

COURSE CATALOG

MOUNT BELL ACADEMY



Table of Contents

3-4	Graduation & Grading Standards
4	Grading Scale
5	Graduation Requirements
6-20	COURSE CATALOG
7-9	English
	<i>American Literature</i>
	<i>British Literature</i>
	<i>Critical Reading & Composition</i>
	<i>English for College Preparation</i>
	<i>English Literature, Language & Composition</i>
	<i>English Test Prep</i>
	<i>Speech & Debate</i>
	<i>World Literature</i>
10-11	English as a Second Language (ESL)
	<i>ESL 1-4</i>
11-13	Foreign Languages
	<i>Chinese 1-3</i>
	<i>French 1-2</i>
	<i>Spanish 1-3</i>
13-15	History & Social Studies
	<i>Economics</i>
	<i>Psychology</i>
	<i>U.S. Government</i>
	<i>U.S. History</i>
	<i>World History</i>
15-16	Mathematics
	<i>Algebra</i>
	<i>Algebra 2</i>
	<i>Geometry</i>
	<i>Pre-Calculus</i>
16-17	Physical Education
	<i>P.E.</i>
	<i>Sports</i>
17-18	Science
	<i>Biology</i>
	<i>Chemistry</i>
	<i>Physics</i>
18-20	Visual & Performing Arts
	<i>Art History & Criticism</i>
	<i>Intro to Art</i>
	<i>Drawing & Painting</i>
	<i>Acrylic Painting</i>
	<i>Choir</i>
	<i>Music Appreciation</i>
20	Notes
21	Order of Courses

GRADUATION & GRADING POLICIES

Mount Bell Academy expects students to succeed; we help them at every step not only to graduate, but to graduate honorably. Mount Bell Academy makes successful learning possible to students of nearly all abilities. Because our approach is motivational, developmental and foundational, we tailor our curriculum to the needs and capacities of the individual student. Our grading policies and standards exceed those set by the California Department of Education, and they meet or exceed the University of California “a to g”. Our standard graduation requirements listed below are for students in our college preparatory program. Exceptions for these requirements may be made in specific instances and for students in one of our alternative programs.

Graduation Schedule

It typically takes 4 years of study to graduate from high school. Students may become eligible for early college admission and, therefore, early graduation by taking AP and college courses (through the dual enrollment program) and by fulfilling all graduation requirements. AP & college courses are not required for graduation but can help increase GPA and number of credits earned for graduation. Students will earn a one point bonus in each Honors, AP, IB and qualifying college level course they receive a grade of C- or better.

Credits & GPA Requirements

Each course is assigned a specific number of credits depending on the number of hours of study. Normally a semester long course is 5 credits and a year-long course is 10 credits. Students need to earn a minimum of 210 credits and maintain a C average to be eligible for graduation at Mount Bell Academy.

Areas of Study

Students are also expected to complete specific areas of study. These areas of required study are listed on page 6 under Graduation Requirements. These requirements meet and exceed both the California State graduation requirements and the University of California admissions standards.

Dual Enrollment & College Courses

Students may qualify to take courses from local colleges to receive both college and high school credit. These courses must be pre-approved by the administration. Be aware that college courses (particularly those on the quarter system) may have different credit weight or equivalency on high school transcripts. If you are interested in a dual enrollment program, please contact the school office for more information. Certain college level courses can earn a student the additional +1 Honor Point on their GPA.

Course Load Requirements

We believe that private schools must set standards superior to those of their neighbors if they are to make any difference; therefore, fulltime students must be enrolled in at least 5-6 classes at all times even when graduation requirements have been met. All students (even part-time students), while on campus, should be attending a class or engaged in a scheduled and supervised activity. We expect Mount Bell students to take advantage of the opportunities given to them to grow, learn and better themselves.

Grade Point Average (GPA)

A Grade Point Average is the average score between 0-4.3 on the grading scale (see Grading Scale). Each grade is assigned a number score. These scores are added together and then divided by the number of courses taken. This gives a grade point average. A high GPA is important for graduation & college admission. Students who wish to be considered for early graduation, must also have a good GPA.

Weighted GPA

Mount Bell Academy uses a **weighted GPA** that includes additional credit for AP/Honors courses (see Grading Scale). However, when applying to many colleges the GPA is recalculated by the college admissions department on a non-weighted scale with a max score of 4.0. For some colleges (including those in the UC system), it is possible to have a GPA greater than a 4.0 (up to a 5.0) by taking AP, Honors, IB or certain approved college level courses.

GRADING SCALE

Percentage	Letter Grade	Weighted GPA	GPA (non-weighted) *	AP/Honors GPA**
100	A+	4.3	4.0	5.0
98-100	A+	4.3	4.0	4.8
93-97	A	4.0	4.0	4.5
90-92	A-	3.7	4.0	4.2
87-89	B+	3.3	3.0	3.8
83-86	B	3.0	3.0	3.5
80-82	B-	2.7	3.0	3.2
77-79	C+	2.3	2.0	2.8
73-76	C	2.0	2.0	2.5
70-72	C-	1.7	2.0	2.2
67-69	D+	1.3	1.0	1.8
63-66	D	1.0	1.0	1.5
60-62	D-	0.7	1.0	1.2
Less than 60	F	0.0	0.0	0.0

*Note that UC and most other universities do not calculate a plus or minus into the GPA of incoming freshman applicants. Most universities will recalculate your GPA using a non-weighted scale. See the table above to compare our weighted scale versus traditional non-weighted GPA scales.

**Note also, for college admissions the only way to have a GPA greater than 4.0 is with an AP course (therefore an A or A+ grade in a non-AP class is 4.0 in the eyes of most admissions officers). Many universities also do not acknowledge Honor Points. UC is one of the few university systems that does acknowledge Honor Points.

Graduation Requirements

- a. **History/Social Science:** Three years required in the following courses **(30 credits)**
- World history (including cultures and geography) or European History (1 Year)
 - U.S. history (1 Year)
 - Economics (½ Year)
 - U.S. Government or Civics (½ Year).

International transfer students can satisfy one year of U.S. History with certain history courses from their native country. However, we recommend taking a U.S. History course to meet the application requirements for many Universities

- b. **English:** Four years of college preparatory English that include frequent and regular writing and reading of classic and modern literature, essays and non-fiction. **(40 credits)**

International students can transfer English language credits taken in their home country for the years prior to entering the United States. If no English was taken, it is possible to transfer language courses taken in their native tongue if those courses had a strong emphasis on reading, writing and literature.

To graduate, International and ESL students must demonstrate mastery of the English language by passing or testing out of Advanced ESL and completing with a passing grade (non-ESL) English courses for each subsequent year of study at Mount Bell Academy

For students planning to attend a UC college upon graduation, please note that UC schools usually only allow one year of ESL in place of English to meet admission requirements.

- c. **Mathematics:** Three years of college preparatory mathematics that include the topics covered in elementary and advanced algebra and two- and three-dimensional geometry. Course such as Algebra, Geometry, Algebra 2, Pre-Calculus, Calculus and Statistics. -We encourage students to graduate with Pre-Calculus or higher. **(30 credits)**

- d. **Laboratory Science:** Three years of laboratory science providing fundamental knowledge in at least two of these three disciplines: biology, chemistry, and physics. **(30 credits)**

- e. **Foreign language:** Two years of the same language other than English. **(20 credits)**

An International or bilingual student is considered to have met this requirement when he or she has passed the Foreign language SAT for their native tongue.

However, even for those students who pass the SAT Foreign language test, we still strongly recommend at least two years of an additional foreign language for those planning to apply to Universities.

- f. **Visual & Performing Arts:** One year, including dance, drama/theater, music, or visual art. **(10 credits)**
- g. **College Preparatory Elective:** In addition to those courses required in "a-f" above, three years (or equivalent semesters) of college preparatory electives are required, chosen from advanced visual and performing arts, history, social science, English, advanced mathematics, laboratory science, and language other than English. **(30 credits)**
- h. **Physical Education:** Two years of P.E. is required. **(20 credits)**

Competitive sports outside of school can be used to satisfy this with approval from the administration and only if the hours of practice & development are equivalent or exceed those of Mount Bell's P.E. program.

Total Credits Needed for Graduation: 210

MOUNT BELL ACADEMY

Course Catalog

English Department:

- **American Literature**

American Literature is an English course designed to prepare students for further literary studies at the college level. Emphasis is on connecting history with literature. Students will analyze historical context, gathering background information to explore the social and historical forces that may influence the writing of a literary piece. Students will analyze each text, paying particular attention to how the narrative, poem or essay reveals culture, style, history and social structure of a particular era in American History. Students will produce written critical analysis of and oral responses to a variety of literature. Students will analyze, interpret and utilize literary elements, literary devices and rhetorical devices. Students will also compare perspectives, and they will recognize bias (as in how the author's bias is revealed in the language of the text). Students will also identify the author's purpose and intent in writing a particular piece of literature. From this, they will draw conclusions, particularly about the author's beliefs and influences. The classroom is set up to accommodate a conference style environment; therefore, students are expected to participate in classroom discussions, debates and literary analysis. In addition to literary criticism, students will synthesize what they have learned from their readings into their own narratives, poems and essays. This is a writing intensive course and, therefore, most student evaluations and assessments will be done through written assignments. (This course fulfills one of the four English Language graduation requirements and is especially recommended for college bound students). **10 credits**

- **British Literature**

The purpose of this English course is to introduce students to the development of the English language and British culture from earliest literature through the Victorian period. Students study works in their respective social and historical contexts. Students will also become familiar with older versions of English (such as Old English, Middle English and Early Modern English) as seen in texts like Beowulf, The Canterbury Tales, and works by Shakespeare. In addition to at least four novels, students study selections from various texts including those of 17th-century writers such as Milton, and of Romantic and Victorian poets such as Blake, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Shelley, Byron, Keats, Browning and Wilde. The course studies several genres, including epic, drama, poetic narrative, lyric poetry, and satire; focusing on themes such as religious controversy, the hero's journey, and social critique. As students explore the

development and features of literature, they improve in their writing of critical essays, in utilizing proper MLA formatting for essays and research reports, and in developing the art of oral presentation. Moreover, students expand their base of literary terms as an aid to interpretive reading and for use in expository essay writing. This course focuses intensively on students' development of critical writing skills (students write and revise analytical essays using the comparison/contrast, persuasive and argumentative modes), and research writing skills (students learn to support a thesis, avoid plagiarism and utilize proper MLA formatting). Workshops, peer reviews and individual conferences with teachers ensure that students focus upon improving their writing grammatically and stylistically at the sentence, paragraph and whole-text levels. (This course fulfills one of the four English Language graduation requirements and is especially recommended for college bound students). 10 Credits

- **Critical Reading and Composition**

As an introduction to university level writing and academic study, this course will focus on the fundamentals of academic writing. Students will read and respond to a broad array of works in both fiction and non-fiction across subject matter and genres as well as examine and analyze images, videos, graphs and model essays. During this course, students will broaden their composition skills, sharpen their rhetorical skills, improved their own writing skills, further develop their research skills and participate in in-depth class discussions and workshops with an emphasis on creative and critical reading, writing, thinking and reasoning. The goal of this course is to ready students for the various audiences, demands and expectations they will face in their college studies particularly in reading, writing, research, analysis and response. This course was designed for 12th grade students on the college track. (This course satisfies one of the four required English courses for graduation). **10 credits**

- **English for College Preparation**

In this non-credit elective class, students develop reading and writing skills to help them with the college application process and for success in college and other future endeavors. During this course, students will work on their college application and resume, and hone writing, research, presentation, and interview skills. This course is designed for 11th and 12th graders.

- **English Literature, Language & Composition**

This survey course introduces students to a variety of literary genres, writers, styles and movements and helps students develop their reading, writing and critical thinking skills. Students in this course learn to read and write both fiction and non-fiction. As an introductory course, it readies the student for the reading, writing, discussion, presentation and research expectations across genres of a college prep high school as well as readies students for further study in literature and college preparatory English.

Through discussion, oral presentations and writing, students will demonstrate their understanding of text and key concepts and utilize critical thinking skills. Vocabulary and grammar studies are integrated into each unit. Additional emphasis will be taken on teaching good research and expository writing skills including formatting, properly citing sources, paraphrasing, summarizing and avoiding plagiarism. Additional focus will include honing rhetoric. The course is especially useful for students, particularly Freshmen and English language learners, who need to improve upon and bolster their English language skills before moving onto further levels of college preparatory English. This course is a requirement for ESL students before they can take other MBA college preparatory English courses. This year long course can be used towards the English language graduation requirements. *(This course may also be listed as English 1 or English 9).* **10 credits**

- **English Language Test Prep and Essay Writing**

In this non-credit elective course, students will practice and develop test taking skills and strategies for the English language and writing portions of standardized tests such as in the SAT, PSAT and ACT. Students will also develop and strengthen their timed essay writing techniques.

- **Speech and Debate**

In this elective course, students learn rhetorical techniques and practice presentation skills to gain confidence and mastery of the various forms of oral communication and debate. Presentations, discussions and class participation are a large portion of the student's grade for this course. **5 credits per semester.**

- **World Literature**

This English course focuses on multi-cultural Literature written in English or translated into English and includes various voices from around the world. Through in-depth study of the oral traditions, literature and texts produced during different time periods and throughout the world, students will gain an appreciation for the diverse works and masterpieces that have had both local and international influence. Through their studies in World Literature, students will have a deepened understanding of global culture, politics, history and self-expression. The course gives special attention to the understanding of literary works in their cultural and historical contexts. Through expository writing, creative expression, and oral presentations students will demonstrate their understanding of (and possibly find inspiration from) these various literary texts. Writing, vocabulary and grammar studies are integrated into each unit of study. (This course fulfills one of the four English Language graduation requirements and is especially recommended for college bound students). **10 Credits**

English as a Second Language:

Mount Bell Academy has developed an ESL program with four levels of study that helps develop English language learners' fluency and proficiency in both academic and functional English. Each ESL course will focus on improving all aspects of the students' abilities to communicate in and understand the English language. Students will study and develop their skills in grammar, vocabulary, reading, writing, listening, speaking, literary analysis, critical thinking and conversation.

The ESL program is broken into 4 levels of ESL study. Students will be placed into the level the school deems is the best fit according to test scores, interviews and school records.

Each level is considered a one year course and equivalent to 10 credits. When it is offered as an accelerated quarter long or semester long course of about 3-4 hours a day it can carry the same credit weight as the year-long course (depending on the hours of study per week). Credit equivalency will be listed in the class syllabus and on transcripts.

Only 10 credits from Mount Bell Academy's ESL program can be used to fulfill the English language requirement for graduation at Mount Bell Academy. The additional credits of ESL will be considered Elective credits. (Exceptions are made in rare cases, particularly if a student has transferred to MBA with previous ESL credits or if MBA is unable to offer an English course to the student prior to graduation. Please speak with the office if you have a concern about fulfilling graduation requirements).

- **ESL 1**
This beginning ESL course was developed for students with low English language proficiency. Students who enter at this level tend to read and write English below the 2nd grade. *(This course may also be listed as ESL: Low-Beginning or ESL: Basic) 10 credits*
- **ESL 2**
This is an English language course for high beginners to low intermediate ESL students. Students entering this course are able to read and write in English at around the 2nd-3rd grade level. *(This course may also be listed as ESL: High-Beginning or ESL: Beginning) 10 credits*
- **ESL 3**
This is an English language course for intermediate ESL students. Students in this course have already had a few years of formal English language studies or have tested out of MBA's ESL 2 course. Students should feel comfortable reading and writing English at the 4th grade level or above. *(This course may also be listed as ESL: Intermediate) 10 credits*

- **ESL 4**
This is an English language course for High Intermediate or Advanced ESL students. Students in this course are able to read and write at the middle school level. Further development of vocabulary, communication, writing and reading skills ready students for English language studies at the high school level. *(This course may also be listed as ESL: Advanced)* **10 credits**

Foreign Language Department:

- **Chinese (Mandarin) 1: Beginning**
This course is designed for students with no or very little Mandarin Chinese knowledge or who have not taken a Mandarin Chinese course for a number of years. This course features task-based learning coupled with a focus on form and function. Vocabulary acquisition, identification and production of tones, and understanding the basic rules and patterns in writing Chinese characters will be the focus of this beginning course. Upon completion, learners will have acquired a vocabulary of several hundred Chinese characters and phrases. Student will also learn to read and write in both simplified and traditional Chinese characters. Chinese traditions, culture and history will be integrated into many of the lessons as well. (this course fulfills one of the two foreign language requirements for graduation.) **10 credits**
- **Chinese (Mandarin) 2: Intermediate**
This course is designed for students who have already taken at least one year of Mandarin Chinese. This course continues and builds from the knowledge and skills acquired in Chinese 1. Vocabulary building and conversational fluency will be the focus of this course. Students will improve upon their pronunciation and tonal quality, will be able to more accurately identify tones and will begin distinguishing homophones in both writing and listening. Students will be introduced to the use of radicals, learn to use a Chinese dictionary, and begin work in Chinese calligraphy. Cultural studies, traditions and history will be integrated into many lessons. (This course fulfills one of the two foreign language requirements for graduation. College bound students should take at least two years of the same language). **10 credits**
- **Chinese (Mandarin) 3: Intermediate-Advanced**
This course is for students with at least 2 years of previous Mandarin Chinese study. It focuses on Chinese fluency in reading, writing and conversation. In this course, students will be able to converse in Mandarin Chinese with more ease and accuracy, will be able to read more complex texts in literature, poetry and non-fiction, and will be able to write characters more naturally. Chinese culture, history, traditions, art and literature will be integrated into many lessons. (It is recommended that students serious about applying to prestigious universities have at least three years of the same foreign language). **10 credits**

- **French 1: Beginning French**

This is an introductory French class designed for high school students with little or no prior study in French. In this course, students will learn beginning French language structure, grammar and vocabulary. Students will learn about the life and culture of a number of French speaking countries such as France, Quebec and Senegal. Students will learn to utilize both written and conversational French, becoming familiar and comfortable with expressing themselves in the language (particularly in situations dealing with daily life, school, travel and shopping). During their studies, students will also gain an appreciation and understanding of a variety of different cultures in the French speaking world. The goal of this course is to inspire curiosity and appreciation for the French language and the French speaking part of the world and to form the basis of understanding upon which students can further build fluency in the French language. The multi-media resources, audio files, videos and cartoons also help make learning accessible and fun (This course fulfills one of the two foreign language requirements. It is recommended that college track students pursue at least 2 years of study within the same foreign language). **10 Credits**

- **French 2: Intermediate French**

This course is for students with at least one year of previous French studies. Continuing from the studies in French 1, students improve fluency, build their vocabulary, utilize and comprehend more complex grammar and sentence structures, and develop the communication tools with which to tackle the language demands of verbal and written interactions. In this course, students will interact and converse in French within a wide range of authentic contexts, develop effective self-expression, read and respond to various texts in French, learn about additional Francophone cultures, develop an understanding of common French idioms and idiomatic expressions, listen and respond to a variety of prompts initiated by native French speakers, and use French in class presentations and to participate in class discussions. The multi-media resources, audio files, videos and cartoons also help make learning accessible and fun (This course fulfills one of the two foreign language requirements for graduation. It is recommended that college bound students who have taken French 1 also take French 2). **10 Credits**

- **Spanish 1: Beginning Spanish**

This course is designed for students with no or very little Spanish knowledge, who have not yet completed a full year of Spanish or who have not taken a Spanish course for a number of years. This introductory Spanish course focuses on the Spanish language and culture in Spain and around the world, including a look at the Latin world and Latin culture in general. This course is structured to help students begin conversing almost immediately in Spanish. Students will practice pronunciation, patterns, basic grammar, reading, and writing about familiar topics and will include weekly conversation practice.

The multi-media resources, audio files, videos and cartoons also help make learning Spanish in this class accessible and fun. **10 credits**

- **Spanish 2: Intermediate Spanish**

This course is designed for students who have already taken at least one year of Spanish. This course continues and builds from the knowledge and skills acquired in Spanish 1. Students will focus on speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills, with appropriate grammatical principles. Students will also study the culture, traditions, history and literature found throughout the Spanish speaking world with additional insights into the varying Spanish pronunciations, vocabulary and idiomatic expressions used in different parts of the Spanish speaking world. Class discussions, presentations and conversations will take place to help bolster student fluency and confidence in using the Spanish language to communicate. The multi-media resources, audio files, videos and cartoons also help make learning Spanish in this class accessible and fun. (This course fulfills one of the two foreign language requirements for graduation. It is recommended that college bound students who have taken Spanish 1 also take Spanish 2). **10 credits**

- **Spanish 3: Intermediate-Advanced Spanish**

This course is for students with at least 2 years of previous Spanish study. It focuses on Spanish conversational fluency and studying literary texts written in Spanish with increasingly complex structure and vocabulary. During this course, students will converse solely in Spanish amongst each other and with the instructor. (It is recommended that students serious about applying to prestigious universities have at least three years of the same foreign language). **10 credits**

History and Social Studies Department:

- **Economics**

This semester long course focuses on the study of economic principals and philosophies, and the methods by which societies have solved their economic problems. It also examines the history, functionality and characteristics of America's market economy. This survey course covers both micro- and macro- economics, the science of scarcity, supply and demand, economic systems and philosophies, the role of government, the US economy (current and historical), and the global marketplace. Students analyze real world scenarios and compare various economic philosophies and systems around the world, making comparisons in order to develop opinions that are based on the economic principals they have learned. (This is a required course for graduation and all high school Seniors). **5 credits**

- **Psychology**

In this elective course, students will be introduced to the different fields and studies of psychology including philosophies, practices, methods and history. In this course, students will gain an understanding of the complexities and diversity of human thought and behavior. As a result, students may apply knowledge gained from this introductory psychology course to their daily lives. Additional emphasis will be directed at the emerging field of positive psychology from which students can learn ideas and techniques for cultivating a positive attitude, healthy lifestyle, mindfulness and well-being. **5 credits per semester.**

- **U.S. Government**

This semester course is a study of the origins, development, structure and functions of the American government. Study includes topics on the American founding (including key elements, philosophies and influences), structure of government and balance of power, the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, laws, Federalism, local government, economic and political systems worldwide, political parties, civics and citizenship, and taxation. Class discussions and essay assignments are an integral part of this course. Upon completion, students should be able to demonstrate both verbally and in writing an understanding of these topics and the participatory processes of the American political system. **5 credits**

- **U.S. History**

From pre-contact through modern times, this course studies the history and the making of this great nation. Studies also reflect the variety of individual experiences and cultures that comprise American society. The goal is to spark curiosity and invite students to explore and “do” history rather than simply read about it. Utilizing authentic voices, first person accounts, photographs films, collective tales, literature, historical documents and other resources, students learn of the experiences, ideals, struggles, conflicts, successes and failures that are the real story of the American past. This course makes the historical content vivid and comprehensible through readings, discussions, projects, visuals and an integrated program of learning aids. (This is a required course and fulfills one of the three history requirements for graduation). **10 credits**

- **World History**

This required survey course covers major historical events and essential aspects of cultures and societies in Europe, Asia, Africa, America and the Pacific. From technology and intellectual development to social and political changes, this course is designed to not only delve into their historical significance but also relate these events to contemporary culture and current events. Students will take a deep look at how history has shaped the world and how it continues to influence the modern era. Certain themes and events in history that are particularly relevant today or that have had great global

impact will be pursued in even more depth. This course will also look at the significant role geography played and/or still plays in the development and outcome of world events. Students will complete a variety of projects to help facilitate a deep understanding of cultures, world politics, and the impact historical events have had around the globe. (This is a required course and fulfills one of the three history requirements for graduation). **10 credits**

Mathematics Department:

- **Algebra**

This course lays the foundation for every subsequent course in mathematics. It includes a study of the properties of sets of real numbers, linear equations, linear functions, and inequalities; geometry, radical expressions and equations; graphing and algebraic equations. The content and instruction of this course is designed to develop both conceptual and procedural understanding in algebraic mathematics. The students develop the ability to explore and solve real-world application problems, demonstrate the appropriate use of graphing calculators, and communicate mathematical ideas clearly. This course (or equivalent study), which also might be taken in middle school, is a pre-requisite for Geometry and Algebra 2. **10 credits**

- **Algebra 2**

To take this course, students must have passed both Algebra 1 and Geometry (or equivalent study). This high school math course builds upon the foundations of equations, functions, and theorems learned and practiced in Algebra I and Geometry. The course will provide more challenging questions on system of equations, inequalities, and functions. It will also develop the foundation for exponential and logarithmic equations, imaginary numbers, conics, and matrices that will prepare students for pre-calculus and college level calculus. The class will also provide students with the ability to approach problems using both the traditional and common core methods, and will require students to be able to present their findings and understandings to their class. This course (or equivalent study) is a pre-requisite for Pre-Calculus. This course meets one of the three mathematics requirements for graduation. **10 credits**

- **Geometry**

Geometry is a branch of mathematics concerned with the properties and relations of points, lines, surfaces, solids, and higher dimensional analogs, the properties of space, and shapes, sizes and relative position of figures. Students will study these topics and demonstrate the ability to formulate, analyze and solve mathematical problems in geometry using logical thinking, proof writing, measurement and the axiomatic system. Before taking this course, students should already have a solid foundation in Algebra

since algebraic applications are embedded throughout the program; therefore, Algebra 1 is a pre-requisite for taking this course. This course fulfills one of the three mathematics graduation requirements and is a pre-requisite for Algebra 2. **10 credits**

- **Pre-Calculus / Trigonometry**

Students can take this course after finishing Algebra 2 and in preparation for further studies in Calculus. From this course, students will be able to graph functions, apply operations, and solve systems of equations & matrices. Topics studied include power, polynomial and rational functions; exponential, logarithmic and trigonometric functions; trigonometric identities and equations; systems of equations and matrices; conic sections and parametric equations; vectors, polar coordinates, complex numbers, sequences, series, inferential statistics, limits and derivatives. This course satisfies one of the three math requirements for graduation. **10 credits**

- **Test Prep for Mathematics**

In this non-credited elective course, students will practice and develop test taking skills and strategies for the mathematic portion of the SAT, PSAT and/or ACT tests.

Physical Education Department:

- **P.E.**

In this general Physical Education course, students will participate in group and individual activities that promote physical health and wellbeing, and will develop the knowledge and skills necessary to maintain a healthy lifestyle. In addition to promoting physical fitness, this course also helps students learn to work together in a group towards a common goal with positive interactions and utilizing good sportsmanship. Students might be asked to participate in activities such as dance, basketball, soccer, field sports, football, tennis, swimming, running, relay races, muscle training, martial arts, handball, frisbee, cardio-vascular activities, stretching, yoga, softball, kickball, baseball, badminton, or other sports. Reading, discussing and learning about other aspects of health, fitness and well-being may also be a part of the course curriculum. (Students are expected to take two years of P.E. to graduate. This course can be repeated each year for additional elective credits). **10 Credits**

- **Specialty Sports**

In addition to, or in place of PE, students can participate in Mount Bell Academy's competitive sports program. In this program, students choose a sport (from the list below) to specialize in where rigorous training towards success at the competition level is pursued. Learning proper form, self-discipline and perseverance is integral to personal success in this program.

The Mount Bell competitive sports program includes a choice of:

- Archery
- Golf
- Swimming
- Tennis

(Participation in the competitive sports program can satisfy a PE credit if all requirements for the course are met). **10 credits**

Science Department:

- **Biology**

Biology is a course in natural science that is concerned with the study of life. More specifically, the class will explore everything from the microscopic components of the individual cell to the physiology of human body systems, as well as larger communities of organisms living in ecosystems. It will also lay the foundation for studies in genetics and evolution by studying the processes of how variability, inheritance, and survival allow for the development and creation of new species. In addition, the course will cultivate skills in scientific method and inquiry required for doing research, presenting findings, and writing formal lab reports. This course fulfills the science requirement in biological science category for graduation. **10 credits**

- **Chemistry**

Chemistry is a course in physical science that is concerned with the matter that makes up the universe. More specifically, the class will cover the properties and composition of atoms and how they react with one another. Expanding upon the atom, students will be required to balance chemical equations of compounds. This interdisciplinary course which requires higher level algebra will also allow students to predict the ideal properties of a universe through study and experimentation with Acids and Bases, Gas Laws, and Kinetics. The course will provide students with the content, language, and skill necessary to perform higher level problems within the context of their own experiments. This course fulfills the physical science graduation requirements. **10 credits**

- **Physics**

Physics is the study of matter, energy, and the interaction between them. The study of physics deals with the fundamental particles of which the universe is made, and the interactions between those particles, the objects composed of them such as nuclei, atoms, molecules (which make up matter), and energy. It also looks at the motion and behavior of matter through space and time, along with related concepts such as energy and force. This class will cover key concepts in physics regarding such topics as mechanics, matter, heat, electricity, magnetism, light, atomics and relativity. In this course students gain a solid understanding of physics through practice and problem

solving. By engaging students with relevant and accessible narratives, animations, analogies and imagery from the real-world, a strong conceptual understanding of physical principles ranging from classical mechanics to modern physics is built. This course fulfills the physical science graduation requirement. **10 credits**

Visual and Performing Arts Department:

Art

- **Art History and Criticism**

In this elective course, students will study art throughout history and across the globe. Students will learn about the evolution of art, its forms, mediums, ideals, philosophies and purpose, and how different cultures and artists influenced one another. Students will understand that art isn't just a vehicle for self-expression but can also be a reflection of society and culture. Students will also become aware of the role art plays in communication, propaganda and religion. In understanding the political, cultural, religious and historical contexts from which a work of art is made, students will be able to use reflective and critical thinking skills to analyze, discuss and write about art. This course is an opportunity for students to reflect on "What is art?". **10 credits**

- **Intro to Art**

This elective course introduces students to a broad array of mediums and styles for producing visual arts and crafts of both two- and three-dimensional works. Depending on the course instructor, students may learn to work in different media and with a variety of mediums such as clay, wood, styrofoam, found objects, stone, paper, and various types of paints and drawing utensils, and on different types of foundation like boards, paper, vellum, canvas, wood, etc., and may even utilize digital tools for the creative process. In this course, students will have the opportunity to view and analyze the works of other artists to gain insight and inspiration. Class participation and discussions are also an integral part of this course grade. Proper set up, clean up and disposal of materials will be covered. **5 credits per semester**

- **Drawing and Painting**

In this introductory art class, students will focus on using various mediums and techniques for drawing and painting (pencil, color pencil, charcoal, crayon, pastel, acrylic, water color, oil, etc.). Students will learn about and experiment with line, texture, composition, form, light & shadow, color theory, mixing, layering, perspective and other skills to produce original works of art. Students will have the opportunity to learn about and produce a broad array of art types such as still-life, portrait, plein-air, figurative, illustration, multi-media, etc. Students will also learn about other artists'

works and styles, plus the different art movements and ideals as a foundation and inspiration for creating their own unique pieces. In addition to guided classroom activities, students will be required to complete two quarterly projects, a semester project and a final project that reflect the accumulation of skills and knowledge acquired throughout the year. Class participation and student workshop discussions are also an integral part of this course grade. Proper set up, clean up and disposal of materials will be covered as well. **10 credits**

- **Acrylic Painting**

This more advanced course in painting is for students who have taken the Drawing and Painting introductory course from Mount Bell Academy or a similar course and are ready to focus on improving their painting and drawing skills, primarily using acrylic paints. A variety of techniques and styles will be discussed and practiced. Students will learn about the versatility of acrylic paints through experimentation and guided classroom projects. Students will observe the techniques, styles and philosophies surrounding various art movements and apply what they have learned to their own work. In addition to guided classroom activities, students will be required to complete two quarterly projects, a semester project and a final project that reflect the accumulation of skills and knowledge acquired throughout the year. Class participation and student workshop discussions are also an integral part of this course grade. Proper set up, clean up and disposal of painting materials and mediums will be covered as well. **10 credits**

Music

- **Choir**

In this performing arts elective course, major emphasis is on vocal development and music comprehension. Students will learn to use their voice as an instrument, practicing phrasing, pitch, rhythm and harmonization, and learn to sing with good breath support to create full, free and open vocal tone. Students will learn to read music for voice and the skills needed to participate in an ensemble and to perform both in a solo and a group. **10 credits**

- **Music Appreciation**

In this elective course, students will listen to and learn about modern and classical music from around the world with insight into their historical and cultural contexts. Students will learn the language of music as well as the language used to describe music with the goal that they will become more active listeners and able to respond intelligently and with critical thinking to a variety of musical idioms. Students will become familiar with the basic elements of music and through exposure to a number of different musical genres, styles and instruments from around the world, students will learn to identify the

various forms from across the globe. By analyzing the preferences and choices that composers of music have made, students will begin to recognize the similarities and differences between pieces of music across genres, cultures and time periods. The goal of this course is to help students appreciate a broad array of music and develop a strong foundation from which they can pursue further musical studies and better engage in discussions or debates on issues about the character and purpose of the music they are exposed to today. **5 credits per semester**

Notes about this Catalog

Additional courses may be offered throughout the year depending on student needs and other factors.

Additional courses may be offered as well through the online and independent study programs.

Courses in this catalog are not necessarily offered every semester nor every year. Semester and yearly offerings are determined by many factors including student needs, staffing and scheduling. Therefore, though this is a comprehensive list of courses at Mount Bell Academy, this list is subject to change as courses may be added or eliminated from the catalog at the discretion of the school Administration and with accordance to student needs and graduation requirements.

Courses designed specifically for **English Language Learners** will begin their course title with **EL** (such as EL US Government, EL Economics, etc.). These EL courses cover the same content found in their non-EL counterpart but modified for students who are English Language Learners where extra care and focus is taken to ensure student understanding of subject matter and vocabulary.

COURSE ORDER

Depending on learning level and with consideration of previous courses taken, a student will begin learning at their appropriate level. From that level, the student will likely move forward in the suggested order listed below, particularly if a course has pre-requisites.

English

ESL1

ESL 2

ESL 3

ESL 4

English Literature, Language & Composition

World Literature

American Literature

British Literature

Critical Reading & Composition

AP Literature & Composition

AP Language & Composition

Math

Pre-Algebra

Algebra

Geometry

Algebra 2

Pre-Calculus

AP Calculus A/B or Calculus 1

AP Calculus B/C or Calculus 2

Statistics

Science

Biology

Chemistry

Physics

An AP science course can be taken after finishing its non-AP counterpart

History

World History

U.S. History

Economics

U.S. Government

An AP history course can be taken after finishing its non-AP counterpart

Studio Art

Intro to Art

Drawing & Painting

Acrylic Painting