

## **Upper School Curriculum**

Wildwood School is a unique center of teaching and learning. Our curriculum and talented staff offer every opportunity for students to discover and grow intellectually, personally, and emotionally. Our program is designed not to be delivered to students but to actively engage them in learning, stretching, and finding a home in the world of ideas. Many classes are interdisciplinary because we believe that supporting children as they make connections is vital to a nuanced understanding of the way our world works.

We invite you to read on and discover what Wildwood students and families know and expect: intellectual rigor and infinite doorways to knowledge and creativity for every mind.

### **Upper School**

Wildwood's upper school curriculum engages maturing intellects with core courses and electives. Honors courses and advanced studies are offered for students who wish to pursue additional coursework areas of special interest and abilities, and further their academic record. Upper school arts and academic electives invite students to explore their creativity and nurture talents on campus and in the community.

Advisory meets four times per week throughout the upper school. Students also enjoy opportunities to build and strengthen relationships with peers on competitive sports teams, in the performing arts, social action clubs, and science clubs and competitions.

Upper school programs include off-site internships, local and international community involvement, and senior projects, which test student initiative while engaging students in a variety of experiences beyond the classroom.

## **HONORS AND ADVANCED STUDIES**

The honors program challenges students with passion in a subject to go deeper with their work and their thinking. Honors is not simply about doing more work but about doing more sophisticated, challenging work. Students work independently—with teacher guidance—on more complex assignments.

Students who choose honors-level work receive honors designation on their transcripts after successful completion of all requirements. The following classes offer an honors level:

### **Humanities:**

The American Experience  
Western Civilization

### **History:**

Modern U.S. History  
Senior Seminar

### **Literature:**

Genre and Style  
World Literature

### **Mathematics:**

Algebra I  
Geometry  
Algebra II  
Trigonometry  
Pre-Calculus  
Intro to Calculus  
Calculus  
Calculus 2  
Statistics

### **Science:**

Conceptual Physics  
Biology  
Chemistry  
Advanced Biology  
Advanced Physics  
Human Reproductive Biology

### **World Languages:**

#### **Mandarin:**

Mandarin 1  
Mandarin 2

#### **Spanish:**

Spanish I  
Spanish 2  
Spanish 3  
Spanish 4  
Spanish 5

## **HUMANITIES**

Courses are designed to bring historic time and place to life through literature and the arts. A strong social-justice component is illuminated as students begin to wrestle with issues beyond their daily life and lean into the complex adult world. Students often work in small cooperative groups to exchange ideas, peer edit, and debate and discuss critical ideas.

In Senior Institute, classes separate into discrete literature and history courses as the rigors of college-preparatory work builds. Coursework includes an introduction to genre and style and modern U.S. history.

The senior history class provides students with an opportunity to choose between four seminar classes focusing on a particular area of social science including human rights, philosophy ethics and law, politics and government, and human rights.

The upper school humanities curriculum provides the foundation for the following skills. Individual classes support the development of additional skills as specified.

### **ESSENTIAL SKILLS:**

- Close reading strategies of literature
- Analysis of historic primary and secondary sources
- Research, including analysis of credible evidence
- Analytic and creative writing

## **Ninth Grade**

### **Humanities: Western Heritage**

Framed by the essential question, “How have ideas about what it means to be human changed over time?” students begin with the Renaissance as they read and analyze William Shakespeare’s *Comedy of Errors* and move through novels, poetry, plays, essays, memoirs, and primary and secondary sources touching on intellectual and political history around world revolutions, imperialism, and World War I. Students examine historic cause and effect, create projects for each major historic period studied, write essays on literary texts like *A Small Place* by Jamaica Kincaid, and actively engage in dynamic classroom discussions.

## **Tenth Grade**

### **Humanities: The American Experience**

Through an analysis of the essential question, “What does it mean to be an ‘American’?” students launch into a yearlong inquiry through American history and literature, which includes reading novels, poetry, plays, essays, and primary and secondary historical texts. Students consider the historic and contemporary factors that bring immigrants and others to our shores and how this plurality of cultures continues to evolve in the U.S. Student projects, essays, and classroom discussions illuminate these core questions about American lives. Readings include Howard Zinn’s *A People’s History of the United States*, classic American novels *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald and John Steinbeck’s *The Grapes of Wrath*, and the contemporary play *Fences* by August Wilson.

## **Eleventh Grade**

### **Genre and Style**

Beginning with summer reading of Kurt Vonnegut’s *Slaughterhouse-Five*, students are plunged into a modern

text and begin to grapple with authorial voice. Students then compare and analyze the “unreliable narrator” and questions of gender and race in the novels Ken Kesey’s *One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest* and Toni Morrison’s *Beloved*. Classroom conversation, personal journal writing, in-depth literary analysis, and film study complement all texts, including the culminating reading of William Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*.

**ESSENTIAL SKILLS:**

- Read and analyze literature, including close reading strategies
- Development of personal voice in writing
- Appreciation of character, authorial intent, and textual ambiguity

**Eleventh Grade**

**Modern U.S. History**

Exploring American history from World War II to the present, students are introduced to the origins of the Cold War, McCarthyism, and the U.S.’s involvement in foreign conflicts. By examining social, political, economic, and international influences, student discussions and projects focus on forces that bring about change, perspective, and polemics around America’s place in the world. Students create oral history film projects and gain insights into American foreign policy through researching a specific country, post-9/11. Throughout the course, students are coached in research practice, expository writing, and using citations for writing that will be necessary for college coursework.

**ESSENTIAL SKILLS:**

- Articulation of historical perspectives
- Connection of historic events to contemporary issues

**Twelfth Grade**

**World Literature**

How do language and literature influence culture and society? This essential question is explored through poetry, drama, and fiction. Texts explored include the novels *Brave New World* by Aldous Huxley, *Agamemnon* by Aeschylus, *Los Vendidos* by Luis Valdez, and *Paper Angels* by Genny Lim, and the play *The America Play* by Suzan-Lori Parks. Students will develop a yearlong fiction or nonfiction writing piece focused on an area of passion.

**ESSENTIAL SKILLS:**

- Develops sophisticated personal voice and perspective in analytical, creative, and personal writing
- Hones advanced level skills in rhetoric and argument including argument structure and crafting powerful conclusion paragraphs
- Continues to hone close reading strategies for all texts
- Communicates clear understanding and analysis of all evidence while communicating a clear and critical perspective that engages with the author and all aspects of the text

## **Twelfth Grade**

### **Senior Seminar**

Students explore multiple perspectives, clarify their thinking through reading, research, and class discourse with the aim of creating evidence-based solutions to local and global problems. The course emphasizes critical reading and writing, Socratic discussions, independent research, and oral and multimedia presentation. Students will apply all these methods to daily coursework and activities and a year-long project that engages them in searching for solutions to real-world problems.

The separate student-selected sections of Senior Seminar, while retaining the same emphases listed above, investigates the world through four different lenses: Environmental Change; Government and Politics; Philosophy, Ethics, and Law; and Human Rights. Students in different sections have structured exchanges and interactions with students in other sections to share their different perspectives and learnings.

### **ESSENTIAL SKILLS:**

- Research skills, including use, understanding, and analysis of credible evidence
- Connecting philosophical ideas and historic events to contemporary issues

### **Wildwood Institute for Social Good and Community Leadership (ISGCL)**

The Wildwood Institute for Social Good and Community Leadership class centers on finding ways to address challenging social issues such as poverty and unequal access to resources; cultivate in students the expertise needed for grassroots organizing; and provide them with the necessary skills to serve as nonprofit leaders, volunteers, and trustees. Students work together to unpack the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals, research social issues, identify ways to create a positive impact in the local and global community, and partner with nonprofits to learn how to develop their own nonprofit organization.

### **WISRDR (Wildwood Institute for STEM Research and Development)**

The Wildwood Institute for STEM Research and Development (WISRDR) is a center of study for students with a strong interest in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and math. The mission of the institute is to provide a deep, probing, intellectually stimulating, and challenging STEM curriculum unique to Wildwood that is built around student-centered, hands-on learning opportunities in and of the real world.

The institute offers a year-round program focused on project-based, collaborative experiences that have relevance today. Starting in 9th grade, WISRDR students work together to research and design short- and long-term projects and summer experiences that are of interest to them in the following fields: astronomy and space, engineering, electronics computing and coding, and data science.

Off-site public lectures and visiting speakers at Wildwood are cornerstones of the WISRDR experience. Institute scholars also receive mentorship from an advisory board with notable scientists from MIT, UCLA, the Jet Propulsion Laboratory, and LMU. The institute actively partners with research groups such as Southern California Microscopic Society and UCLA's Plasma Physics Lab. Additionally, Wildwood is an official partner of the Dawn Mission, joining the Jet Propulsion Laboratory, MIT, Brown University, and a handful of other institutions working together to gather data for NASA. WISRDR students are involved in this effort, collaborating with students across the country in operating a radio telescope and working with noted scientists to collect and disseminate data used by NASA in their studies of the solar system.

WISRDR COO Joe Wise is a recognized leader in STEM learning. He brings myriad connections to local and national science-affiliated organizations and has created formal partnerships between Wildwood and pedigree

organizations. Both the California Association of Astronomers and the Radio Telescope Society are now holding their meetings at Wildwood, giving our students on-the-ground access to leading scientists. Wildwood has also become a GAVRT school (Goldstone Apple Valley Radio Telescope), which is a partnership between NASA, the Jet Propulsion Laboratory, and the Lewis Center for Educational Research, which gives our students and teachers access to a radio telescope in the High Desert. Joe is also helping students explore Wildwood's new 3-D printers, opening up a whole new world of creating, developing, and building.

## **MATHEMATICS**

The upper school math program moves sequentially, from geometry to advanced algebra and then calculus. Students progress through the program based on the mastery of skills and individual strengths. Through direct instruction and cooperative group work, students are guided in creative problem-solving and finding multiple means to solve problems. Technology is integrated throughout, including Geometer's Sketchpad, Microsoft Graph, and programmable calculators. Students gain confidence by mastering concepts through multiple forms of assessment, including peer and teacher feedback, demonstrations of knowledge, and projects.

Math classes emphasize investigations of concepts that range from two-column proofs in geometry to trigonometric relationships of triangles and single-variable calculus problems. Students learn through experiential activities. Working in small groups, students create business profit models with statistical theories and construct the face of a working clock. Project-based learning provides real-world connections to the abstract concepts of pre-calculus. Two senior math options are offered in calculus or statistics. For advanced students, a second year of calculus is offered.

The upper school mathematics curriculum provides the foundation for the following skills. Individual classes support the development of additional skills as specified.

### **ESSENTIAL SKILLS:**

- Use of software like Geometer's Sketchpad and Microsoft Graph to illustrate and substantiate mathematical solutions
- Ability to solve problems through multiple methods

### **Algebra I**

This course builds on foundations students have to evaluate expressions, combine like terms, use order of operations, and solve multiple-step equations to interpret patterns in tables and graphs. Working with slope-intercept forms of lines, students graph lines from an equation. Students demonstrate dexterity in writing equations. Students explore multiple algebraic methods to solve systems of equations. Working with polynomials and quadratics, students gain confidence in multiplying binomials and factoring quadratic equations. Finally, students learn to write an equation from the graph of a parabola.

### **ESSENTIAL SKILLS:**

- Solve multiple-step equations accurately
- Write equations from a graph or table and reverse process
- Create algebraic word problems
- Demonstrate understanding of the quadratic formula

## Geometry

Students investigate geometric concepts in cooperative groups. They explore the properties of geometric figures using Geometer's Sketchpad software, mirrors, tracing paper, and cut-out shapes. Students first explore symmetry through transformations, reflections, rotations, and translations. Students review algebraic skills in order to graph lines, culminating in an art-related project, creating mandalas, line designs, and tessellations. Students also study the triangle sum theorem, triangle inequalities, the Pythagorean Theorem, congruence and similarity, and classic proofs. Students are also introduced to quadrilaterals, the geometric mean, circles, area, and volume. This course is taken when students are ready, either at the end of middle school or in 9th grade.

### ESSENTIAL SKILLS:

- Identifies and creates reflections, rotations, and translations
- Identifies angles formed by two lines and a transversal
- Understands angle relationships and the triangle sum theorem
- Explains and uses properties of parallel lines
- Identifies lines of symmetry

## Algebra II

Beginning with equations, inequalities, expressions, functions, and their graphs, students solve systems of linear equations. Students translate word problems into algebraic expressions, learn to simplify numerical expressions, and evaluate algebraic expressions. Students also work in systems with multiple variables. A quadratic equation unit introduces properties of parabolas and factoring quadratic expressions. Students use software programs, including Microsoft Graph and Equation as well as a graphing calculator in problem-solving.

### ESSENTIAL SKILLS:

- Solve and graph equations, inequalities, and compound inequalities
- Write absolute value functions and graphs
- Solve systems of linear equations graphically and algebraically
- Demonstrate how to factor and graph quadratic expressions
- Understand parabolas and conic sections

## Trigonometry

Trigonometry is a methodology for finding some unknown elements of a triangle (or other geometric shapes) provided the data includes a sufficient amount of linear and angular measurements to define a shape uniquely. The course leverages mathematical skills developed in algebra I, algebra II, and geometry, to fully understand a triangle and the relationship between and among its sides and angles. Using technology, data, group work, class-wide discussions, outside sources, and independent thinking, students gain an appreciation for the power of trigonometry (mathematics) to help one understand and interpret the measurable real world. Project work enables learners to go deeper in their ability to address strictly mathematical questions (simplify complex expressions, prove identities, analyze, and graph trigonometric functions) and questions pertaining to the real-world (measuring sizes of properties indirectly, figuring out molecular forms, understanding how GPS works, measure distances to far away stars).

### ESSENTIAL SKILLS:

- Understand how to solve triangles
- Understand all six trigonometric functions, both in right triangles and in the unit circle

- Ability to simplify complex mathematical expressions containing trigonometric terms
- Ability to prove and apply trigonometric identities
- Ability to analyze and graph trigonometric functions
- Ability to apply trigonometric (mathematical) thinking to real-world scenarios and to fully explain one's solutions and conclusions
- Ability to express one's thinking unambiguously

### **Pre-Calculus**

Building on understanding of quadratic equations, functions, and analytic geometry, students work with irrational numbers and investigate roots of real numbers and expressions involving radicals to find solutions. Problem solution sets are graphed using software to address theoretical and applied problems in art and architecture. Trigonometric relationships of triangles are explored and mastered through classroom practice and projects.

#### **ESSENTIAL SKILLS:**

- Mathematical understanding of irrational and complex numbers
- Ability to use analytic geometry as a problem-solving tool

### **Introduction to Calculus**

This course is an extension of Pre-Calculus and provides review and further development of the concepts introduced while adding several new calculus topics. Intro to Calculus involves a deeper level of generalizing when thinking about numbers. It's more about thinking logically, analytically, qualitatively, and less so algorithmically.

#### **ESSENTIAL SKILLS:**

- Work with functions algebraically, numerically, graphically, and verbally
- Use graphing calculators and other technology to model problem situations
- Tie together familiar concepts and techniques to explore limits and rates of change
- Understand the meaning of derivative in terms of rates of change and local linear approximations

### **Statistics**

Fundamental principles and applications of statistics are explored as students learn how to measure data and/or use data to predict future outcomes. Students learn decision strategies, survey techniques, margin-of-error levels, and normal and standard deviations. They define and use probability, permutations, and combinations. Projects use real-world statistical problems in science, government, business, and economics.

#### **ESSENTIAL SKILLS:**

- Understand margin of error, normal and standard deviations, probabilities, permutations, and combinations
- Apply statistical analysis to real-world situations

### **Calculus**

An introduction to the principles and applications of differential and integral calculus includes how functions change with time in business application problems or angular change in a project, as students investigate what

happens in an oil-spill simulation. Students increase agility in applying skills calculating derivatives to a function and graph. Emphasis is on solving real-world problems in engineering.

#### **ESSENTIAL SKILLS:**

- Perform the needed calculations accurately for finding limits of functions, derivatives, and definite and indefinite integrals
- Use a variety of methods to integrate functions
- Recognize and solve differential equations
- Applying integration to solve problems

#### **Calculus II**

This course is a continuation of Calculus I that includes differentiation, integration and infinite series. The course is designed for students working toward a college degree in science, mathematics, physics, computer science, and more. Students who sign up for this course must have completed Calculus I successfully.

#### **ESSENTIAL SKILLS:**

- Apply the required theorems of differentiation and infinite series from Calculus I in order to solve definite and indefinite integrals.
- Use a variety of methods to integrate different functions.
- Apply derivatives, infinite series, and integrals to solve problems.

#### **SCIENCE**

At each level, students are guided through investigations, explorations, model creations, and hands-on activities. Wildwood's inquiry-based curriculum builds skill and knowledge over a sequence of rigorous courses. Science is presented as a way of approaching problems and a body of knowledge as students grow in their scientific literacy with each course.

Beginning with conceptual physics, students gain an appreciation of the school's "physics first" approach as the foundation of scientific inquiry, creating connections between the physical, known world and scientific thinking. This foundation allows students to understand advanced coursework focused on biology and chemistry. Biology classes and labs present systems thinking as students explore classifications of life. Students investigate chemistry through discussions and lab experiments. A choice of two senior science classes offer equally challenging but diverse class experiences in either advanced topics in physics or advanced topics in biology. The upper school science curriculum provides the foundation for the following skills. Individual classes support the development of additional skills as specified.

#### **ESSENTIAL SKILLS:**

- Creation of hypothesis, observation, prediction, and concluding reflections
- Research, data collection, graphing, and written reporting of formal lab results
- Scientific literacy
- Use of scientific writing to analyze experimental processes

## Conceptual Physics

Our hands-on approach emphasizes “minds-on” coursework designed to inspire curiosity and interest in physics through active engagement. Using equations as guides to thinking, students explore the mechanical physics principles of inertia, equilibrium, speed, velocity, acceleration, and Newton’s laws. Later topics include light, sound, and heat.

### ESSENTIAL SKILLS:

- Use of algebraic principles to solve physics problems
- Use data analysis to connect lab results to real-world application of physics principles

## Biology

Addressing the essential question, “What is life?” students identify the common characteristics of life, comparing functions of humans to other organisms. Fundamental understanding of anatomy and physiology inform investigations and laboratory activities, including dialysis of membranes, DNA analysis, dissections, neuron receptors, and other human systems. Additional topics include heredity and evolution. Creation of concept maps aid student understanding of discrete vocabulary for each unit.

### ESSENTIAL SKILLS:

- Dissection protocols
- Describe the significance of experimental results and calculations

## Chemistry

Topics include study of matter, energy, and change at the atomic and molecular level. Discussions explore atomic structure, compounds and alloys, bonds, acids and bases, and electrochemistry. Students master concepts of atomic symbols, conventions for formula writing, and math competency related to conversions. This chemistry course includes lab-safe fire and explosions, designed to investigate exothermic reactions in the combustion of ethyl alcohol, “Survivor Fire Skills” with potassium permanganate and glycerin, and a darkness lab demonstrating gas laws.

### ESSENTIAL SKILLS:

- Understand atomic structure and elements and their organization on the periodic table
- Understand chemical reactions and properties of acids and bases

## Advanced Physics

Building on the foundational knowledge of conceptual physics, students experiment with, read about, and discuss thermodynamics, gas laws, optics, and planetary mechanics. Students work together on several projects, including the design, construction, and launch of a hot-air balloon.

### ESSENTIAL SKILLS:

- Gain scientific literacy to include refraction, diffraction, and optical absorption
- Apply mathematic concepts to physics principles, including graphs, diagrams, numeric data, and calculations

## **Advanced Biology**

Students approach advanced topics in biology through the context of contemporary public policy and health issues. The science of genetic cloning is examined through inquiry into gene regulation and expression by putting fluorescent protein in E. coli bacteria. Other labs explore brain chemistry through dissection of a sheep brain and questions of the human immune system, especially related to the HIV epidemic.

### **ESSENTIAL SKILLS:**

- Gain scientific literacy to include the specific vocabulary of biological science
- Understand genetic information, including gene cloning

## **WORLD LANGUAGES**

### **MANDARIN**

#### **Mandarin 1**

This course fosters development of the four skills of language: speaking, listening reading and writing. Students learn to express themselves and understand others in daily life through various activities including dialogues, acting, games, illustration, and story-telling. All vocabulary and structures are introduced through visuals, songs, stories, or picture sequences. Students learn to read and write simple passages in Chinese characters about the themes learned. The course also aims to improve understanding of the Chinese culture and people by doing projects on geography, food, calligraphy, and customs.

### **ESSENTIAL SKILLS:**

- Build vocabulary and writing skills
- Basic comprehension, grammar, and verb conjugation
- Expand vocabulary comprehension
- Expand grammatical understanding of verb tenses

#### **Mandarin 2**

Students who have had previous Mandarin instruction enroll in Mandarin 2. Vocabulary and language skills are reinforced with an emphasis on communication in real-life situations. Reading and writing skills become increasingly complex to enhance language production and comprehension skills.

### **ESSENTIAL SKILLS:**

- Increase ability to read and write target vocabulary in complex texts  
Develop comprehension, grammar, and verb conjugation
- Expand vocabulary comprehension
- Expand grammatical understanding of verb tenses

### **SPANISH**

Wildwood's approach to upper-level Spanish continues to emphasize communication, creating opportunities for students to speak, listen, read, and write at every level. Learning vocabulary that is relevant to daily life, student projects are creative, incorporating visuals that reinforce the oral language. Each unit includes new

skills that build on foundations so that students incorporate a growing vocabulary and more sophisticated grammatical structures.

Many students take Spanish 1 in 8th grade. In 9th through 12th grade, students complete either a sequence of Spanish 2 through 5 or a sequence of Spanish 1 through 4.

The upper school Spanish curriculum provides the foundation for the following skills. Individual classes support the development of additional skills as specified.

#### **ESSENTIAL SKILLS:**

- Ability to speak correctly, using correct grammatical structures and verb conjugations
- Read and write in Spanish using the target vocabulary

#### **Spanish 1**

Students new to the language take this introductory course, focusing on common vocabulary used in everyday conversational Spanish. Stories, songs, visuals, and reading activities prompt conversation and conceptual learning foundational to speaking and writing in Spanish. Emphasis is on question words and infinitive and present tense. Students also develop an understanding of spoken and written Spanish. The instructor provides feedback on writing and speaking confidently with correct pronunciation. Students broaden their vocabulary and review the use of the present and present progressive tense in regular and irregular verbs.

#### **ESSENTIAL SKILLS:**

- Build vocabulary and writing skills
- Basic comprehension, grammar, and verb conjugation
- Expand vocabulary comprehension
- Expand grammatical understanding of verb tenses

#### **Spanish 2**

Students who have had previous Spanish instruction enroll in Spanish 2. Vocabulary and language skills are reinforced with an emphasis on communication in real-life situations. They use the present, preterit, and imperfect past tenses to accurately describe states of being and other situations. Reading and writing skills become increasingly complex to enhance language production and comprehension skills.

#### **ESSENTIAL SKILLS:**

- Increase ability to read and write target vocabulary in complex texts
- Demonstrate a command of verb conjugation to speak, read, and write in present and past tenses

#### **Spanish 3**

In deepening their appreciation for literary and cultural ideas that resonate across cultures, students begin to read Hispanic literature, including the mystery *No Hay Justicia* for reinforcement of understanding of conjugation of verbs and dexterity with vocabulary in written and spoken language. Conversational focus is on learning how to ask for assistance or directions. Students create and present a tourist guide of their favorite city to include descriptions and maps.

## **ESSENTIAL SKILLS:**

- Write the target vocabulary correctly in a creative retelling of stories
- Present fluently in Spanish to the class

### **Spanish 4**

Daily conversation in Spanish about geography, fashion, current events, and personal health topics reinforce students' ability to communicate with ease on topics of global interest. Students read and analyze Spanish texts in timed writings to demonstrate comprehension and fluency and advanced writing skills. Grammar study focuses on the use of present indicative, present progressive, preterit, imperfect, and future and conditional tenses in their conjugations.

## **ESSENTIAL SKILLS:**

- Conversational agility
- Expand vocabulary to include proper conjugation of verbs in all tenses

### **Spanish 5**

Students reinforce vocabulary and language skills required to communicate in real-life situations and to deepen their understanding of Hispanic culture. Focus on verbs extends to indicative versus subjunctive tenses and "if" clauses. Reading in Spanish includes an adaptation of the classic text *Sangre y Arena* by Vicente Blasco Ibáñez, as well as poetry by Pablo Neruda and a variety of short stories. Students learn new vocabulary pertaining to the arts. Students select an artist from any medium for a culminating project about place, influences, and the artist's vision presented in Spanish.

## **ESSENTIAL SKILLS:**

- Independent reading of Spanish literature
- Reading comprehension
- Fluency in writing in Spanish

## **ELECTIVES**

**The Band** – Music Ensemble elective has a strong emphasis on roots and blues. In this yearlong course, students learn to form and interact musically in a collaborative setting by creating bands and learning performance repertoire. They learn about musical roles in the ensemble members by trying various instruments and collaborations and they have the opportunity to play one or more instruments as they discover their musical passions. Students play and sing together, improve reading and improvising, learn composing skills and study basic theory of intervals and 7th chords through ear training. They learn repertoire and work together to arrange, rehearse, and perform music in concerts throughout the year. Students create original compositions that are performed in small ensembles for peers and parents. They also learn to appreciate music and make connections among music, history, and cultural values through research, analytic discussion and listening. All performances, rehearsals, set ups and breakdowns are part of the course.

\*Introduction to Band: Open to 9th and 10th grade students

\*The Band: Open to 10th grade students who have completed the prerequisite of *Introduction to Band*

**Cinema Studies: Art, Interpretation, and Ideology** – What is cinema? Are films artworks, entertainments, consumer goods, or propaganda devices? How do you watch a movie? How do films affect us? How do movies

make meaning? What are films really about? More specifically, why does Kane say “Rosebud” just before he dies? How does a dead narrator relate to image-sound synchronization? Why does the camera look down an empty hallway in *Taxi Driver*? What does *Mulholland Drive* say about race and gender in Hollywood? How do the long takes in *Elephant* offer an explanation for Columbine? Why does HAL’s eye look like the sun at dawn?

To address such questions, students will explore the world of cinema from *Citizen Kane* to *Birdman*, from celluloid to digital, from The Dome to the iPhone through various conceptual, historical, and critical perspectives to develop an understanding of the aesthetic, affective, cultural, economic, and political dimensions and implications of cinema. Students will investigate basic cinematic techniques, common narrative tropes, vital film genres, important film theories, and key ideological functions.

Along with watching and discussing films, students will read and write reviews and essays, watch and produce video reviews and essays, and research and give presentations concerning cinematic subjects. The course allows for a generous amount of student choice in the films analyzed and topics researched. For instance, in a unit on genre, the class may initially focus on westerns to introduce the students to genre studies; however, for the project, the students will pick their own genre to investigate: film noir, sci-fi, comedy, rom-com, war film, horror, etc. All of this will entail students learning to watch themselves watch films, which, ironically, will result in them having more fun and being more moved by the cinematic experience. Open to 9th-12th grade students.

**Creative Writing** – *Write what you like; there is no other rule.* ~ O. Henry Who’s going to write the next great American novel? Or collection of poetry? Or memoir? You are—with the foundations you’ll learn in this class. Unleash your own unique sense of storytelling to craft weekly assignments culminating in a polished final project—a short story, a portfolio of poems, a chapter from your memoir—or another written narrative outlet of your choosing. Workshop your ideas with fellow classmates and build towards the creation of your ultimate masterpiece. Readings, movies, music and honest communication will be provided to help guide and inspire your work. Open to 9th-12th grade students.

**Digital Photography** – This course introduces students to the process of using a digital camera and manipulating work in a digital darkroom. Students will be introduced to composition, lighting techniques, and exposure as they work toward producing photographs that explore their visual aesthetic. After their on-location shoots, students will develop skills in Photoshop to adjust, crop, combine or color enhance relevant ideas into their digital images. Research and writing is an essential part of this course reflected in art history assignments, self-assessments, and artist’s statements. Class critiques, art history discussions, field trips, and visiting artists provide opportunity for collaborative learning. Student work will meet course and college portfolio requirements. Open to 9th-12th grade students.

**Digital Skills for Entrepreneurs** – Are you an aspiring or current entrepreneur who wants to learn how to leverage technology to grow your brand? This course will provide you with the digital skills to do just that. Throughout this yearlong course, we will cover E-commerce, basic web development, User Experience Design, and Social Media Marketing. Open to 9th-12th grade students.

**Foundations in Digital Design Media Arts** – This is an introductory course into the field of Digital Media providing students with a survey of five skill areas: Graphic Design, Photography, Animation, Video Production and Web Design. Hands-on projects are grounded in the principles of art-making and design, and support the development of specific skills that would be required in the field of Digital Media, including fluency in software, media literacy and analytical thinking processes required to communicate compelling visual messages. Open to 9th-12th grade students.

**Graphic Design** – Graphic design is an intermediary between information and understanding: the right balance of text and image can make ideas, stories and brands memorable, persuasive and powerful. This class is an introduction to the design process through a series of hands-on projects that delve into the art of visual communication. From brainstorming ideas, sketches, revisions, to final solutions students create their own designs that can be used for textiles, album covers, logos, business cards, typography, posters, and web design using computer applications such as Adobe Illustrator and InDesign. Applying the fundamentals of art and design, to creative thinking and problem solving, this class aims to prepare students to thrive as the methods of information communication and consumption continue to change. Open to 9th-12th grade students.

**Human Reproductive Biology** – This course will explore the many facets of human reproduction using the lenses of both biology and culture. Students will learn about reproductive anatomy, gamete production, conception and pregnancy, birth, lactation, and parental care. These experiences will be placed in a broader context of life course development, from infancy through old age. Students will also discuss reproductive behaviors and human sexuality and explore how evolution and culture have impacted and continue to influence various reproductive experiences in the US and around the world. Open to 11th to 12th grade students. Students must have first completed the prerequisite of *Biology*.

**Introduction to Motion Picture Studies** – Introduction to Motion Picture Studies provides students an opportunity to familiarize themselves with the filmmaking process. It is a broad introduction to film aesthetic, traditions, theory and criticism, as well as hands-on production. The course includes film viewings, learning various phases of production such as storyboarding, camera usage, lighting and editing in Premiere. Skills will be demonstrated through hands-on projects ranging from a 30-second green screen unit to shorts and music videos. Students will collaborate on all films, learning various roles from Director to Cinematographer to Sound Designer. Through this course, the student will gain a unique insight into the world of filmmaking from creative and technical perspectives. Student work will meet course and college portfolio requirements. Open to 9th-12th grade students.

**Jazz Ensemble** – The Jazz Band elective includes all styles of music with a strong emphasis on Jazz repertoire and improvisation. In this yearlong course students play and sing music together, refine composing skills and notation skills and deepen their understanding of music theory. They work on improvising, using modes and advanced chord structures.

Students learn repertoire and work together to arrange, rehearse, and perform music in concerts throughout the year. Students create original compositions that are performed in small ensembles for peers and parents. They also learn to appreciate music and make connections among music, history and cultural values through research, analytic discussion, and listening. In addition to Concerts the band performs in three open houses events, Jazz on Mississippi, graduation ceremony performance, multicultural symposium and elementary exchange performances. All performances, rehearsals, set-ups and breakdowns are part of the course.

\*Introduction to Jazz Ensemble: Open to 11th and 12th grade students

\*Jazz Ensemble: Open to 12th grade students who have completed the prerequisite of *Introduction to Jazz Ensemble*

**Law, Individuals, and Societies** – What is law? What is it for? Who says what it is? Who makes it? When should you change it? What are the essential human rights? If you kill someone while sleepwalking, are you a murderer? Does a police dog sniffing your car constitute an illegal search? What limitations are there to the freedom of speech? Are Girl Talk's mashups an example of the "fair use" of music owned by others? What constitutes torture? When is it legal to go to war? These are some of the broad and narrow questions that may be addressed

in this class. At the high level, the class will explore how the law considers and impacts individuals and how it structures and reflects society. At the ground level, the class will tackle tough issues in specific areas of the law. For example, in the area of criminal law, students will grapple with this fact pattern and these issues: Four men are stranded on a lifeboat in the middle of the ocean. They run out of provisions. Three of the men kill the fourth man and eat him to survive. Did they commit murder? Do they have an excuse? Should they be punished? What would be the purpose of punishing them? (Based on R v. Dudley and Stephens (1884).) During the course, while studying the law from philosophical, ethical, legal, and scientific perspectives, students will develop practical skills by role-playing certain positions within a legal system through exercises in legal analysis, oral advocacy, negotiation, mediation, and trial advocacy. Students will be given opportunities to delve into areas or aspects of the law that interest them. Open to 9th-12th grade students.

**Marine Biology** The mystery and beauty that surrounds the sea intrigues many of us. In this course, we will focus our attention on the “why” and “how” the study of the marine world is infinite and the approaches are so diverse. There are six themes that we will explore this year; the formation of our ocean and the role of Plate Tectonics, scientific exploration using underwater robotics and technology, basic science as applied to the marine environment, the organisms and their environment, conservation projects such as coral and wetland grass restoration, and the interaction of man within these fragile ecosystems. We will look at different ecosystems in order to understand the many organisms that live within each type of community. The study of the oceans will be introduced as it relates throughout the marine environment. We will supplement the text book with a variety of learning tools such as labs, internet research, and scientific journals. Upon completion of this course, your knowledge of the flora and fauna that characterize various ecosystems will be enhanced. Open to 11th-12th grade students.

**Music Production Lab I** – This course is designed for students who want to learn music production techniques using software and MIDI tools. Student will work individually or in small groups to create, produce, and record original music using advanced technology, including music software, MIDI keyboards, and audio interfaces. Students will learn MIDI sequencing and MIDI production as well as editing and basic mixing techniques. Students will create several projects throughout the year, culminating in an exhibition of their work. Open to 9th-12th grade students.

**Musicianship for Singers and Songwriters** – This class is designed for students who want to learn to sing and play songs and to explore the art of song including the history of song, singers, and songwriters. Students will study song structure, lyric writing technique, songwriting technique and performance technique in addition to theory and ear training.

Students will learn to sing and play songs of their choice. They will choose comfortable keys, play basic chords while they sing, and perform in front of an audience. Students will develop a small body of thoughtfully chosen works throughout the year and write original compositions for the final project. Open to 9th-12th grade students.

**Painting** – This course will teach students how to develop technical, conceptual, and critical decision-making skills in painting. Students will learn how to work with gouache, watercolor, acrylic, and oil paints; various types of paper; canvas, brushes, and other painting tools. Units of study will focus on layering, lighting, perspective, figure and portrait painting, color theory, building frames, stretching canvas, as well as archiving work and developing a portfolio website for college. Students will choose a personal theme at the beginning of the year, which will be explored through art making, research and writing. Concepts will be fleshed out during the preproduction stage of all projects supported by individual meetings with the teacher. Studio time focuses on skill building and the

steps employed in creating a work of art. In-class and homework assignments will further support technical and conceptual skill building. Research and writing is an essential part of this course reflected in art history assignments, self-assessments, and artist's statements. Class critiques, art history discussions, fieldtrips, and visiting artists provide opportunity for collaborative learning. Open to 9th -12th grade students.

**Script, Pitch, and Produce** – This course dives deeper into the filming process begun in the Introduction to Motion Picture Elective. Students will continue studies in film aesthetic, traditions, theory and criticism as well as hands-on production. Coursework will focus heavily on developing individual student generated concepts, script writing, and pitching ideas. Well-developed concepts will be produced collaboratively via filming and editing. Films produced will be shorts ranging from 3-20min in length. Student work will meet course and college portfolio requirements. Open to 10th-12th grade students who have completed the prerequisite of *Introduction to Motion Picture*.

**Stagecraft** – This course is an introduction to the terminology and techniques used in technical theatre. Course examines two-dimensional and three-dimensional scenery, the physical theater, stage and scene shop equipment, project organization and process, technical theater tools, materials, and theatrical construction techniques. Students will also be introduced to sound and lighting systems. The course designed to provide students with a basic understanding of the aesthetics and practical application of all phases of technical production. Students in this course will be actively involved in Performing Arts Department productions. Enrollment in this course constitutes agreement to fulfill all curricular, curricular, and extra-curricular requirements. Students are expected to fulfill 70 hours of work for the year.

\*Stagecraft: Open to 9th to 12th grade students

\*Stagecraft II: Open to 10th to 12th grade students who have completed the prerequisite of *Stagecraft*

\*Advanced Topics in Stagecraft: Open to 11th and 12th grade who have completed the prerequisite of *Stagecraft II*

**US Performing Arts Elective** – This elective offers in-depth exploration and skill building as a theatre artist with an emphasis on the craft of acting. Whether you are continuing to refine and deepen skills built in previous years or new to performing arts, this course will challenge you to explore and express your unique artistic voice. Training will include acting technique, improvisation, voice, movement, scene study, audition technique, as well as directing and writing from personal story. Students will work on scenes and monologues designed to expand their acting and directing skills and foster a new understanding of their creative capacities. In the fall, students will have the opportunity to participate in a Southern California Theatre Festival (DTASC.) Upon completion of this class, students will have a strong actors' toolbox of skills to take forward if they choose to further their craft as theatre artists. This class includes an evening performance of student work.

\*The Actor and the Stage: Open to 9th-12th grade students who have not yet completed an Upper School Performing Arts class

\*The Actor and the Stage II: Open to 9th-12th grade students who have completed one year of Upper School Performing Arts

\*Theatre and Performance: Open to 9th-12th grade students who have completed at least two years of Upper School Performing Arts

\*Theatre and Performance II: Open to 9th-12th grade students who have completed at least three years of Upper School Performing Arts

**Wildwood Institute for Social Good and Community Leadership (ISGCL)** – The class centers on finding ways to address challenging social issues such as poverty and unequal access to resources; cultivate in students the expertise needed for grassroots organizing; and provide them with the necessary skills to serve as nonprofit leaders, volunteers, and trustees. Students work together to unpack the United Nation's Sustainable

Development Goals, research social issues, identify ways to create a positive impact in the local and global community, and partner with nonprofits to learn o how to develop their own nonprofit organization. The class is available over four years. Open to 9th-12th grade students.

**Wildwood Institute for STEM Research and Development (WISRD)** – The class provides opportunities for individualized research within five established areas of study: Coding/Electronics, Engineering/Design, Earth/Space, Life Science/Cognition, and Math theory/Applied math. Students have access to a range of tools including 3D printers, CNC machines, machine shop, welding, a research grade plasma device, a 34-meter radio telescope, etc. In addition, students have access to scientists and engineers who are part of the WISRD Science Advisory Board. Students present progress on their studies several times a year, participate in two evening community lectures, weekly WISRD Wednesdays, monthly lunch lectures, and contribute to the WISRD Research Journal. The class is available over four years. Open to 9th-12th grade students.

**Yearbook** – This class is where the magic happens in creating the Wildwood Yearbook. Students will learn about the Principles of Graphic Design, journalistic writing and photographic composition, as well as the software program utilized to create our yearbook. Organizational skills will also be developed through production planning, divisions of labor and coordination of ad sales, design and placement. Students interested in leadership positions are strongly encouraged to attend a two-day yearbook conference, which takes place on Aug. 5 and 6 in Burbank, during which theme and cover art are established and plans are made for coverage of the beginning of the school year. Open to 9th-12th grade students.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

The upper school physical education program seeks to promote students' development of healthy habits for a balanced lifestyle, integrating the mind, the heart, and the body by developing lifelong habits of health and wellness. Upper school students are required to take P.E. in their 9th grade year.

Each student chooses from one of three tracks: yoga, with an emphasis on flexibility and breath control; a fitness track, emphasizing wellness and core strength building; and a traditional sports track such as soccer, basketball, or baseball. Students in each track set personal wellness goals and are coached to achieve their intended outcomes. The Habits of Mind and Heart are highlighted throughout the curriculum, with a focus on respect for self and others during classes. The Habit of Collaboration is the foundation of teamwork, and students are continually encouraged in the Habit of the Service to the Common Good to put forth the effort to improve.

### **Athletics**

This multi-sport choice is appropriate for beginners and more skilled players interested in team sports, including flag football, basketball, and soccer. The class focuses on technique and on specific skills and strategies used in athletics. Students are divided into teams to play one another in formal games as they continue developing skills through friendly competition. Classes take place at Stoner Park, Wildwood's home field for P.E. and CIF soccer play.

### **Fitness Training and Meditation**

Students explore various modalities of meditation combined with interval training to increase their mindfulness, core strength, and overall fitness. Classes take place at Stoner Park and Santa Monica Beach.

## **INTERNSHIPS**

Internships are part of the core curriculum for Wildwood juniors and seniors, and students are assessed on their participation. From communications and public relations to sports management and research labs, Wildwood's internship program offers opportunities for students to explore a range of professions.

Each student researches and selects a site aligned with personal and career interests and chooses from a range of settings. Students spend one afternoon each week at a work site observing how colleagues collaborate in organizations with mission-specific goals. Students support the work of the organization while learning communication skills, problem-solving, and meeting challenges in a real-world setting. Work-site supervisors provide regular feedback on students' work.

Examples of recent internship sites include the Santa Monica Museum of Art, Bad Robot, The Peninsula Hotel, Brooks + Scarpa Architects, UCLA's Department of Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering, ESPN Deportes Radio, Mayme A. Clayton Library & Museum, Cedars-Sinai Medical Center, and the Skirball Cultural Center.

## **TECHNOLOGY AND LIBRARY RESOURCES**

Upper school students build cloud-computing skills and use advanced search engines and emerging research tools.

Upper school students expand their use of Web 2.0 applications through the use of VoiceThread and Web-based academic portfolios. Advanced techniques in iMovie, GarageBand, Adobe CS, and other emerging media design software is emphasized as students create and present project work. Some courses, like geometry, feature software as the main textbook for the class, and students use Geometer's Sketchpad to explore key academic concepts. Art and music classes introduce students to specialized programs to produce digital works and to store work in virtual portfolios and student websites. Students and teachers use a new Web-based learning management system, which allows Wildwood to embrace blended learning models throughout the grades.

## **COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT PROGRAM**

Wildwood empowers its students to become passionate advocates for local and global communities. Through a variety of community involvement experiences, Wildwood students gain perspective and come to understand the impact one individual can have on the world.

Ninth graders create, design, and implement a health fair for the students of Braddock Drive Elementary School. Using information and skills learned in their 9th grade Mind/Body classes, students inform and educate Braddock students in health and wellness issues.

Tenth graders work with the elementary students of Braddock Drive Elementary School as reading buddies. Through this involvement, students develop their social, emotional, and interpersonal skills. Students reflect on their work at Braddock with the following question in mind: "How do the Habits of Mind and Heart influence me outside the walls of Wildwood School?"

Eleventh grade students give back to their school community by assisting at the middle and upper campus or by volunteering at an outside service agency of their choice. Within the school community, students can write articles for school publications, help in the classroom, or assist in various departments.

In their senior year, students create, plan, and execute a community involvement project of their own design. Each project reflects the student's individual ideas and passions and is the culmination of the ideals of citizenship and connection to community Wildwood fosters in all its students.

**International Community Involvement (ICI)**

Wildwood's International Community Involvement program gives Senior Institute students the opportunity to become involved and form relationships with other people and cultures through service-based learning and cultural exchange. Students spend their spring break in Uruguay, Guatemala, or Nepal working with local schools or nonprofit groups.

**Internship Program**

Wildwood's unique Internship program provides juniors and seniors with professional experience for academic credit. Internships enrich students' education by extending their learning experience beyond the classroom. Through this program, students explore careers of interest, develop social skills for a professional setting, and build their college resume.