

# Social Studies

## PHILOSOPHY OF THE SOCIAL STUDIES DEPARTMENT

The Lemont High School Social Studies Department believes that students should develop the following characteristics:

- Use of cooperation and collaboration in decision making
- Utilization of analytical and critical thinking skills
- Enhancement of self image
- Understanding of how to function as effective and contributing members of a democratic society

Courses offered within the Social Studies curriculum help students demonstrate an understanding and competency of historical and economic principles as participating citizens in our ever-changing society.

**Based on abilities and course level, students are expected to:**

- Attain historical literacy by learning about world events, traditions, patterns and changes
- Make informed decisions that transcend time and cultures
- Understand the human experience by learning how individual and group behaviors impact diverse populations
- Achieve economic literacy by applying the process of choice and the allocation of resources and how they relate to individuals, groups and societies
- Use democratic principles to act responsibly and productively within their community and take part in participatory citizenship

**Grading Standards:** Student grades are determined based on their performance in the areas of research, discussion, writing and examinations.

### CORE COURSES - SOCIAL STUDIES

#### Cultural Geography

**Grades Course Open To:** 9                      **Credit:** 1.0

**Prerequisite:** None

**Description:** This course introduces students to the concepts of cultural geography, helping them to learn the major regions of the world and compare and contrast, analyze and evaluate those regions through various themes. Through discussion, debate, simulations, research, lectures and role playing, students gain critical thinking skills and examine history, cultures, environment, demographics, economic systems and political systems of the world. The content of the course examines the commonalities among, and differences between, the world's regions. Topics of study include, among others, map skills, world religions, regional histories, economics, political science, demographics and geography.

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## Consumer Education

**Grades Course Open To:** 11-12      **Credit:** 0.5

**Prerequisite:** None

**Description:** This course addresses skills that are necessary for students to possess in modern society. Students become aware of the benefits of being an effective consumer in America. They gain knowledge about taking out credit in their own names - including credit cards, college loans and home loans - and are exposed to different methods of saving and investing their money. Students also discover the important choices that consumers must consider when making major purchases, such as houses and automobiles. The course places a strong emphasis on financial planning for college and beyond. **Note:** This course, or an equivalent, is required for graduation from Lemont High School. **Note:** This course is not accepted by the NCAA Clearinghouse.

## U.S. History

**Grades Course Open To:** 11-12      **Credit:** 1.0

**Prerequisite:** None

**Description:** This course covers events related to the political, economic and social development of the United States, with attention given to the relationship of past events to current affairs. Students are introduced to basic concepts relative to American History, and are expected to discuss a broad variety of problems in American History by developing abilities to analyze critically, synthesize and evaluate subject matter. Through discussion, debate, simulations, lectures, role playing, and research papers, students study a number of areas, ranging from colonial development and the Revolutionary War, to the Civil War and Reconstruction, to World War I and II and new America.

## AP U.S. History

**Grades Course Open To:** 11-12      **Credit:** 1.0 - weighted for AP

**Prerequisite:** Grade of B or better in any Social Studies courses taken as a freshman or sophomore, and grade of B or better in both English I (all levels) and English II (all levels)

**Fees:** AP U.S. History exam (paid at fall registration)

**Description:** With a more advanced and in depth curriculum, this course covers events related to the political, economic and social development of the United States, with attention given to the relationship of past events to current affairs. The course provides students with analytical skills necessary to deal critically with problems and materials in this country's history. Students are introduced to basic concepts relative to American History, and are expected to discuss a broad variety of problems in American History by developing abilities to analyze critically, synthesize and evaluate subject matter. Through discussion, debate, simulations, lectures, role playing, and research papers, students study a number of areas, ranging from colonial development and the Revolutionary War, to the Civil War and Reconstruction, to World War I and II and new America. This course involves mandatory summer reading and writing assignments that must be completed by the first day of class. **Note:** All students enrolled in this course **must** take the AP U.S. History exam in the spring.

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## American Government

**Grades Course Open To:** 12                      **Credit:** 0.5

**Prerequisite:** None

**Description:** This course stresses the processes of the American government and how it relates to the community it serves. Students examine the branches of government, the constitution, the bill of rights, separation of powers, and the fundamental beliefs of a democratic society. Special attention is given to the party system, the conflict over rights and the interpretation of the constitution, among other topics. Areas of study include modern political and economic systems, civil rights, voters and their behavior, electoral process, foreign affairs, national security, the Illinois constitution and local government, among others. Students develop the ability to analyze critically, synthesize and evaluate subject matter through a variety of methods, including discussion, debate, lectures, role playing, observation of local government in action, and essay writing.

## AP American Government

**Grades Course Open To:** 12                      **Credit:** 1.0 - weighted for AP

**Prerequisite:** Grade of B or better in any Social Studies courses taken as a freshman, sophomore or junior, and grade of B or better in English I (all levels), English II (all levels) and English III (all levels)

**Fees:** AP American Government exam (paid at fall registration)

**Description:** This advanced-level course gives students an analytical perspective on government and politics in the United States. It includes both the study of general concepts used to interpret U.S. politics, as well as analysis of specific examples. Students become familiar with various institutions, groups, beliefs and ideas that constitute U.S. politics. They also become acquainted with a variety of theoretical perspectives and explanations for various behaviors and outcomes, including constitutional underpinnings of U.S. government, political beliefs, political parties, interest groups and mass media, institutions of national government, public policy, and civil rights and liberties. This course involves mandatory summer reading and writing assignments that must be completed by the first day of class, and unlike the regular American Government course, spans two semesters. **Note:** All students enrolled in this course **must** take the AP American Government exam in the spring.

## American Problems

**Grades Course Open To:** 12                      **Credit:** 0.5

**Prerequisite:** None

**Description:** This course provides students with the opportunity to discuss and debate major social, economic, political, international and ethical problems through the use of a number of techniques, including group discussion, debate, simulations and speeches. An emphasis is placed on logic, propaganda analysis, semantic accuracy, problem solving processes and securing adequate and reliable information through the use of valid research techniques. The course prepares students for active democratic citizenship and helps them effectively trace economic, social, military, global and cultural problems they may confront in their adult lives. Students actively participate in problem solving discussions, extensive research and other activities in order to become well-informed and logical thinkers.

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## ELECTIVE COURSES - SOCIAL STUDIES

### AP Psychology

**Grades Course Open To:** 11-12      **Credit:** 1.0 - weighted for AP

**Prerequisite:** Grade of B or better in any Social Studies courses taken as a freshman and sophomore, and grade of B or better in both English I (all levels) and English II (all levels)

**Fees:** AP Psychology exam (paid at fall registration)

**Description:** This advanced-level course introduces students to the methods of studying human behavior and how the mind functions, and unlike the academic course, meets for a full year. Exploring topics more in depth, students learn about the many areas of the field of psychology and various widely practiced perspectives. A number of areas are studied, from behavior and emotion, to adolescence and adulthood, to abnormal behavior and social psychology. The course provides a background study in a number of areas, including learning, motivation, thinking, intelligence and conflict, among others. Students develop the ability to analyze critically, synthesize and evaluate subject matter through discussion, debate, simulations, lectures, role playing, conducting surveys, observational research, reflective analysis, and interviews of personnel in the field of psychology. The course is intended to prepare students for a college-level course in the subject area, and accordingly, students are expected to do a great deal of reading and writing. This course involves mandatory summer reading and writing assignments that must be completed by the first day of class. **Note:** All students enrolled in this course **must** take the AP Psychology exam in the spring.

### Cultural Diversity

**Grades Course Open To:** 10-11-12      **Credit:** 0.5

**Prerequisite:** None

**Description:** This course analyzes the basic concepts of prejudice, intolerance and discrimination. Students identify various cultures in the United States and discuss both the diversity and intolerance that exists among them. Major areas of study include racism and ethnic intolerance, religious intolerance, and gender, class and other areas of prejudice and discrimination. Students complete several biographies, a research project and film analysis, and participate in various class activities that explore the concepts of cultural diversity and tolerance. Students complete a series of projects throughout the semester that analyze the diversity within our culture.

### Human Rights & World Affairs

**Grades Course Open To:** 10-11-12      **Credit:** 0.5

**Prerequisite:** Grade of A in semester 1 of Cultural Geography (applies to sophomores only)

**Description:** This course helps students identify basic human rights as outlined by the United Nations, and analyzes the roles of the United Nations and the United States in promoting and protecting basic human rights. The course focuses on a number of violations of human rights, including the Armenian Genocide, the Ukrainian Famine-Genocide, and more recent atrocities in Cambodia, Bosnia, Rwanda and Sudan. Additionally, students examine the extreme violations of human rights and genocidal policies by the governments of China, Burma, Laos and Indonesia, among others. Students analyze the geopolitical difficulties involved in preventing genocide and protecting human rights, and learn to identify the root causes of genocide. The course also examines the creation of the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights, the United Nations Charter on Genocide, genocide prevention, and the geopolitical issue of human rights and foreign policy. The course examines the policies of the United States in relation to these events, and the abilities of nations to prevent human rights violations and genocide.

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## Psychology

**Grades Course Open To:** 11-12      **Credit:** 0.5

**Prerequisite:** None

**Description:** This course introduces students to the methods of studying human behavior and how the mind functions. Students learn about the many areas of the field of psychology and various widely practiced perspectives. A number of areas are studied, from behavior and emotion, to adolescence and adulthood, to abnormal behavior and social psychology. The course provides a background study in a number of areas, including learning, motivation, thinking, intelligence and conflict, among others. Students develop the ability to analyze critically, synthesize and evaluate subject matter through discussion, debate, simulations, lectures, role playing, conducting surveys, observational research, completing research papers, and through interviews of personnel in the field of psychology.

## Sociology

**Grades Course Open To:** 11-12      **Credit:** 0.5

**Prerequisite:** None

**Description:** This course helps students examine humankind in social groups and as individuals, and affords them the opportunity to learn about themselves and others in group behavior. The subjects of various cultures and current social issues such as crime, minorities and war provide for stimulating discussion and projects. Students develop the ability to analyze critically, synthesize and evaluate subject matter through discussion, debate, simulations, lectures, role playing, conducting surveys, observational research, reflective analysis, and interviews of personnel in the field of sociology. A number of subject areas are addressed, from sociological theories and social research, structure and interaction, to race, ethnic groups and social movements and change, among others.

## World History

**Grades Course Open To:** 10-11-12      **Credit:** 1.0

**Prerequisite:** None

**Description:** This course provides students perspective of past events and their relationship to the modern world. Students learn how past events have contributed to the shape of modern culture and civilization, and study the geographic regions of ancient civilizations in comparison with today's world. Through the study of ancient civilizations, including Greece and Rome, students learn the major ways in which such past civilizations have affected modern civilization. Other areas of study include the Medieval Period, the Reformation, the Renaissance and the Modern Age, as well as other significant periods and events. Students use multiple resources to participate in both group and individual research projects.