

Course Selection

2019 - 2020

RISING JUNIORS AND SENIORS

ST. THOMAS HIGH SCHOOL

SPRING 2019



What to expect

- Today, we are providing you with an overview of information to assist you as you begin thinking about courses for next year.
- Your counselor will call you in over the next few weeks to go over your course selection in detail.
- Please know that we start working with rising seniors and then we will move on to rising juniors. It may take us a little time, but we promise when it is your turn, you will have our full attention.
- We have a lot of information to cover, and we will likely answer some of your questions as we go along. We are happy to answer any lingering questions at the end.

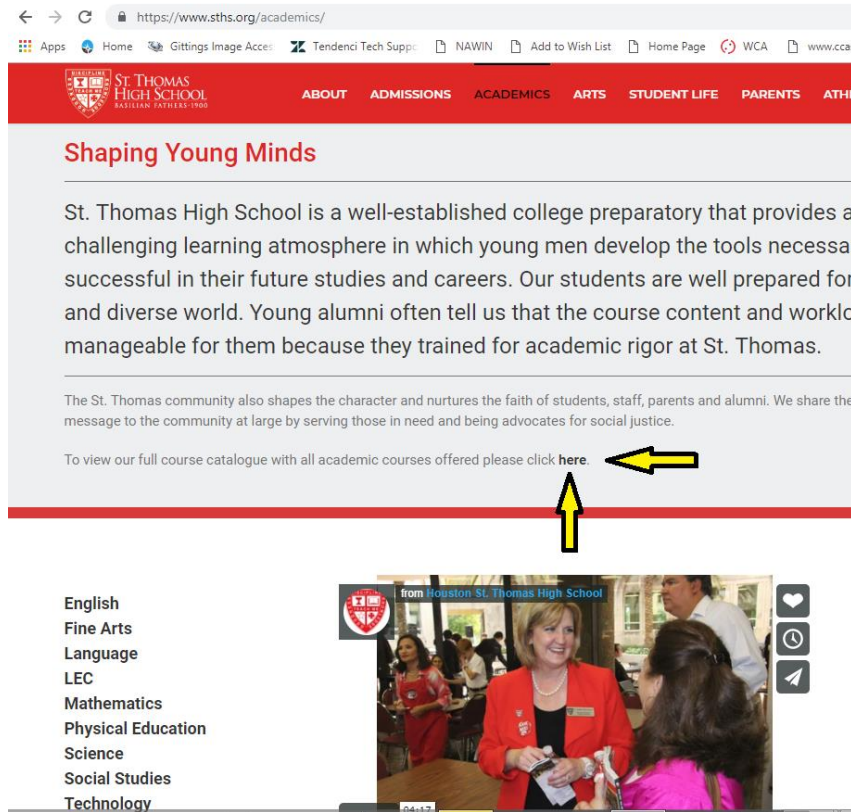
Course Catalogue

All course offerings and their prerequisites are listed in the STH Course Catalogue.

- The catalogue can be found by going to <http://www.sths.org>, clicking on “Academics” and then the link that says **“To view our full course catalogue that includes all academic courses offered, please click [here](#).”**

You should review this catalogue with your parents prior to meeting with your counselor and come ready with specific questions.

Course Catalogue



The screenshot shows the St. Thomas High School website's Academics page. The browser address bar displays <https://www.sths.org/academics/>. The navigation menu includes links for ABOUT, ADMISSIONS, ACADEMICS, ARTS, STUDENT LIFE, PARENTS, and ATHLETICS. The main heading is "Shaping Young Minds". The text describes the school as a college preparatory institution. A yellow arrow points to the word "here" in the sentence: "To view our full course catalogue with all academic courses offered please click [here](#)." Below the text is a list of academic categories: English, Fine Arts, Language, LEC, Mathematics, Physical Education, Science, Social Studies, and Technology. To the right of the list is a video player showing a woman in a red blazer, with a caption "from Houston St. Thomas High School".

<https://www.sths.org/academics/>

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ST. THOMAS HIGH SCHOOL
BASILIAN FATHERS 1908

ABOUT ADMISSIONS ACADEMICS ARTS STUDENT LIFE PARENTS ATHLETICS

Shaping Young Minds

St. Thomas High School is a well-established college preparatory that provides a challenging learning atmosphere in which young men develop the tools necessary to be successful in their future studies and careers. Our students are well prepared for a diverse world. Young alumni often tell us that the course content and workload are manageable for them because they were trained for academic rigor at St. Thomas.

The St. Thomas community also shapes the character and nurtures the faith of students, staff, parents and alumni. We share the message to the community at large by serving those in need and being advocates for social justice.

To view our full course catalogue with all academic courses offered please click [here](#).

- English
- Fine Arts
- Language
- LEC
- Mathematics
- Physical Education
- Science
- Social Studies
- Technology

from Houston St. Thomas High School

SCHEDULE REQUIREMENTS

- **All students are required to take 8 classes.**
- **7 must be for credit, and 1 may be a Study Hall.**
- **For all seniors, any outstanding credits needed for graduation must be selected before any other electives.**
 - **2 semesters of PE**
 - **1 semester of Health**
 - **2 semesters of Fine Arts**
 - **2 semesters of Technology**
 - **1 semester of Speech or Forensics**

SCHEDULE REQUIREMENTS

Schedules **are more individualized** in 11th and 12th grades.

The following is a typical outline:

JUNIORS

Theology III

English III

U.S. History

Mathematics

Science

Technology Elective

PE or Band

Study Hall

SENIORS

Theology IV

English IV

Government/Economics

Mathematics

Science

Elective

Health/Fine Arts

Study Hall/Eagle Pass

STUDY HALL/EAGLE PASS

- It is highly recommended that all students have a Study Hall, especially with difficult upperclassmen course loads and simultaneous college applications.
- **EAGLE PASS** will take the place of Study Hall for any seniors who qualify based upon their grades.
 - A 3.8 cumulative gpa is required
 - If your cumulative gpa goes from below 3.8 to 3.8 or above after first semester of senior year, you can earn Eagle Pass for second semester!
- During **EAGLE PASS**, students must remain on campus, however, they do not need to report to a classroom.

QUALIFICATION FOR COURSES

Your course placement and eligibility are determined by your **first semester** grades. You must **maintain** eligibility with your second semester grades.

Course prerequisites can be found in the online course catalog.

Prerequisites are **exact**, so a B- would not meet the requirement for a B.

What if I do much better second semester than first semester?

- If you do not currently qualify for a course and wish to be reconsidered based upon your second semester grades, you must see your counselor between **May 1st-May 15th**. No consideration will be given before that time, and you must make the exact grade necessary or higher.
- It is **YOUR responsibility** to take the initiative during this designated window of time.

ADVANCED COURSES

Students must have taken the prerequisite coursework listed in the course catalog and have maintained the required grade in order to take Advanced coursework next year.

*****This works the same way in terms of eligibility based on first semester grades, necessity of maintaining grades, and the potential to be re-evaluated based on second semester grades.***

Selection of ELECTIVES

- ❖ Electives are courses that are taken outside of your core coursework, but they are just as important!
- ❖ Electives are a great way to explore your interests and/or show colleges a concentrated interest in a subject area.
- ❖ In some subject areas, you can take more than what is required if it is an area of interest (extra science, technology classes, etc.).
- ❖ Students may not take more than 1.5 credits of PE.
- ❖ You will need to choose **two alternates** for your electives just in case a class will not work for your schedule, becomes full, or if it does not garner enough interest to be offered.

THEOLOGY

- † Theology III is a full year, just as Theology I and Theology II were.
- † Seniors take one semester of Theology IV: Living as a Disciple of Christ in Society.
- † The other semester, seniors choose a Theology elective:
 - † **Healing Racism**
 - † **World Religions**
 - † **The Holocaust in Christian-Jewish Dialogue**
 - † **Philosophical Foundations**
 - † ***Advanced Sacred Scripture***
 - Carries extra weighted point for gpa
 - Requires approval of the Dean of Theology
 - Dual-credit through the University of St. Thomas
 - \$350 course fee paid to the university
 - The academic credit *may* be accepted at other colleges and universities in addition to UST

FOREIGN LANGUAGE

Although only 2 years of the same foreign language are required for graduation, taking at least 3 years of the same language is **STRONGLY** recommended for selective college admissions.

- Students must meet the course prerequisite in the 2nd year of a foreign language in order to take a 3rd year of that language.
- All French, Latin, and Mandarin classes in the 3rd and 4th year are Advanced/AP classes.
- Spanish III and IV are offered at both regular and Advanced/AP levels.

Students who have fulfilled at least two years of the same language are allowed to take a new language as an elective if they wish to do so.

- You must have earned a B- or better in your second year of foreign language to begin taking a new language as an elective.

New in Foreign Language

AP Latin IV

- ❖ Full-year course
- ❖ Must take AP exam in May
- ❖ Must have made a B- or better in Advanced Latin III and receive approval from your teacher

ENGLISH

To move from regular to advanced:

- Rising Juniors: Must have made an A- or better in the first semester of English II and receive teacher recommendation to move into AP English Language and Composition
- Rising Seniors: *** NEW! For AP English Literature and Composition, placement will be based on teacher recommendation and analysis of a writing sample.

To remain in Advanced/AP:

- Rising Juniors: Must have made a B or better in first semester of Advanced English II and receive teacher recommendation
- Rising Seniors: *** NEW! For AP English Literature and Composition, placement will be based on teacher recommendation and analysis of a writing sample.

ENGLISH ELECTIVES

All courses are one semester unless otherwise noted.

- Creative Writing
- Contemporary Research
- Graphic Novels
- Intro to Journalism
- Photojournalism
- Publications (full year)
- Journalism (full year)
- Forensics I, II, III, and IV (each are a full year)

HISTORY

In the History department, you may qualify to take AP History in 1 of 2 ways:

- 1. You are currently in AP History and made a B or better first semester
- 2. You receive a passing score on the placement test
 - If you are currently in AP History and made a B- or lower first semester OR you are currently in regular history, you must take and pass the AP History Placement Test for the course that you wish to enroll in.

****You cannot be reconsidered for AP History based on semester 2 grades alone.

HISTORY ELECTIVES

- US in Conflict
 - US in World Affairs
 - Warfare in Antiquity
 - Introduction to Legal Studies
- ** Seniors only*

MATHEMATICS

- Math prerequisites for specific classes and qualifications vary from course to course, so it is important to consult your course catalogue for the requirements.
- Remember that you will be placed based on Semester 1 grades. If you meet the requirements for a different course at the end of second semester and would like to be reconsidered, you must take the initiative to see your counselor between **May 1st and May 15th**.

*** AP STATISTICS ***

AP STATISTICS

- Full-year course offered for Juniors and Seniors
- Introductory, non-calculus-based college course in statistics
- Introduces major concepts and tools for collecting, analyzing, and drawing conclusions from data
- May be taken as a Junior or Senior elective
- May also be taken to fulfill the mathematics requirement for Senior year .

SCIENCE

- Science prerequisites for specific classes and qualifications vary from course to course, so it is important to consult your course catalogue for the requirements.
- All eligible students should take Physics by the time they graduate to remain most competitive for college admissions.
- Students are able to take more than one science class as an elective as long as they meet the course prerequisites.

PHYSICS CHOICES

- **Physics** – This course is an introduction to high school Physics
 - Emphasizes development of deep conceptual understanding of various topics in mechanics and beyond.
 - Math utilized in this course are limited to Algebra and Geometry.
- **Accelerated Physics**- Faster paced, deeper introduction to high school Physics
 - Also emphasizes development of deep conceptual understanding of various topics in mechanics and beyond.
 - Math utilized in this course extend to Algebra II and Trigonometry.
- **AP Physics I and AP Physics II**

Any students interested in STEM careers/majors should aim to take Accelerated Physics or AP Physics I/AP Physics II if eligible

*** SCIENCE elective***

APPLICATIONS OF ENGINEERING

- One semester elective (will not count as a science course for graduation requirements)
- Hands on course that is great for those who think they may want to explore Engineering as a course of study in college.
- Introduce students to problem-solving methods utilized by engineers using mathematically and scientifically based methods.
- Summer pre-work required for students to research project concepts and ideas.

HEALTH

- Now being offered in the summer for **original credit**
- Offered during both June and July summer school sessions
- Limit 20 students per session (40 total)
- First come, first serve
- Required course for graduation
 - If you are a rising senior who has not taken Health, you **must** take it either over the summer or during senior year
 - Rising juniors cannot take Health during the school year
- Allows for more flexibility in your class schedule by taking care of a graduation requirement in the summer!

HEALTH

Another incentive for taking Health over the summer:

- If your schedule allows for it, as a SENIOR, you may have an extra study hall for one semester at the beginning or end of the day, which will allow you to come to school late or leave school early.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION (PE)

- All students must have 1.0 credit (2 semesters) of PE to graduate
- Band will count as your PE credit
 - If you are in Band for at least 2 full years, you will have covered all PE and Fine Arts!
- 2 years of playing a varsity sport or playing at the varsity level junior year will count as 0.5 credits of PE.
- You cannot take more than 1 semester of PE per year, and you cannot take more than 1.5 semesters of PE while at STH.
- If you are a rising senior and you have not completed 2 semesters of PE/Band or 1 semester of PE and 2 years of a varsity-level sport, you must take PE next year.

TECHNOLOGY

You must take two semesters of technology courses to graduate.

- This includes Computer Applications if taken at STH or two other technology classes if you placed out of Computer Applications.
- Students may take additional technology classes as electives

All technology courses are one semester unless otherwise designated.

***Broadcast & Video Production**

-Limited to the first 40 students who sign up

***Web Design and Management**

***Advanced Computer Science I**

***AP Principles of Computer Science** (Full Year)

***Photojournalism**

***Publications** (Yearbook)-Full Year

***Robotics**

***Computer Science I**

***EBN**-Full year

***AP Computer Science A**-Full Year

***Introduction to Journalism**

***Digital Graphics**

***Journalism** (Newspaper)-Full Year

TECHNOLOGY

New Course

AP Principles of Computer Science: A survey course for those who think they may be interested in computer science and engineering to gain a broader understanding of the varied skillsets and applications to different majors and careers.

- *Full year course*
- *Required to take AP test in May*
- *Receives weighted grade point*

Topics include: how the internet works, the impact of computers on society, cyber security, and programming

FINE ARTS

- You must have 2 semesters of Fine Arts to graduate.
 - They do not need to be from the same art discipline.
- You may take as many different fine arts classes as you wish that will fit into your schedule.
- All fine arts courses are one semester long unless designated otherwise.
- Fine arts courses are offered in the areas of
 - Visual Arts
 - Music
 - Drama/Film
 - Journalism

FINE ARTS- VISUAL ARTS

- Ceramics I, II, and III
- Drawing I and II
- Printmaking I and II
- Digital Graphics I and II
- Special Problems/ Independent Study
 - Must receive permission from the teacher in that discipline (Mr. Nebel or Ms. Nguyen)

SPECIAL PROBLEMS/ INDEPENDENT STUDY

- ❖ Open to dedicated art students in their senior year
- ❖ Explore challenging creative assignments to broaden artistic abilities of visual art students.
- ❖ Students' works are individualized based upon previous creative inquiry along with peer and instructor collaboration.
- ❖ Student and supervising teacher work together develop scope and sequence of the course, projects, and portfolio.
- ❖ *Prerequisite: Recommendation of the supervising teacher and completion of the highest level of art class.*

FINE ARTS- MUSIC

All Music courses are a full year unless designated otherwise.

- Beginning Band (one semester)
 - Will go into Band at 7:00 AM second semester
- Band
- Jazz Band (requires approval of Mr. Thoede)
- Orchestra
- Music History (one semester)
- Vocal Ensemble
- AP Music Theory (requires approval of Mr. Wilson)

FINE ARTS- DRAMA/FILM

All Drama/Film courses are one semester

- Theater I
- Theater II
- Tech Theater
- Tech Theater II
- Theater III: Original Production
- Film Studies

New in FINE ARTS

Tech Theater II

- One semester elective
- Hands-on continuation to the designing, crafting, and execution of theatrical productions
- Project-based course
- Required to participate in all semester productions
- Prerequisite: Tech Theater I

New in FINE ARTS

Theater III:Original Production

- One semester elective
- Develop a one-act play from start to finish
- Focus on character development, significance of settings, thematic development, writing dialogue, and creating dramatic scenes.
- Technical instruction will include operation of sound and light boards, spotlights, and mastery of industry standard technology.
- Students will perform their plays at the end of the semester.
- Prerequisite: Theater I and Theater II or
Tech Theater I and Tech Theater II
AND the permission of Mr. Green

FINE ARTS- JOURNALISM

- Introduction to Journalism
- Photojournalism
- Publications (Yearbook)- Full Year
- Journalism (Newspaper)- Full Year
- Journalism I and Photojournalism are 1 semester courses with no prerequisites
- Publications and Journalism require prior experience or having taken one of the courses listed above. All students must also have approval from Mr. Nash.

FORENSICS/SPEECH

You must have at least one semester of Speech to graduate.

SPEECH

- One semester introduction to public speaking course
- Learn to prepare & deliver speeches for a variety of public speaking situations as well as the basics of debate.

FORENSICS I (Not CSI!)

- Full year course geared towards students interested in competitive speech activities
- Study various debate formats & extemporaneous speech along with research methods and persuasive writing
- Course requirements include assistance with the Junior High School Speech Tournament

FORENSICS II, III, and IV (Still not CSI)

- Full year course designed for experienced speech and debate student
- Includes analysis of current controversial issues, methods and materials of research, evidence, applied logic and reasoning, construction of debate cases and audience analysis
- *Pre-requisite: Previous Forensics course(s) in sequence and recommendation*

PARENT APPROVAL AND COURSE CHANGES

- ✓ Parents will be sent a list of your courses to approve with re-registration in March
 - If parents have questions about your courses at that point, there is still plenty of time for them to speak with your counselor.
- ✓ Courses may be changed at any point between the time you meet with your counselor and May 15th.
- ✓ **NO COURSES WILL BE CHANGED AFTER MAY 15th.**
 - Give this a lot of thought, ask questions, talk to the teachers of the courses and students taking the courses currently.
- ✓ As stated in the student handbook, we are NOT able to accommodate any requests for particular teachers, semesters that a course is taken, times of day that a course is taken, or preference of lunch time.

Next Steps

- ✓ Preview the course catalogue.
- ✓ Review potential course choices with your parents.
- ✓ Solicit the advice of teachers and students currently enrolled in courses of interest.
- ✓ Make a list of questions to ask your counselor.
- ✓ **Meet with your counselor when they call you in over the next few weeks.**
- ✓ Make all course changes by May 15th.
- ✓ Schedules will be finalized and sent to you over the summer.

Any Questions???

We are excited to work with you on selecting the courses best suited to you and your future goals!

Ms. Shipman

Ms. Wagner

Ms. Rawls

Mr. Tesone

