratory activities and field trips to various sites. Some of the topics discussed will include climate change, species conservation, energy sources, and how to create a more sustainable environment.

Teaching/Learning Style: Text and digital resources will be used. The course will include reading, writing, group discussion, projects, construction of evidence-based arguments, design and execution of scientific studies, and the use of conceptual and mathematical models.

Credit: .5 Science per semester

**Physics SC-Physics**

Prerequisite: Geometry, Advanced Algebra (may be taken concurrently if necessary)

When Offered: Full Year Course

Course Description: Physics is a fascinating subject matter that strives to find the fundamental patterns of nature. By understanding these patterns, predictions can be made that could ultimately make cars safer or take us to Mars. In this course, students will be guided in the process of finding and applying these patterns, the laws of physics. With an emphasis on the study of motion, students work collaboratively to design, carry out, and analyze experiments that lead to important laws of physics. Students develop problem-solving skills as they apply these laws to new situations. They are required to present and defend their solutions to their classmates. This course is based on the Modeling Instruction Program at Arizona State University, designated as exemplary in 2001 by the U.S. Department of Education.

Teaching/Learning Style: Students will participate in laboratory work, discussion and student presentations. Each student must have a scientific calculator. Students' learning will be assessed with tests and projects.

Credit: .5 Science per semester



**Intro to World Languages**

**FL-World Lang**

Prerequisite: None

When Offered: Full Year Course

Course Description: In this class, we will look at languages from many different angles. We will explore different languages (including spoken, written and sign languages). We will look at lost languages, rules of language, acquisition of language and development of language. Culture is an important aspect of language so we will also look at several different cultures. Students will come out of this class with a broad view of the role language plays in the world, our lives and how it shapes us (or we shape it).

Teaching/Learning Style: We will use different sources including TED lectures, current novels, fiction and non-fiction, films,

Credit: .5 Foreign Language per semester

**French**

**FL-French 1 / FL-French 2 / FL-French Adv**

Prerequisite: Class Placement per Instructor Assessment

When Offered: Full Year Course

Course Description: The five goals of the national standards of foreign language learning, - communication, cultures, connections, comparisons and communities - are implemented in KCA French classes. This means we focus on what and how students learn. We stress communication within a cultural context. Students engage in conversations, presentations, written and spoken French. Students also work on reading and comprehension through grammar and vocabulary by putting pieces together in meaningful and purposeful ways.

Teaching/Learning Style: Teacher led instruction occurs individually as well as in small groups throughout the course. There is an expectation of nightly review and 3-4 nights per week of homework. There are 4-6 quizzes per chapter as well as a Chapter Exam for each Chapter. We will cover 6 chapters per semester.

Credit: .5 Foreign Language per semester

## Fine Arts Department – Visual Arts

### **Studio Art 2-D**

### **FA-2D**

Prerequisite:

None

When Offered:

Semester 1 and/or 2

Course Description:

This course is designed to expose students to a variety of two-dimensional mediums through elements of art and principals of design to create portfolio-quality work. Mediums may include drawing, painting, printmaking, photography and collage. Assignments will range from traditional drawing from observation to more nonobjective assignments. Students will revise and reflect on their work and participate in class critiques.

Teaching/Learning Style:

Studio class, teacher directed, hands-on, class discussion, and critiques

Credit:

.5 Fine Arts per semester

### **Studio Art 3-D**

### **FA-3D**

Prerequisite:

None

When Offered:

Semester 1 and/or 2

Course Description:

This course is designed to expose students to a variety of three-dimensional mediums through the elements of art and principals of design to create portfolio-quality work. Mediums may include clay, plaster, paper, mixed media, wood, and found objects. Assignments will range from traditional representational sculptures to more abstract ideas. There will be an emphasis on additive, subtractive process as well as more experimental construction processes. Students will focus on revision and reflection and will participate in class critiques.

Teaching/Learning Style:

Hands-on, studio class

Credit:

.5 Fine Arts per semester

### **Portfolio Prep**

### **FA-Port Prep**

Prerequisite:

Instructor Permission, Written Proposal, Completion of One or More High School Art Courses, High School Standing

When Offered:

Semester 1 and/or 2

Course Description:

Portfolio Prep is offered to High School students who intend to pursue Art as part of their post-high school plans. Emphasis in the course includes portfolio development, artist statement development, regular critiques, work documentation, post-secondary opportunities, and the application process.

Teaching/Learning Style:

Hands-on learning, teacher directed, individual work

Credit:

.5 Fine Arts per semester

## Fine Arts Department – Theatre

### **Theatre Study**

### **FA-Theatre**

Prerequisite:	none
When Offered:	Semester 1 and/or 2
Course Description:	This course is a buffet of theatre: some acting, some tech, and some history... a sampler for those who want to try something new and juicier stuff for those who are coming back for more.
Teaching/Learning Style:	Hands-on learning, teacher directed, group and individual work
Credit:	.5 Fine Arts per semester

## Fine Arts Department – Music

### **Studio Music**

### **FA-Studio Music**

Prerequisite:	Prior musical training and audition will secure placement
When Offered:	Semester 1 and/or 2
Course Description:	Students accepted into this music program are placed in one or more electric bands and spend class time learning how to perform with each other, allowing students to develop their own unique musical sound (voice) while learning how to interact with others musically. Student songwriting, creativity, and collaboration are strongly encouraged. Concerts are performed toward the end of each semester and highlight the effort put forth by the student musicians.
Teaching/Learning Style:	Rehearsals are led by the music instructor in collaboration with the students.
Credit:	.5 Fine Arts per semester

### **KCA Singers**

### **FA-Singers**

Prerequisite:	Instructor Approval
When Offered:	Semester 1 and/or 2 (after school option)
Course Description:	This a cappella singing group meets after school 2 days per week to hone their vocal skills and develop performance-ready pieces which are presented each semester as part of the KCA Music Showcase. This is a graded class (P/F) with grades based on attendance, participation and effort. The class is open to both Middle and High School students on a space available basis (limit 12).
Credit:	.25 Fine Arts per semester for students in grades 9-12

## Physical Education Department

### **Health & Fitness**

### **PE-Health/Fit**

Prerequisite:

None

When Offered:

Semester 1 and/or 2

Course Description:

This class is designed for students to understand the importance of a healthy lifestyle. Students will learn correct body mechanics, through safe, functional, fun movements. Class includes elements of weight lifting, body weight movements, running, jumping rope, and more. Additionally, yoga (breathing), flexibility, agility, balance, and coordination are addressed in this class. These are skills and strategies that can be applied for a lifetime!

Teaching/Learning Style:

Teacher led. We work as group to encourage one another.

Credit:

.5 Physical Education per semester

## Practical Arts

### **Culinary Arts**

### **PA-Culinary**

Prerequisite:

None

When Offered:

Semester 1 and/or 2

Course Description:

The class will be comprised of basic essentials of cooking. We will begin by learning proper knife skills and knife cuts, as well as food safety and sanitation. We will then move into cost control, menu development and product identification. The importance of nutrition and sustainability in cooking will be discussed, and we'll practice some basic cooking techniques. Curriculum will emphasize the ideas behind the food and Bistro Kids' philosophy of using fresh, local ingredients and seeing food with respect, but also with a creative outlook. Class Limit: 4 per section

Teaching/Learning Style:

Instructor-directed, hands-on learning. Projects may require group and/or individual work.

Cred:

.5 Practical Arts per semester

### **Yearbook**

### **PA-Yearbook**

Prerequisite:

none

When Offered:

Semester 1 and/or 2

Course Description:

This is a hands on course in which students will deepen their business knowledge as they create a final project-The KCA Yearbook. This will be designed as a business opportunity to learn more about starting a business, publishing, advertising, cross-training and design. Special attention to business skills in reading, writing and editing are central to this class.

Teaching/Learning Style

This is a product-driven course with timely, creative production of consistent and accurate content in collaboration with your co-learners. A combination of instructor direction, discussion, assessments, and meeting deadlines

Credit:

.5 Practical Arts per semester

**TA - Teacher's Assistant****PA-TA**

Prerequisite:

Teacher's permission

When Offered:

Semester 1 and/or 2

Course Description:

The student will assist his/her assigned teacher in preparing materials for instructional activities. Duties may include photocopying, organizing instructional materials, preparing laboratory activities and creating worksheets.

Credit:

.5 Practical Arts per semester

**Culinary Assistant****PA-CA**

Prerequisite:

Teacher's permission

When Offered:

Semester 1 and/or 2

Course Description:

The student will student will learn food safety and sanitation skills as an assistant to the Bistro Chef/Instructor. Duties may include kitchen cleaning, wrapping, labeling and dating food for storage.

Credit:

.5 Practical Arts per semester

**Senior Seminar****SR-Seminar**

Prerequisite:

Senior Status – required for graduation

When Offered:

Full Year Course

Course Description:

A major aspect of the guiding philosophy of KCA is to prepare future adults for responsible participation in their society by encouraging diversity, dialogue and understanding, responsible freedom, critical thinking, and an awareness of global interdependence. This seminar is an opportunity for KCA seniors to get involved with a social justice issue they are personally passionate about and experience what it means to live the traits listed above.

Teaching/Learning Style

In this required seminar, students will participate in and lead discussions on readings, give presentations, research a social justice topic of their choice, write reflections and an extensive research paper, and develop and implement a personal social justice project. The work done for this seminar will be presented as part of students' Senior Passages which is required for graduation from KCA.

Credit:

.5 Practical Arts per semester