



## CAPSTONE ELECTIVE COURSES & DESCRIPTIONS

### Upper School

In addition to the Capstone Core that makes for a vigorous intellectual life, the elective courses below enhance a complete classical education. During each semester of high school, each department listed below will offer *select* courses from their field. Some of these courses are designed to go a full year (2 semesters), but philosophers may take only one half / 1 semester of the course where indicated. By the time a philosopher is a senior, they will have a chance to take multiple classes in each department based on their interests. Some courses have necessary prerequisites due to their nature with sensitive topics or responsibility needed to succeed.

### HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY

#### **Battles that Shaped Western Civilization**

Philosophers will study 15 of the most significant battles that shaped Western civilization. Emphasis will be on competing civilizations (East/West), ideologies (Democracy/Fascist), and “brothers” (English Roundheads/Cavaliers). The imaginative discoveries of “What if?”, driven by “Why?”, will hone philosopher imaginations and train them to recognize the conditions under which such conflicts have occurred, and perhaps will again. 1 credit (2 semesters)

#### **The Crusades**

While it is fashionable to paint the Crusades as a form of Western arrogance, philosophers will study the complex socio-economic and religious web of centuries of fear, war, pestilence, and devotion collectively called “The Crusades”. The virtues and vices of each side, and the enduring effects to East/West relationships, will be emphasized. ½ credit class (1 semester) or 1 credit (2 semesters).

#### **The Mediaeval World**

Moving beyond our general European history (500-1815) course, philosophers will investigate the artistic, socio-political, technological, and religious developments of European society between the collapse of the Western Roman Empire and the Renaissance. Interactions with Eastern Rome and the intellectual vibrancy of the period will be through direct engagement with the various works of the period. Prerequisite: 10th grade (Philosophers may take this concurrently with the general European history, 500-1815 course.). A philosopher project will count as 25% of the final grade. 1 credit class (2 semesters).

#### **The Pre-Modern Philosophers**

Long: 10 selected philosophers from the ancient to pre-Enlightenment eras, representative of major developments in the field as measured by their enduring legacy and cultural impact, will be examined through their biographies (who they were) and most significant work (and 1 minor work where applicable). Studied in abstraction, philosophers will be persuaded as to the significance of these figures in Western Civilization, and enabled to critique their views against the timelessness of Christian philosophy with Christ as the solution to the One and the

Many, the Already-Not Yet, as the supreme Wisdom hidden from the Ages but now revealed to us through the Scriptures. This course counts as a theology or history credit. ½ a credit (1 semester) or 1 credit (2 semesters) class.

### **History & Philosophy Independent Study**

Philosophers may request an independent, faculty-guided study of an author, ideology, or movement in any historical era focusing on primary documents. Prerequisite: 10th grade and faculty recommendation. ½ a credit (1 semester) or 1 credit (2 semesters).

## **ENGLISH**

### **Science Fiction**

Are things getting better or worse? Science fiction's attempts to answer this question is a form of literary and philosophical prophecy which philosophers will learn to analyze and anticipate through its four general eras: pre-industrial, industrial, modern, and post-modern/digital. Major authors and ideas that dealt with cosmology, theology, anthropology, and ethics will be examined with a final philosopher short-story counting as 25% of the final grade.

Prerequisites: parental permission and teacher recommendation. ½ a credit (1 semester) or a 1 credit (2 semesters).

### **Creative Writing and Journalism**

In the Fall creative writing semester, philosophers will learn to steward their creative abilities through active faculty coaching and informal peer review of poetry, short stories, and a final novella (worth 25% of their grade). In the Spring journalism semester, philosophers will learn to plan, design, and deliver a journal of philosopher work that goes through peer and faculty review before publication. Prerequisite: completion of 9th grade. ½ a credit (1 semester) or a 1 credit (2 semesters).

### **Great Speeches and Rhetoric**

The best speeches in Western history, judged on their initial impact and/or enduring legacies (not length), will be heard and analyzed in class, shaping philosopher's affections to what is virtuous, or what is not. The Fall semester will focus on ancient and mediaeval rhetoric; the Spring will focus on early Modern to the 21st century. ½ a credit (1 semester) or a 1 credit (2 semesters).

### **American Plains Literature and Oral Traditions**

The beauty and grit of the Plains inhabitants, from the indigenous peoples to Western settlers, has left an enduring legacy in the art and sensibilities of those who have inherited their place. Philosophers will develop an intensive appreciation for the hardships of the land, the wisdom of those who shaped the Plains, and the virtues and vices of decisions made through time. Willa Cather, Dee Brown, Laura I. Wilder, and others will enrich the Socratic discussions. ½ a credit (1 semester) or a 1 credit (2 semesters).

### **Independent Study (Author intensive)**

Philosophers may request an independent study of a single author or work from an author's corpus. Pre-approved authors are: Fitzgerald, Hemingway, Aquinas, Augustine, Faulkner, Poe, Welty, Christie, Twain, Wharton, Franklin, O'Connor, C. S. Lewis, selected Puritan authors, Steinbeck, Hawthorne, or a Bronte sister. Other authors will be included, or existing ones removed, depending on available faculty. If a religious author is chosen, this class may also

count as a Theology ½ or full credit. Prerequisite: successful completion of 10th grade and faculty recommendation letter.

## THEOLOGY

### **Christ and the Psalms (required)**

Are the Psalms about me? Are they obsolete? For millennia, God's people have embraced the Psalms as the God-blessed language of song, prayer, and exaltation of the Savior. This class will train philosophers in the language and purpose of the "Psalter", equipping philosophers for a life of richer devotion towards Christ, for whom every psalm was written to anticipate, prepare, or celebrate. 1 credit (2 semesters).

### **Latin and Greek Patristic Fathers**

To enrich philosophers' appreciation for how the Holy Spirit has preserved the Church through time, philosophers will study and discuss major thinkers, ideas, and interpretive approaches of the early Latin and Greek-speaking churches as they struggled to speak of the Christ revealed as God and Man. The class will alter years between the Latin/Greek figures, allowing a deep understanding of why we believe what we believe regarding the Doctrine of God in particular. Prerequisite: completion of Latin 4 or Greek 3 with an 80%, *or* teacher recommendation for philosophers who have not taken Latin 4 or Greek. ½ (1 semester) or 1 credit (2 semesters). This class may also count as a history credit.

### **Mediaeval Church Debates**

Using primary texts and guided discussions, philosophers will study the major mediaeval debates and figures, learning the causes and effects of both, in such a way that the "dark ages" are revealed as a period of vibrant intellectual growth. The critical foundations of modernity will be studied, especially those of nominalism/realism, scholasticism/pietism, church/state relations, church divisions (East/West, and Catholic/Protestant), and Christianity/Islam "borrowings" and opposition. A final project will count as 25% of the total grade. ½ a credit (1 semester) or 1 credit (2 semesters).

## LANGUAGES

\* Modern language offerings are based on faculty abilities. These are subject to change. Those marked with an \* are what we anticipate offering during the 2025-2026 academic year. Those without an asterisk we hope to offer. We will have foreign language clubs based on philosopher interest and faculty availability.

### **\* Modern Language I: Introduction to German**

Philosophers will receive a basic introduction to German history, culture, and language and become proficient in essential grammar and syntax along with 80% of the most frequent vocabulary words and grammatical constructions. Through immersive experience, skills of speaking, listening, reading, and writing in German will be practiced with the goal of rapid language acquisition and preparation for intermediate German. Philosophers who desire to complete Capstone German should take this class in 9th grade. 1 credit (2 semesters).

### **Modern Language 2: Intermediate German**

Philosophers will advance their listening, speaking, and reading skills through conversational practice of previous skills, acquisition of the remaining 20% of the most frequently used words and grammatical constructions, and an introduction to extended readings and speeches in the German language. Prerequisite: 75% or higher in German I or German teacher recommendation. 1 credit (2 semesters).

### **Modern Language 3: German Reading and Speech**

Philosophers will build on Intermediate German skills through class (audible) current events and historical readings and speeches, with portions of great German works memorized and recited, enabling comfort with, and speed of, language use. Prerequisite: 75% or higher in Intermediate German or teacher recommendation. 1 credit (2 semesters).

### **Modern Language 4: German Speech and Research**

Philosophers will experience advanced use of German through ongoing projects, designed and executed with their peers, covering an integration of subject fields (history, politics, logic, art, music, economics, etc.) as they learn to research and comb through German cultural texts and resources. Final projects, counting as 25% of their final grade, will be presented to one another in German. Prerequisite: 75% or higher in German 3 or teacher recommendation. 1 credit (2 semesters).

### **\* Modern Language 1: Introduction to Modern Standard Arabic**

Philosophers will receive a basic introduction to the history, culture, and language of the modern Middle East through the lens of Modern Standard Arabic and become proficient in essential grammar and syntax along with 80% of the most frequent vocabulary words. Skills of speaking, listening, reading, and writing in Arabic will be practiced with the goal of rapid language acquisition and preparation for intermediate Arabic. 1 credit (2 semesters).

### **Latin 4**

### **Latin 5**

### **Latin 6**

### **Greek 1: Grammar I**

Using Bill Mounce's groundbreaking [\*Basics of Biblical Greek\*](#), Philosophers will cover the first half of Koine (biblical) Greek grammar, from basic nouns to the present middle/passive indicative verb formation (chapter 18 of the 4th edition). Prerequisite: completion of 9th grade. ½ a credit (1 semester). This course can also count as ½ a language elective.

### **Greek 2: Grammar 2**

Using Bill Mounce's groundbreaking [\*Basics of Biblical Greek\*](#), philosophers will cover the second half of Koine (biblical) Greek grammar, from future active / middle indicative verb formation (chapter 19 through 36 of the 4th edition) to non-indicative moods and μτ verbs. Prerequisite: 80% or higher in Greek I. ½ a credit (1 semester). This course can also count as ½ a language elective.

### **Greek 3: Exegesis I**

Using Dan Wallace's companion text ([\*Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics\*](#)), philosophers will learn basics of exegetical skills and have a growing understanding of verbal aspect and its impact on New Testament translation, which philosophers will practice using the First Letter

of John in the New Testament. Prerequisite: 80% or higher in Greek 2. ½ a credit (1 semester). This course can also count as ½ a language elective.

#### **Greek 4: Exegesis 2**

Using Dan Wallace's companion text ([\*Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics\*](#)), philosophers will learn basics of exegetical skills and have a growing understanding of verbal aspect and its impact on New Testament translation, which philosophers will practice using either Colossians or Philippians (their choice) from the New Testament. A final project on a select passage from their letter choice will count as 25% of their grade. Prerequisite: 80% or higher in Greek 3. ½ a credit (1 semester). This course can also count as ½ a language elective.

#### **Greek 5: Investigative Reading**

Philosophers will sharpen their Greek skills by an examination of portions of the New Testament letter Romans (Fall) and Greek extant primary sources from the [Loeb Classical Library](#) (Spring) and Patristic fathers. Various supplemental reference texts (e.g., dictionaries, syntactical guides, etc.) will assist philosophers in translation exercises. Prerequisite: 80% or higher in Greek 4. 1 credit (2 semesters). This course can also count as 1 credit of a language elective.

## **CAREER AND TECHNICAL SKILLS**

#### **Introduction to Business and Business Ethics**

Philosophers will be introduced to major issues, and become novice navigators of, principles of profit, charity, and risk inherent in virtuous business practices. Case studies, panel discussions, and teacher-guided projects will ground philosophers in basic philosophies and practices of modern business that honors God and loves others. ½ a credit (1 semester)

#### **Trades 1-3**

Philosophers may choose from a technical "hands-on" trade, which will be offered based on faculty and local community assistance. Establishing basic skills in various common and in-demand trades will be emphasized with the possibility of moving towards job internships or apprenticeships in coordination with local business and tradesmen. Trades 1 will develop basic skills, with Trades 2 allowing practice and project-based intermediate skills. Trades 3 will connect philosophers to outside work with in-school projects available. As these courses build upon one another, 2 and 3 have obvious prerequisites. 1 credit (2 semesters).

#### **Human Dignity and Innovation**

Philosophers will learn the anthropological impact of past private and public/State enterprise with a special focus on emerging and predicted industries (e.g., A.I.) through case studies, socratic discussions, and investigative practices that increases their abilities to anticipate harmful business and practices, and create those which are beneficial. ½ a credit (1 semester) or 1 credit (2 semesters)

#### **Medical Ethics**

Philosophers will learn to question, analyze, interpret, and react to a wide range of medical innovations which do not advertise their underlying views of the human being, both body and soul. Innovations explored in this class cover the full range of life: conception, birth, health-care, and death-care. Due to the sensitive nature of this class, prerequisites include

completion of 10th grade, *and* recommendations from both a teacher and a parent. 1 credit (2 semesters).

### **Computer Science**

This is a course for philosophers with a strong interest in computer science. Philosophers will be exposed to the various aspects of both theoretical and applied computer science through laboratory exercises. Course content will illuminate the interplay between logic, mathematics, engineering, and management principles in computer science. Topics will include introductions to computer architecture, operating systems, programming constructs, networks, and distributed systems. Basic mathematical topics such as number representation, algebraic rules, and logic will also be included. Computer-related career options will be explored through an introduction to the various computer science sub-disciplines and applications of computers in science, medicine, industry, and business. 1/2 credit.

### **Programming I**

This course provides philosophers with a foundation for understanding programming languages. Fundamentals of logic, design, coding, structures, and controls will be applied through various software solutions. Careers in coding and programming will be explored. Philosophers will sharpen skills through project-based learning, teamwork, problem-solving, and project management and communication. 1/2 credit.

### **Programming II**

Philosophers will learn to program using Python and will be exposed to its applications in website development, web applications, GUI, network servers, API's, desktop apps, medial tools, and machine learning. 1/2 credit.

### **Intro to Networks and Cyber Security**

This course introduces philosophers to principles and practices of designing home and small business networks, along with an introduction to cybersecurity concepts. Philosophers will demonstrate competence through networking and lab activities. 1/2 credit.

## **SCIENCES**

### **Botany I-3**

Philosophers will put hands to what they've learned in physical science classes through soil, hybridization, and whole-system integration (soil, animal, etc.) practice. While designed to work together in a way that philosophers completing all three will have a complete working, actionable knowledge of plants, animals, and ecosystems, each class can stand alone. ½ credit (1 semester) or 1 credit (2 semesters).

### **Advanced Chemistry**

Philosophers will explore chem theory and practice various chem fields, emphasizing quantitative reasoning towards chemical systems. Classroom investigations and laboratory experiments will enhance theoretical understanding through applications of the scientific method. Teacher-led discussions and philosopher reflections about chemical and scientific limits, and predictions for future applications in environmental and industrial processes, will

be emphasized. Prerequisites: B or higher in Chemistry *or* teacher recommendation. 1 credit (2 semesters).

### **Advanced Physics**

This course provides further study of the fundamental principles governing the physical world through classroom and laboratory investigation and experimentation, from electromagnetism to the growing field of quantum physics. Philosophers will learn the principles behind current theories and how to formulate experiments that test them; lab will be critical to hands-on investigation of physical laws and precise analysis of data. Prerequisites: B or higher in Physics and Calculus *or* teacher recommendation. ½ credit (1 semester) or 1 credit (2 semesters)

### **Anatomy and Physiology**

A&P is an advanced science course for philosophers who desire greater understanding between structure (anatomy) and function (physiology) with some discussion over ethical issues related to biomedical developments. Explorations of major organ systems will occur through classroom and lab activities alongside historical investigations of scientific advancement in ways that encourage gratitude and joyful stewardship of the human body under God's providential hand. Prerequisites: Biology and Chemistry *or* instructor recommendation. 1 credit (2 semesters).

### **Advanced Biology**

Philosophers will explore greater depth in biological principles and processes in the life sciences. Investigations in molecular biology, genetics, creation/evolution, biotechnology, ecology, and cellular physiology will increase philosopher awareness and gratitude of the vast wisdom of the Creator and the power of God's preserving and providential Hand alongside ethical considerations of theories and technologies related to the biomedical field. Special guest teachers and lab work will complement classroom discussions and research projects. Prerequisites: B or higher in Biology or teacher recommendation. ½ credit (1 semester) or 1 credit (2 semesters).

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

### **Weight Training**

Philosophers will learn the basics of anaerobic exercises, including fundamentals of weights with the major muscle groups, powerlifting, relative and explosive strength training, and bodyweight training. Philosophers will learn how to set appropriate goals based on individual need, how to manage a strength-training program within and without a weight room, and how to connect training to broader life goals. Grading will be based on philosopher progress through their pre-designed and adjusted personal program. ½ a credit (1 semester)

### **JV-V Athletics**

Philosophers competing in a JV or Varsity Capstone sport may receive physical education elective credit with the approval of the Athletics Director and Upper School Dean and maintaining of academic and behavioral eligibility. ¼ credit. (After school hours).

### **Personal Wellness**

Philosophers will learn how to plan and maintain anaerobic, aerobic, and nutritional health programs through a combination of in-class instruction and field-training. philosophers will develop an individualized plan for growth in all three areas and will be guided, and graded, on their successful execution of that plan over the semester. ½ a credit (1 semester), but available every semester.

## **THE ARTS**

### **Music Theory and Composition**

Philosophers will study the fundamentals of music: pitch, rhythm, meter, and tonality. They will explore harmony as it relates to melody and practice writing counterpoint with composition in original music of multiple styles for a variety of instruments and voices. 1 credit (2 semesters).

### **The Golden Gryphon Choir**

Philosophers will experience and learn to create the beauty of a cappella and accompanied choral music. Through an emphasis on music theory, philosophers will practice musical design and delivery through composition and presentation, singing their own original compositions. This course satisfies the prerequisite for entry into The Capstone Choir (11th & 12th grade). 1 credit (2 semesters).

### **The Capstone Choir**

Advanced ecclesiastical and secular choral pieces will be studied and presented in annual concerts and trips. Through analysis of theory, historical compositions, acoustical/ environmental considerations, and the choir's respective voices, philosophers will learn to steward the rich gifts God has given them for the sake of benefiting their neighbors with auditory beauty. 1 year of Golden Gryphon Choir *or* teacher recommendation. 1 credit (2 semesters).

### **The Golden Gryphon Band**

Philosophers will experience the beauty of, and learn gratitude for, multiple styles of instrumental music by a chronological, historical progression through the Western musical canon. Occasional comparisons to other musical styles will highlight the beauty of their own tradition, and the value of others added to it. This course satisfies the prerequisite for entry into The Capstone Band (11th & 12th grade). 1 credit (2 semesters).



### **The Capstone Band**

Philosophers will continue to hone their play and appreciation towards multiple styles of instrumental music by a performance-based class, including large and small group, and solo, performances. These will express love towards, and the value and beauty of, music to our Capstone community and our F-M neighbors. Prerequisite: 1 year of Golden Gryphon Band or teacher recommendation. 1 credit (2 semesters).

### **Arts 1: Pen and Pencil Media Projects**

Philosophers will learn the possibilities of simple pens and pencils taken for granted in daily life. Long-term observation and duplication of still lifes and Great Plains landscapes will increase philosopher appreciation of the beauty of what God has given them in the simplicity of their everyday surroundings. Various techniques, from shadowing to pointillism, will deepen philosophers' observational and creative skill. ½ credit (1 semester) or 1 credit (2 semesters).

### **Arts 2: Calligraphy and Architectural Design**

Philosophers will learn to observe, analyze, and replicate the beauty in historic word design and modern typography, then redesign and create their own. Special attention will be given to how architectural and technological design and use went hand-in-hand with choices in font and style. The Spring semester will focus on in-depth philosopher projects of exterior and interior design, with calligraphic and typographical choices that tell the story of their design. ½ credit (1 semester) or 1 credit (2 semesters).

### **Arts 3: Three Dimensional Art**

Philosophers will learn to plan and execute short and long-term artistic projects in various media, from ceramics to wood carving. By March, philosophers will begin work on their final project which will be viewed during the final week of school and judged, as anonymous submissions, by the Headmaster. Prerequisite: completion of 9th grade. 1 credit (2 semesters).

### **Arts 4: Studio Art**

Philosophers will plan a cohesive portfolio of various media and projects that communicate a story to the observer. Through teacher guidance, experience with concept art and storyboards, and collaboration with another Capstone department of each philosopher's choice, philosopher art will display a range of artistic expression over a grand idea or concept learned through their Capstone experience. Portfolios will be on display, and recognized for excellence by the Headmaster and Deans, at the Spring art show. Prerequisite: completion of 10th grade and 2 other art classes, *or* art teacher recommendation if previous classes have not been completed. Prerequisite: Art 1, 2, or 3. 1 credit (2 semesters).

## MATHEMATICS

### **Finite Mathematics**

Philosophers will have a more intensive experience with finite math than available in the more general math courses with special emphases on abstract mathematics for non-STEM math heavy fields like computer science, programming, game theory, and other concepts. Systems of linear equations and inequalities, matrices, linear programming, mathematics of finance, elementary probability and descriptive statistics, will be covered. 1 credit (2 semesters).

### **Statistics**

This course introduces philosophers to the methods of gathering, organizing, and interpreting data. Philosophers will learn how to describe patterns and departures from patterns, how to plan and conduct a study, how to explore random phenomena using probability and simulations, and how to estimate population parameters and test hypotheses. A graphing calculator is required. Prerequisite: Algebra II. 1 credit (2 semesters).