

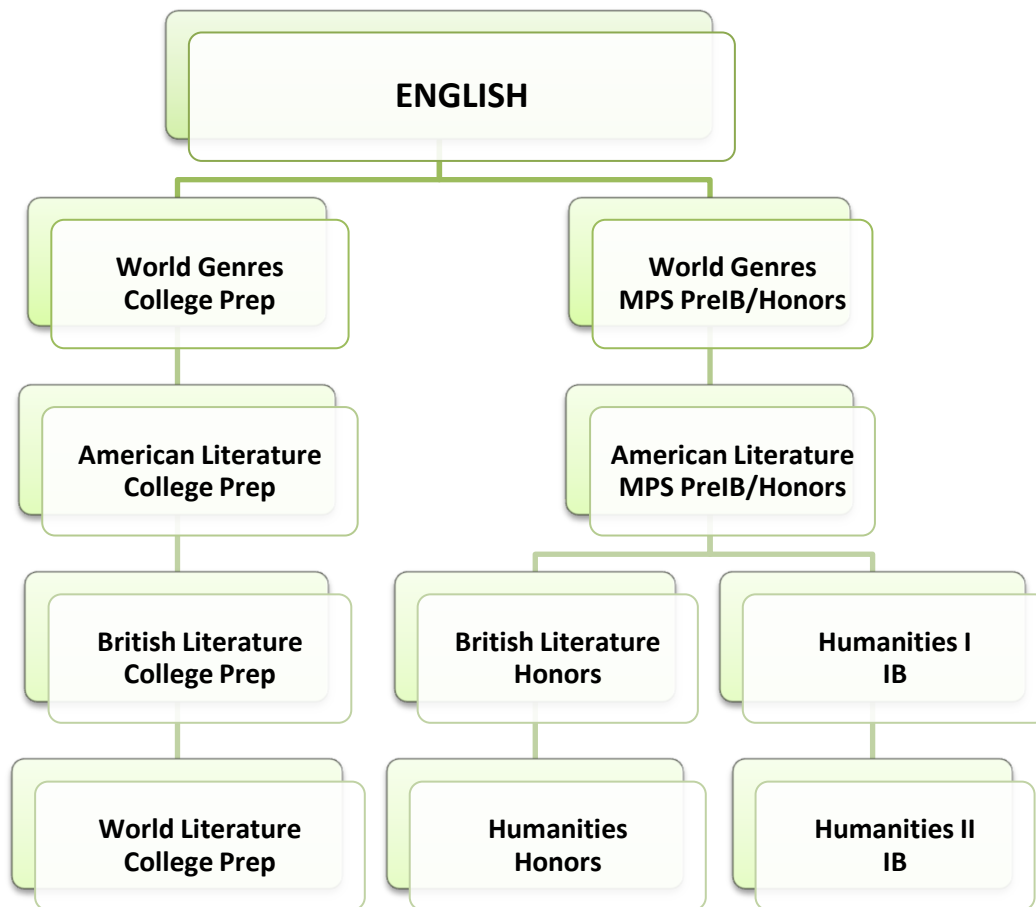
ENGLISH

One of the most effective and humanizing ways that people of different cultures can have access to each other's experiences and concerns is through works of literary merit (Salma Jayyusi The Literature of Modern Arabia).

The English curriculum provides a comprehensive program of studies in the areas of literature, vocabulary, grammar, composition, oratory, and study skills. Students will become proficient in expressing themselves through a wide variety of expository and creative writing assignments and speech activities. Students will begin the study of literature with a genre format as freshmen and continue their sophomore and junior years of study using a chronological approach to American then British literature, concluding their senior studies with an overview of World Literature. The department strives to encompass the study of language and literature for both creative and functional purposes.

We provide our students with the literary skills not only to judge and evaluate what they have read and heard but also to help them broaden and deepen their personal experiences of the written word. Our students approach great literature with a confident knowledge that it is always relevant, is capable of expanding their world views, and always promotes critical thinking, which can only lead to intelligent dialogue as our students develop a global perspective. This, in turn, helps the students develop attitudes of tolerance, empathy and genuine respect for stories different from their own.

Each student will take a freshman, sophomore, junior, and senior yearlong English course. We encourage students to take additional electives for educational and personal fulfillment. The English curriculum choices provide excellent background, not only for college, but for enjoyment and a lifelong interest in literature.



Please note: There is mobility among the College Prep, Honors, and IB Levels based on teacher and/or department recommendations.

Required Term Course: Composition and Speech

Term Electives: Creative Writing, The Twilight Zone, Playwriting, East Asian and Mideastern Literature

Yearlong Elective: Journalism I

WORLD GENRES - COLLEGE PREP

#1001

Freshman

1.00 credit

Yearlong

In this course the student is introduced to literary terminology, analysis, and criticism of several genres of literature by authors from around the world: the short story, the novel, drama, non-fiction and poetry. A variety of materials containing strategies and guidelines designed to improve organization, study, and test-taking skills will be presented early in Term I. The year will include a review of English grammar as needed and opportunities to master composition skills, varied and effective sentence structure, and the thesis driven essay. Oral language activities for freshman year will include expressive oral reading, discussion, and speech techniques. Time will be spent on fundamental high school library and research skills including the use and incorporation of computer technology as well as the iPad in a year-end research paper. Vocabulary building through etymological study is an integral part of this course and the foundation for vocabulary enrichment during freshman year as well as in subsequent English courses at MPS.

WORLD GENRES – MPS PRE-IB/HONORS

#1002

Freshman

1.00 credit

Yearlong

Freshman English Honors (Pre-IB) is an accelerated course of study which is the foundation for the high school student's English program. Each student will become proficient in writing expository, narrative and descriptive writing as well as the standard thesis driven essay. Knowledge of literary terminology will enable the student to analyze various genres: novel, short story, poetry, drama, and non-fiction works. Oral language activities will encompass general speech techniques, discussion, and dramatic reading. Systematic vocabulary and root study will enhance ability in oral and written expression and standardized test taking. The student will receive instruction and opportunity for practice in such fundamental areas as summarizing, note-taking, test-taking, and outlining. The writing process will culminate at year's end in the production of an MLA formatted research paper using primary and secondary resources.

COMPOSITON AND SPEECH-COLLEGE PREP

#1101

Freshman (required)

.33 credit

Term course

Are you afraid to speak in front of an audience? Do you get frustrated trying to organize and write a paper for class? Then the Freshman Communications course will help you master both areas. It is composed of two components: public speaking and writing. The public speaking portion will address the student's ability to communicate in interpersonal situations, small groups, and with mass audiences. Not only will students examine the mechanics and development of communication and public speaking, but they will also address the anxiety that may accompany speaking in front of people by practicing ways to alleviate stress in those situations. By studying and practicing 3-5 (depending on time) types of public speaking, students will develop confidence to successfully participate in both oral and written communication with a wide variety of audiences. In addition, the writing portion of the class will include studying models of essays from *Writer's Inc.*, creating a thesis statement, organizing an outline, composing thesis driven essays, using transitions, learning how to incorporate parenthetical references and a works cited page into a research paper. Prewriting, drafting, proof reading and editing skills will be emphasized. Moreover, a brief study skills unit will be introduced and practiced.

AMERICAN LITERATURE - COLLEGE PREP

#1003

Sophomore

1.00 credit

Yearlong

From the earliest tales shared around ancestral fires to current day novels, literature has been driven by the human search for identity and meaning. College Prep American Literature, a year-long sophomore level course, encourages students to embrace this search and explore life's essential issues through the American literary tradition. Students will engage this unique tradition through its diverse perspectives and genres. Thematic emphasis is placed on the human experience in America, especially as it relates to the student's own life experience. Through instruction and active participation, students will continue to develop the skills needed for literary discussion, analysis, and comparison expected on this level of study. Systematic vocabulary and etymology focus will complement the literary study. Research skills and techniques will be advanced and applied. In addition, students will develop and apply written and oral communication skills both individually and cooperatively.

AMERICAN LITERATURE – MPS PRE-IB/HONORS

#1004

Sophomore

1.00 credit

Yearlong

Honors American Literature, a year-long sophomore level course, is designed to acquaint the student with the works of major American authors from the period of 1500 to the present. Students will interact with high quality works of various genres that reflect the origins and development of an American literary tradition that is unique and diverse. Through a chronological approach, this tradition will be explored in the historical, cultural, and personal context of human experience in America. Relevant connections between the literature and the life of the student will be sought. Through instruction and active participation, students will develop the advanced skills needed for literary discussion, analysis, and comparison expected on this level of study. In addition, students will develop and apply written and oral communication skills both individually and cooperatively. An independent research project is required, as is fundamental utilization of computer technology for research/writing. Moreover, standardized test preparation is incorporated throughout the school year.

BRITISH LITERATURE - COLLEGE PREP

#1005

Junior

1.00 credit

Yearlong

Warriors battle monsters, knights chop the heads off giants, a Scottish thane murders his king to usurp the throne...and all of this happens during term one alone! British literature is rich with exciting and interesting stories that are sure to capture your interest. This yearlong course will trace the origins and development of British literature along with the evolution of the English language. Through the study, students will develop an appreciation of the principal English literary periods: Anglo-Saxon, Medieval, Renaissance, Enlightenment, Romanticism, Victorianism, and the Modern Era. The students will practice critical and creative writing and complete two research papers in MLA format. The English novel will be studied with special emphasis on theme, characterization, plot, point of view, and style, and a Shakespearean tragedy will be compared and contrasted with an emphasis on the Aristotelian theory of the tragic hero. The students will also continue their study of composition, critical thinking, the elements of literature, vocabulary, and SAT preparation. Fundamental utilization of computer technology for research and writing is required. Some of the major works studied by the junior college prep class include: *Grendel* by John Gardner, *Macbeth*, *Angela's Ashes* by Frank McCourt, and *Animal Farm* by George Orwell (or another work chosen by the teacher).

BRITISH LITERATURE - HONORS

#1006

Junior

1.00 credit

Yearlong

Approach British literary history chronologically and trace the development of the English language in the yearlong Junior Honors English class. Students will not only familiarize themselves with the characteristics of each literary and cultural movement but will identify and employ a myriad of literary genres and devices. Students begin with the violent Anglo-Saxons and *Beowulf*, continue with the bawdy *The Canterbury Tales* and stories of chivalry of the Medieval Period and an extensive study of Renaissance Shakespearean tragedy and comedy, examine the humor of the Enlightenment, explore the poetry of the Romantic movement and Victorian period, and delve into modern British literature. Students will have the opportunity to explore and write about the process of adapting a novel to film during third term as part of a cultural arts study. They will also learn inductive and deductive methods of reasoning with an emphasis on critical thinking skills, practice many forms of analytical, critical, SAT, and creative writing, and prepare one major research essay in the MLA format. Students will also have ample opportunity to implement the use of the iPad through reading, research, and multiple creative presentation activities, including short film interpretations of scenes from Shakespeare.

WORLD LITERATURE - COLLEGE PREP

#1007

Senior

1.00 credit

Yearlong

This yearlong course in World Literature offers students an opportunity to look at ideas and topics that transcend national boundaries. Students will meet great writers such as Sophocles and Shakespeare. Students will study unabridged literary works of authors that reflect the wonderful diversity of cultures that comprise our global community. Two novels will be read, discussed, and analyzed. Students will continue their practice of the writing process, do research on the topics considered, and develop and apply written and oral communication skills both individually and cooperatively. Fundamental utilization of computer technology for research and technical writing is required. Technological skills may include, but not be limited to, Microsoft Word, Power Point, and Internet.

HUMANITIES - HONORS

#1008

Senior

1.00 credit

Yearlong

Honors Humanities, a yearlong interdisciplinary course that combines the subject areas of literature, art, architecture, history, language, philosophy, and music, is regarded as the capstone experience for seniors. This rigorous class is especially designed to prepare students for their first year of college classes, and the study and practice of the writing process is emphasized as a continuation of the junior honors year. In addition to pursuing the cultural arts projects, which encourage students to explore the arts as they are available in our community, students will study major historical periods, starting with the cradle of Western civilization and moving through the modern age, allowing them to become more aware of global cultures. Students are expected to write literary analyses, short essays, and creative works, to read extensive, assigned materials, and to deliver oral presentations based on research. Students will engage in reading and research in addition to a myriad of creative projects through the use of the iPad, including the construction of web pages using digital photography. Students will conduct major research projects on topics such as Classical and Gothic architecture, religious customs, and Greek mythology and will read the major works of *Hamlet* and *Oedipus Rex*, among others.

HUMANITIES I - IB

#1012

Junior

1.00 credit

Yearlong

This challenging International Baccalaureate level study, designed as a pre-university course in literature, follows the IB curriculum and requirements, which have recently changed. It is available for students who INTEND TO PURSUE AT LEAST A CERTIFICATE IN IB. Admission to the program is highly selective and has the following requirements: first—recommendations of both sophomore teachers and IB English teachers; second—a desire on the part of the student to explore literature on the deepest level of analysis and critical thinking; third—a determination on the part of the student to improve his/her writing style and oral skills; and lastly, an intention to take the IB exam in English. IB Humanities learners strive to be inquirers who develop their natural curiosity acquiring literary skills necessary to attain excellence in both writing and oration. They are knowledgeable as they explore literary concepts that have local and global significance. They are thinkers who exercise initiative in applying both creative and critical thinking skills as they approach classics learning how to respond to literature in both written and oral form. Lastly, they are high school students who can balance sophisticated work with some lighter classroom activity such as cultural study of IKEBANA, Japanese flower arrangement, trips to local theaters to view plays being studied, or going to lunch at local restaurants to taste the international cuisine found in the novels being read. The course moves from this year, which is considered an “oral” year, one that is based on works of British Literature with an emphasis on the IB oral to the following year, an “essay” year, which will focus on World Literature and the writing of IB essays. Both approaches will be assessed according to IB specifications. **A deposit on the IB exam fee is required for registration.**

HUMANITIES II – IB

#1014

Senior

1.00 credit

Yearlong

Seniors, who will be sitting for the IB 2013 exam, must conclude their two year International Baccalaureate program with this pre-university course in literature, which will follow the newly revised IB curriculum. It is available for students who INTEND TO PURSUE AT LEAST A CERTIFICATE IN IB. The IB students, who began their studies in the 2011-2012 school year, will continue their two year IB program focusing on commentary writing and orals. This year is considered an “oral” year, one in which the students will prepare for their Individual Oral Commentaries and continue their Individual Oral Presentations while studying literature in their own English language and literature in translation. Sophisticated training in oration and critical thinking skills are central to success as students read, analyze and comment on classic pieces of literature selected from the newly revised IB Book List. IB students will take their exams in the spring of the year with confidence after two years of stringent preparation.

ENGLISH ELECTIVES

JOURNALISM I-COLLEGE PREP

#1513

Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, Senior

1.00 credit

Yearlong

This course is designed to help students develop a working understanding of newspaper production. Students will explore the nature of print journalism, its history, and its ethical implications. As staff members of *Shorelines*, the school newspaper, which will be reintroduced to the school this year, students will develop the practical skills essential to journalists: interviewing, writing, editing, and layout design. They will utilize current technology in production.

CREATIVE WRITING-COLLEGE PREP

#1509 & #1511

Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, Senior

.66 credit

Two term course

Prerequisite: Teacher approval

Creative Writing is a two term course. Students must sign up for both #1509 and #1511.

Creative writing is a two term course designed for the student interested in writing for fun and the student interested in writing as a career. The introduction to the course will be spent on poetry forms and the writing of verse. It is important for students to discover their unique voice! A second component of this course is the continuation of a project begun four years ago to write the stories of the MPS family with the goal of publishing a booklet, which displays Mercyhurst's uniqueness. A process of interviewing, writing, editing, laying out one's work with graphics, and publishing "in house" fills the requirements of the course. The format of the class is informal and creative but demanding and productive. Students are given time in class to simply write poetry, short stories, and one act plays. Students journal, critique each other's works, lay out and produce a substantial body of writing that is graded, published, and enjoyed by many. The end product is the sequel to MPeSSence—Volume III.

PLAYWRITING-COLLEGE PREP

#1525

Junior, Senior

.33 credit

Term course

To begin, students will study Aristotelian dramatic structure and read a variety of plays to analyze plot and character development. In addition to writing activities intended to spark creativity, students will also compose a series of monologues. Students in this course will write their own 10-minute plays as a culmination of their study.

THE TWILIGHT ZONE-COLLEGE PREP

#1523

Sophomore, Junior, Senior

.33 credit

Term course

One of television's most rightly revered series, The Twilight Zone (CBS, 1959-64) stands as the role model for TV anthologies. Its trenchant sci-fi/fantasy parables explore humanity's hopes, despairs, prides and prejudices in metaphoric ways conventional drama cannot. This series hosted and written by Rod Serling also focuses on ordinary folks who suddenly find themselves in extraordinary, usually supernatural, situations. The stories typically end with an ironic twist that sees the guilty punished. This elective course has students view the various episodes and then have in-depth discussions of the themes, irony, and social and political satire incorporated into the storylines. Students will be required to partake in high level analytical class discussions, write several evaluations of assigned episodes, and develop their own episode using iPad technology.

EAST ASIAN AND MIDEASTERN LITERATURE-COLLEGE PREP

#1527

Junior, Senior

.33 credit

Term course

This elective will begin by presenting the Ancient Wisdom literature found in both the East Asian traditions of China and Japan and the Mideastern texts such as the Torah and the Koran emphasizing the commonalities of excellence found in these early philosophical, moral, and ethical teachings. Works of Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism will be introduced, discussed and compared to Jewish and Islamic scriptures. As the course continues, literature including poetry from the Tang Dynasty, translation of LiBai's work, conventions of courtly love in *The Tale of Genji*, haiku, and Buddhist *Essays in Idleness* will be read. The course will move chronologically to include modern literature such as Mao Zedong's *Poems*, an excerpt from the award winning memoir of the bombing of Hiroshima *Black Rain*, Jewish literature from the Holocaust, and conclude with a modern graphic novel *Persepolis* of an Iranian teenager living under the reign of the 20th century Ayatollah Khomeini. The teacher will welcome commentary from international students who have studied such literature in their homelands to enhance class interaction.

COURSES FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

THE AMERICAN CULTURE-COLLEGE PREP

#8213 (term)	Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, Senior	.33 credit	Term course
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This class is for international students during their initial year at Mercyhurst Prep School. Students enroll for 1 or 2 terms based on their level of mastery of English skills related to American Culture.

Topics covered include: orientation to MPS; food, social and etiquette skills; American holidays; intro to U.S. history; the 50 states; American art, music, sports, literature and humor.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING (ELL)-COLLEGE PREP

#8203 (yearlong)	Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, Senior	1.00 credit	Yearlong
#8204 (term)		.33 credit	Term course

This class is for international students during their initial year at Mercyhurst Prep School. Students enroll for 1-3 terms based on their level of mastery of English grammar, writing, reading comprehension and vocabulary skills.

Topics covered include: vocabulary (18 units); reading comprehension: identifying the main idea, details, sequencing, drawing conclusions, using word parts, comparisons; grammar: verb usage, subject verb agreement, prepositions, and articles; and basic writing skills.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING-COLLEGE PREP

#8215 (term)	Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, Senior	.33 credit	Term course
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This course is an individualized introduction to basic vocabulary and English comprehension for international students auditing classes at Mercyhurst Prep during the spring term.