

# SOCIAL SCIENCES DEPARTMENT

The Jesuit Social Sciences Department believes that the study of this diverse discipline is an essential component of the school's mission to educate "men for others." The exploration of culture, history, geography, economics, politics and human thought creates a deeper understanding of and appreciation for the world and sensitivity to its people. The Social Sciences Department places particular emphasis on promoting the school's mission by focusing on historical and modern issues of social justice.

In the process of educating, it is the goal of the department to develop a core set of fundamental skills, the most important of which are critical reading, writing and thinking. In lower division classes, students learn skills such as efficient note taking, close reading, and proper study strategies. Upper division courses stress research, composition, and oral presentation skills.

Please Note: All Seniors must enroll in Civics and/or Economics to fulfill graduation requirements.

## Global Studies I/II

Grade Level: 9  
Length: Two semesters  
Type of Course: Core Course  
Prerequisites: None

Global Studies focuses on the non-Western regions of the world. Grounded in geography, the course examines the culture, history, politics, economic and social systems of Africa, East Asia (China, Japan), Latin America and the Middle East. Special emphasis is placed on identifying similarities and differences in these cultures, recognizing ethnocentric world views and understanding the impact of these cultures on the United States.

## Global Studies III: Western Cultures

Grade Level: 10  
Length: One semester  
Type of Course: Core Course  
Prerequisites: Global Studies

This survey course covers both Western and Eastern Europe beginning with Greek Civilization and continuing through post-WWII Europe. Students examine Classical Mediterranean, Medieval, Renaissance, Reformation, Exploration and Colonization, the French and Industrial Revolutions, World Wars I and II, and the Cold War eras. Special emphasis is placed on geography, culture, history, politics, economics and social systems.

## United States History

Grade Level: 11  
Length: Two semesters  
Type of Course: Core Course  
Prerequisites: Global Studies I & II

Students will study the major turning points in American history in the 20th century. Following a review of the nation's beginnings and the impact of

the Enlightenment on US democratic ideals, students build upon previous study of global industrialization to understand the emergency and impact of new technology and a corporate economy, including the social and cultural effects. An emphasis is placed on the expanding role of the federal government and federal courts as well as the continuing tension between the individual and the state. Students consider the major social problems of our time and trace their causes in historical events. Students understand that our rights under the US constitution are a precious inheritance that depends on an educated citizenry for their preservation and protection.

## AP United States History

Grade Level: 11  
Length: Two semesters  
Type of Course: Upper Division Course  
which fulfills grad requirement  
Prerequisites: Application and department approval required

### Criteria for Enrollment:

3.75+ GPA in Social Studies courses; 3.75+ overall GPA; 50+ verbal PSAT or PLAN equivalent; superior recommendations from past teachers

This advanced placement course is a college level course designed for highly motivated juniors. Students enrolled in this class will need to master the content of United States history to succeed on the advanced placement test. Students write several document-based and free response essays to learn strategies for writing college quality essays. The AP test will be given in the middle of May, and students passing this test are given college credit at many universities and colleges. The pace of this class is accelerated, covering one or two chapters per week.

All seniors must have a course in Civics and/or Economics to fulfill the Social Sciences graduation requirement.

### **Civics - American Government**

Grade Level: 12  
(or juniors who have completed U.S. History)  
Length: One semester  
Type of Course: Upper Division Course  
which fulfills grad requirement  
Prerequisites: U.S. History

A study of the three main branches of the federal government (Executive, Judicial, and Legislative) and the place of individual citizens within the governmental framework. Special emphasis will be placed on problems facing the government, with in-depth study of selected Supreme Court decisions, the President's war powers, lobbying, the media, and political campaigns.

### **Economics**

Grade Level: 12  
Length: One semester  
Type of Course: Upper Division Course  
fulfills grad requirement  
Prerequisites: None

An introduction to the basic concepts of Economics, this course involves both theoretical and practical approaches to the ideas of scarcity and exchange. After a survey of the microeconomic principles of supply and demand, consumer choice, and efficient production, the class explores several contemporary economic issues, including business finance, the stock market, poverty and inequality, and the international economic system.

### **AP Government**

Grade Level: 12  
Length: Two semesters  
Type of Course: Upper Division Course  
which fulfills Civics/Economics  
graduation requirement  
Prerequisites: Application and department  
approval required;  
U.S. History teacher approval  
Criteria for Enrollment: 3.2+ Grade point average,  
superior recommendations  
from past teachers

This two semester course focuses on the nature of the American political system, its development over the past 200 years and how it works today. Content areas include principles of our government, interpretation of original documents, political beliefs and behaviors, political parties and

interest groups, national institutions and policy processes and law. Students will have the opportunity to actively participate in this class through individual and group discussion, presentations and research, with a special focus on current issues. One of the primary objectives of this course is to expose students to all areas of information covered on the AP examination.

### **AP Economics**

Grade Level: 12  
Length: Two semesters  
Type of Course: Upper Division Course  
which fulfills Civics / Economics grad requirement  
Prerequisites: Special application and  
Department approval required; U.S. History  
teacher approval  
Criteria for enrollment: Minimum 3.2 GPA in Social  
Sciences and Math

### **AP Microeconomics (during the fall semester)**

This course covers material that is usually taught in a one-semester undergraduate microeconomics course. Students receive an introduction to microeconomic analysis. This occurs when students examine the workings of supply and demand in the determination of price, resource allocation, and distribution. Students analyze different forms of markets as these affect economic efficiency and income distribution. Students should have the ability to submit regularly assigned homework using a home computer. Enrollment in the course presumes a commitment to taking the AP Microeconomics test in May.

### **AP Macroeconomics (during the spring semester)**

This course covers material that is usually taught in a one-semester undergraduate macroeconomics course. Macroeconomics deals with principles that apply to a total economic system, particularly the general levels of output and income. It strongly emphasizes the determinants of aggregate demand and the monetary and fiscal policies used to achieve particular policy objectives. Students will understand concepts such as the multiplier, the accelerator, balance-of-payments equilibrium, inflation, and depreciation as well as institutional arrangements such as open-market operations, deficit spending, and exchange rates.

Students should have the ability to submit regularly assigned homework using a home computer. Enrollment in the course presumes a commitment to taking the AP Macroeconomics test in May.

## SOCIAL SCIENCES ELECTIVES

### The Holocaust

Grade Level: 12  
(or juniors who have completed US History)  
Length: One Semester  
Type of Course: Upper Division Course  
which fulfills grad requirement  
Prerequisites: None

Description: This course will examine the events, culture(s) and individuals whose genesis resulted in one of the greatest crimes in recorded history. This course will enable students to examine and experience moral issues and dilemmas in historical and present day contexts as well as develop a more profound awareness of the circumstances under which social justice can be sacrificed in the name of ethnocentric nationalism.

### Introduction to Psychology

Grade Level: 12  
Length: One Semester  
Type of Course: Upper Division Course  
which fulfills grad requirement  
Prerequisites: None

Description: A survey of the scientific study of human behavior covering experiments, observations, and theories relating to individual differences, personality, development, motivation, social behavior, deviant behavior, genetics, physiology of behavior, learning and cognitive processes, and sensory and perceptual processes. Discussion often centers around major social problems and psychologists' efforts to characterize and solve these problems.