

Westmount Charter School

Course Selection Handbook

Grade 9

2019 - 2020

Updated March 6, 2019

Program Planning and Course Selection for High School

Students at Westmount Charter going into grade 9 have the opportunity to access a variety of supports when planning their high school program.

In February and March, SOURCE classes will address how to plan a balanced program over the course of their high school years. Students will be guided through high school graduation requirements, what to expect in high school at each grade level, how a well-rounded program includes a balance of academics and options, and preparation for post-secondary/life after high school. A template for program planning will be shared with students.

Students have the opportunity to meet individually with a counsellor from Student Services to go through their program plan, ask specific questions, and get support for post-secondary planning.

Students planning to apply to post-secondary (university, college, technical schools) will need to go to the website of the institution and look up the entrance requirements for the program they are interested in. If students are uncertain about their future goals, they can access our Career Centre in Student Services either by dropping in to look at the resources or making an appointment. The Career Centre also provides information on scholarships, and this information is continually updated on our Westmount Charter website under Students--Mid/High--Student Services.

Once program planning meetings have been completed, online course selection will be available online. Students will access this through the PowerSchool portal. Please ensure that you have set up access prior to course selection. Information will be sent out via Communications regarding the date it will be available.

High School Redesign

Alberta schools have been encouraged to form dual credit partnerships with post-secondary institutions and industry. Dual Credit creates more opportunities for students to earn credits in high school and post-secondary institutions at the same time. Westmount Charter School has formed dual credit partnerships with degree granting institutions in Calgary to reflect the needs of our gifted learners. Dual credit partnerships are an opportunity to safely expose our gifted students to the natural next step: post-secondary courses, providing our students with invaluable growth opportunities in both affective and intellectual domains.

These course offerings may vary depending upon the needs/interests of students, our access to programming at these post-secondary institutions, and availability of funding. Students interested in dual credit should discuss this with the learning leader in that subject or our High School Redesign Coordinator.

WESTMOUNT CHARTER SCHOOL

Course Selection Checklist for Grade 9 2019-2020

Grade 9's must register in only ONE if the following:

	Course Name	Extra Fees
REQUIRED COURSES		
	Humanities - Full Year (LA & SS integrated) 9	
	Mathematics 9/10	
	Science	
	Physical Education	
SELECT THREE (3) OPTIONS COURSES:		
	Art	YES
	Comics	YES
	Drama	YES
	Innovations	
	Film Studies	
	French	
	Journalism	
	Model United Nations	
	Music Intermediate Concert Band (Level III)	
	Outdoor Education	YES
	Spanish	
	Yoga	
	Learning Strategies	

Please note that you should have at least three or more years of French or Spanish experience in order to select one of the following language options. If you are coming from a bilingual environment, please contact cathleen.bloxham@westmountcharter.com to discuss future language options.

Additionally, courses are offered based on demand and enrollment, not on first-come, first-served basis. Therefore, while a course(s) may appear on the course selection sheet, they may not appear on the schedule if the demand or enrollment were low.

WESTMOUNT CHARTER SCHOOL

Grade 9 Course Descriptions

REQUIRED COURSES

Humanities 9 - full year course

Humanities 9 is an interdisciplinary approach to English Language Arts 9 and Social Studies 9. This full year course will intertwine plays, poetry and prose to notions of governance, economics, citizenship, quality of life and identity. Students will participate in a post-apocalyptic zombie simulation, read classic and dystopian literature, and, through enriched learning materials, thoroughly develop reading, writing, speaking and thinking skills. Additionally, this course will have two designated Humanities teachers who will facilitate the course in a rigorous high school context.

Mathematics 9 - semestered course

The mathematics curriculum is shaped to foster the development of mathematically literate students. It is developed so that students can extend and apply their learning as an active and constructive process. The grade 9 mathematics curriculum consists of the analysis of change, consistency, number sense, patterns, relationships and spatial reasoning through the study of Patterns and relations, Shape and Space and Statistics and Probability. The mathematical processes used include communication, mental mathematics, estimation, problem solving and technology.

Science 9 - semestered course

Science 9 builds on knowledge gained in earlier science courses. Each unit focuses on a major theme within science and will prepare the student to take further courses in the natural and physical sciences. There are five units: Biological Diversity, Matter and Chemical Change, Environmental Chemistry, Electrical Principles and Technologies, Space Exploration.

Physical Education 9 - semestered course

The students are exposed to aspects of the general outcomes (Activity, Benefits Health, Cooperation and Do It Daily For Life), as well as the basic skills progress from “the selection” to “the refinement” of locomotor, non-locomotor and manipulative skills. This is the last year that Health is included in the PE curriculum, including topics such as drugs, alcohol, relationships and sexual education. Field trips typically include squash and rock climbing.

FINE & PERFORMING ARTS OPTIONS

Art 9

Students will expand their skills and work with a variety of materials to create individual works of art. Students will have the opportunity to explore themes and techniques of interest to them and push their creativity.

Drama 9 is an active class that continues to develop student social, emotional and inter personal skills. An in depth look at text work and scene study exposes students to creative problem solving and critical thinking that helps deepen their understanding of the various challenges facing society and relationships today. Students also are introduced to Shakespeare and learn the technique of armed and unarmed stage combat. It is a great opportunity to explore various forms of literature and is a terrific opportunity for students who prefer active hand on learning.

Intermediate Band (Level III) 9

Prerequisite: Junior 7 Band or minimum 2 years of band experience

This course is for grade 8/9 students with at least 2 years of experience on their instrument, and previous experience playing in a Concert Band. Study is more in-depth than in Junior Band and requires strong commitment to a regular practice routine. The level of difficulty of the music begins the year at Grade 3 and the year ends with some grade 4 repertoire.

SECOND LANGUAGES OPTIONS

French 9 (9 year program)

Prerequisite: French 8

Open to any student who wants to have fun, learn a second language and about Francophone culture. Great transition course between mid-school and high school French. In French 9, students work on sports, housing and arts in French Canada. Lots of group projects and skits. In the course, students expand their conjugations and vocabulary tremendously. Movie and novel studies are the two novelties of French 9 in preparation for high school.

Spanish 9 (6 year program)

Prerequisite: Spanish 8

In this course, students will have the opportunity to demonstrate listening, oral, and written skills in Spanish in different settings. In this level students are introduced to Spanish literature, culture and more advanced grammatical structures.

SUPPLEMENTARY OPTIONS

Comics books and Philosophy 9

Friedrich Nietzsche, The Batman, Jack Kirby, The Matrix, Joseph Campbell, The Punisher and Jim Lee all have something in common. In this course we look at contemporary media, philosophy, visual arts, and the production process. Using media students can relate to and are inundated with, the instructors introduce several veins of philosophical thought, and students are requested to ask themselves some deep questions about who they are. We look at the development of character through the eyes of philosophy, video game design, graphic novels and film. Students are introduced to character design - basic proportion, anatomy and aesthetic choices surrounding characters. We ask students to use these concepts to develop characters and explore what these questions really mean. During the last half of the course students are formed into production teams that mimic a real world comic book studio. In groups of three, students will choose the role of the writer, penciller or inker and develop a small graphic novel.

These graphic novels should allow students to illustrate the culmination of their learning and provide them with a new way to address philosophical and real world issues.

Outdoor Education 9

The grade 9 year of the Westmount outdoor education program focusses outdoor education and wilderness ethics. As it take place everyday it is considered a double class and includes two 3 day camps; a spring or fall backpacking trip in Kananaskis Country and a winter cross country skiing/snowshoeing camp to Mosquito Creek.. Students will attend a series of introduction to kayaking half-day sessions at the U of C pool as well as a multitude of activities in class such as biking, map work, backcountry cooking to name a few. As this an experiential class based around developing the skills necessary to safe; and a responsibly travel in the backcountry these field trips are an expectation of this course.

Film Studies 9

In this course we will examine traditional movies as well as the film genre John Grierson describes as the “creative treatment of actuality,” ie. The documentary. Students will be exposed to films spanning cinematic genres including Film Noir, Comedy, Thriller, Early Silent, Foreign, etc.

Over the course of this semester we will:

- View and examine films (critically, creatively, from a research aspect in writing and in discussion)
- Consult with professionals working in the field and discuss their creative and production process (for instance, what it's like to see a film through from inception right to its presentation).
- Instruction in various production skills necessary to create a video documentary
- and/or students will be asked to critique film content in written and verbal form.

Innovations 7 Students interested in design technologies and hands-on learning will have the opportunity to develop a project and learn the stages of managing a project from start to finish. A variety of materials and equipment will be available to work with as students explore a potential area of interest and address their own design challenges.

Journalism 9

Students will experience journalism in the form of print, online, radio and film, as well as hosting guest speakers who work in the field. The classroom itself will have a newsroom atmosphere where students report, photograph and assemble Newspaper style articles and the instructor is their editor. We will meet at the beginning of each class to discuss story ideas progress and to critique completed stories while the bulk of the class is used to work on individual pieces intended to go to print. Students will work independently, researching and preparing news, feature, editorial and investigative articles.

Learning Strategies 9 Learning Strategies is a course designed to support middle school students as they manage their learning in other courses. The nature of the course is practical as students will focus on five areas of active engagement: understanding self and others as learners; organization and management of time and resources; understanding the learning process; self-advocacy and relational management in a school setting; responding to assessment and evaluation. The course will meet students at the level of skills and understanding that they currently possess and foster individual growth to support learning in their overall school experience.

Model United Nations 9

In this course, students are introduced to the workings and procedures of the United Nations. Students explore international relations in depth in addition to developing skills such as critical thinking, public speaking and negotiating. Students will be taught and offered opportunities to compete in Model United Nations tournaments at Westmount, as well as around the city. Students will engage in several simulations throughout the year. One of these simulations will be the United Nations Security Council, where students will represent the nations on this council and discuss issues facing society. Students will also be offered the opportunity to join our Model United Nations team and compete around Calgary.

Yoga 9

Yoga 9 is building upon the roots and philosophy of the eight limbs of ashtanga yoga. There is no prerequisite for this course. Each class will include a guided meditation as well as a physical asana practice. Students will have an opportunity to experience various styles of yoga as well as an exploration of the chakra system. Working with elements such as breathing, mindfulness and stretching, students will acquire skills to self-regulate their emotions and become self-aware. No yoga experience is necessary, just a willingness to be with your breath on the mat.

Francophone Culture 9

Recommendation: 4 or 5 years in French immersion

Prerequisite: equivalent of FSL 9-9Y

The course will be taught exclusively in French, every day for a term.

The content of this course will change on a year to year basis to allow the course to be repeated for credit. This year, the course will focus on the study of French language, francophone culture and relevant current affairs internationally. Both written texts and oral communication will be key components of this course.

*Students may register in French 10-9Y OR Francophone Culture, not both