

Course Selection

2019 - 2020

RISING SOPHOMORES

ST. THOMAS HIGH SCHOOL

SPRING 2019



Rising Sophomores?

You are **RISING** to the next grade level

- Rising Sophomore= current Freshman

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, then rising juniors, and finally our outstanding rising sophomores (YOU). 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 with 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

← → ↻ <https://www.sths.org/academics/>

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ABOUT ADMISSIONS ACADEMICS ARTS STUDENT LIFE PARENTS ATHL

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 global and diverse world. Young alumni often tell us that the course content and workload are manageable for them because they 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**
- **The following are requirements for graduation above and beyond your core classes**
 - **2 semesters of PE (1.0 credit)**
 - **1 semester of Health (.5 credit)**
 - **2 semesters of Fine Arts (1.0 credit)**
 - **2 semesters of Technology (1.0 credit)**
 - **1 semester of Speech or Forensics (.5 credit)**
 - **.5 credit is required, but you will receive 1.0 credit for Forensics. The other .5 credit will count as an elective**
 - **2 years of the same Foreign Language (2.0 credits)**
 - **2 Electives (2.0 credits)**

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.***

Course Selection Requirements

Sophomores are required to take the following subjects:

- Science
- History
- Theology
- Foreign Language
- English
- Math
- ** *Computer Applications (1 semester)*
 - If a placement test was passed or Computer Apps is taken in summer school, you may substitute with another elective.

Course Selection Requirements

ELECTIVES

You will also take 1 or 2 *electives*, depending on the classes that you took freshman year. Sophomore year electives are designed to help us knock out graduation requirements so that you will have more choices going into junior and senior year.

- Speech/Forensics
- P.E.
- Fine Arts
- Technology

PLUS:

- Study Hall (each semester)
 - Highly Recommended
 - Note: If you take a year-long elective during the school day, you may not have a study hall.
- ❖ **Electives are courses that are taken outside of your core coursework, but they are just as important!**
- ❖ **A great way to explore your interests and help you determine areas that you would like to further study in upperclassmen electives.**
- ❖ **You will need to choose two **alternates** for your electives just in case a class will not work for your schedule or fills up.**

ENGLISH

To move from regular to advanced:

- A- in English I and teacher recommendation to move into Advanced English II

To remain in advanced

- B in Advanced English I and teacher recommendation

HISTORY

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

- 1. If you are currently in Adv World Geography and made a B or better first semester, you may enroll in AP World History.

- 2. If you earned a passing score on the placement test
 - If you are currently in Advanced World Geography and made a B- or lower first semester or you are currently in World Geography, you may enroll in AP World History if you passed the placement test and have the recommendation of your current teacher.

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

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**.

*** Summer School Geometry***

GEOMETRY is the only **original** credit math course offered in Summer School

- Taught in conjunction with the University of Texas High School online.
 - 150 hour course
 - 120 hours taken in person at STH over the summer
 - BOTH summer school sessions, 4 hours per day for 60 hours per session
 - 30 hours of coursework assigned by STH teacher to be completed in between the summer sessions
- Allows students who previously would have finished high school with PreCalculus to move on to Calculus/ AP Calculus in their senior year.
- Eligible students must earn a B or higher in Accelerated Algebra I or an A or higher in Algebra I . Students must also receive the recommendation of their teacher.
- Students will be placed into either Algebra II, Algebra II/Trig, or Advanced Algebra II/Trig based on their performance in the summer Geometry course.

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 students who took **Environmental Science** this year will take **Biology** next year.

If you took **Biology** and your first semester grade was:

- C+ or below in Biology and C+ or below in math, you will take **Environmental Science**.
- B- or better in Biology and B- or better in math, you will take **Chemistry**.

If you took **Adv Biology** and your first semester grade was:

- B or better in Adv Biology and B or better in Adv Math, and you will take Alg II/Trig next year, you will take **Adv Chemistry**
- Between a C- and a B- in Adv Biology and/or between a C- and a B- in Adv Math, you will take **Chemistry**
- D+ or below in Adv Biology and D+ or below in Adv Math, you will take **Environmental Science**

Foreign Language

- If you took a foreign language this year, you must take the same foreign language next year.
- If you did not take a foreign language as a freshman, you must choose one to start sophomore year. You will take at least two years of your chosen language.

Spanish

French

Adv Latin

Adv Mandarin

Technology Classes

COMPUTER APPLICATIONS

- Graduation requirement that can be fulfilled by:
 - Having passed the Computer Applications Placement test
 - Taking Computer Applications in Summer School
 - 3-week session in June or July
 - Space is limited. First come, first serve!
 - Taking Computer Applications sophomore year

Once you have satisfied the Computer Applications requirement, the following technology electives will be available to you as a sophomore. You must take two technology courses at St. Thomas to graduate.

Web Design

Broadcast Video Production

Robotics

Computer Science

Advanced Computer Science

Photojournalism

Digital Graphics

Introduction to Journalism

AP Computer Science Principles (full year course)

You may sign up to take one semester of Computer Apps and one semester of another tech course.

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*
- *Must have taken Computer Apps or passed Computer Apps placement test*
- *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

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!
- 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.
- 2 years of playing a varsity sport or playing at the varsity level junior year will count as **0.5 credits** of PE, so you still need to take one other semester if this is the case.
- If you did not take PE this year, it is recommended that you take it next year to free up room for electives junior and senior year.

FINE ARTS

- You must have 2 semesters of Fine Arts to graduate.
 - They do not need to be from the same art discipline.
- All fine arts courses are one semester long unless designated otherwise.
- These courses can provide a great artistic outlet in conjunction with your academic schedule.
- Fine arts courses are offered in the areas of:
 - Visual Arts
 - Music
 - Drama
 - Journalism

FINE ARTS- VISUAL ARTS

- Fundamentals of Art
- Ceramics I, Ceramics II
- Drawing I, Drawing II
- Printmaking I, Printmaking II
- Digital Graphics I, Digital Graphics II

No prior experience is necessary for Fundamentals of Art or any Level I classes.

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- See Mr. Thoede
- Jazz Band- See Mr. Thoede
- Orchestra- See Mr. Thoede
- Music History (one semester)
- Vocal Ensemble- See Mr. Wilson

FINE ARTS- DRAMA

All Drama courses are one semester.

- Theater I, Theater II
- Tech Theater I, Tech Theater II
- Level I courses require no prior experience.

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

If you did not take Speech or Forensics this year, it is advisable to take Speech or Forensics next year

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 (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: Forensics I 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

