

# ARTS & HUMANITIES ACADEMY

## COURSE OFFERINGS

**AHA!**

The following courses will be considered as fulfilling the program requirements for AHA. Every student must take six courses per year. Students enrolled in small schools fulfill the small school requirements and any other courses students have room for in their schedule are taken from the individual departments. Refer to page 49 for department options.

	CREDITS EARNED	UC/CSU	UC/CSU SUBJECT AREA REQUIREMENT
<b>9TH GRADE</b>			
<b>HUMANITIES: ENGLISH</b>	10	●	“b” - English
<b>HUMANITIES: HISTORY</b>	10		
<b>ADVANCED BIOLOGY</b>	10	●	“d” - Science
<b>ART WHEEL</b>	10	●	“f” - Visual/Performing Arts
<b>10TH GRADE</b>			
<b>HUMANITIES: WORLD LITERATURE</b>	10	●	“b” - English
<b>HUMANITIES: WORLD HISTORY</b>	10	●	“a” - History
<b>HONORS HUMAN ANATOMY</b>	10	●	“d” - Science
<b>ART WHEEL</b>	10	●	“f” - Visual/Performing Arts
<b>11TH GRADE</b>			
<b>AMERICAN LITERATURE</b>	10	●	“b” - English
<b>U.S. HISTORY</b>	10	●	“a” - History
<b>CHEMISTRY</b>	10	●	“d” - Science
<b>ARTS SPECIALIZATION*</b>	10	●	“f” - Visual/Performing Arts
<b>12TH GRADE</b>			
<b>GENRE IN LITERATURE/COMPOSITION</b>	10	●	“b” - English
<b>ECONOMICS/GOVERNMENT</b>	10	●	“g” - Elective/“a” - History
<b>BEST ENGLISH/HISTORY</b>	10	●	“g” - Elective
<b>ARTS SPECIALIZATION*</b>	10	●	“f” - Visual/Performing Arts

\* This class is selected by the student from the advanced arts offerings in the Art Department.

# Arts & Humanities Academy!



The Arts and Humanities Academy (AHA!), a small school within Berkeley High School, provides an innovative, rigorous academic and arts curriculum. AHA! began in the fall of 2005, and is now a four-year program. As a community of artists and scholars, AHA! students use the lens of the arts to seek creative solutions to academic and artistic challenges. The curriculum focuses on AHA!'s Three Guiding Questions:

**HOW ARE WE SCHOLARLY IN OUR ART MAKING AND ARTISTIC IN OUR SCHOLARSHIP?**

**HOW CAN WE USE CRITIQUE TO GROW AS ARTISTS AND PEOPLE?**

**HOW CAN WE BOTH REFLECT AND AFFECT OUR ENVIRONMENT THROUGH ART?**

AHA! students learn by doing. Interdisciplinary projects structure the core of AHA!'s educational philosophy, combining Arts, Humanities and Science curricula. Emphasizing collaborative work, student responsibility and critical thinking, these projects inspire high levels of achievement by linking student interest in the arts to all aspects of their education. Students emerge as Seniors with a holistic understanding of their environment and the surrounding world, presenting a Senior Inquiry Project that braids together strands of discovery from their academic and artistic studies.

Critical thinking skills are vital to our students' development as responsible citizens. AHA! teaches a school-wide approach to critique, applying *Five Levels of Questions for Critical Thinking* throughout the curriculum. Through these consistent reflections, students become adept at analyzing an artistic or academic problem from multiple perspectives: experiential, literal, interpretive, thematic and evaluative. Mastering this skill of critical reflection, AHA! students become life long learners and contributing community members.

Entering freshmen in 2008-2009 will join the AHA! community after being selected by BHS's lottery process. With just sixty students per grade, students quickly feel the benefits of a smaller school setting. Throughout their four years, AHA! students study science, English, history and the arts within the small school; they select math, world language and physical education courses from the many options from individual departments. Advanced Placement (AP) and honors courses are available in the arts, science, math and world languages. AHA! courses meet the California Content Standards and most meet the UC/CSU entrance requirements; students graduate from AHA! prepared for success in a college or university and continued pursuits in the arts.

## The Curriculum

### AHA!'s Guiding Questions

During all four years in AHA! students take science, English, history and arts classes within the small school. Each year's curriculum is formatted around *Guiding Questions* that connect the academic curriculum with students' artistic and psychosocial development. Teachers plan curriculum collaboratively, creating interdisciplinary projects that engage the arts, science and humanities, while pushing students to reflect deeply on their related **GUIDING QUESTIONS**:

- ▶ **9TH GRADE:** Who am I as an artist? What influences my perception and guides my expressions? What is my lens?
- ▶ **10TH GRADE:** How can I draw from the world to inform my artistic work?
- ▶ **11TH GRADE:** How have artists reflected upon and contributed to U.S. history? Where do I stand as an emerging artist in this context?
- ▶ **12TH GRADE:** As an artist, how can I affect my community and the world in a significant way?

### Freshman and Sophomore Years

All AHA! freshmen and sophomores are enrolled together in The Arts Wheel. The Arts Wheel is a sequence of eight visual and performing arts classes designed to give students a thorough introduction to all arts disciplines. Here, students practice artistic principles that link all the art forms and develop a vocabulary for artistic engagement and aesthetic perception, setting the foundation for selecting an arts specialization in their final two years. The classes are designed with mixed grade level – freshmen and sophomores together in the same class. This allows students in their first year at Berkeley High School to be mentored into the school by the second year students who already know the ropes and can model the maturity, self-reflection, and collaborative mindset we expect of AHA! students.

Academic courses in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade include AHA! Humanities English and History and Advanced Biology. Sophomores take World Literature, World History and Honors Anatomy.

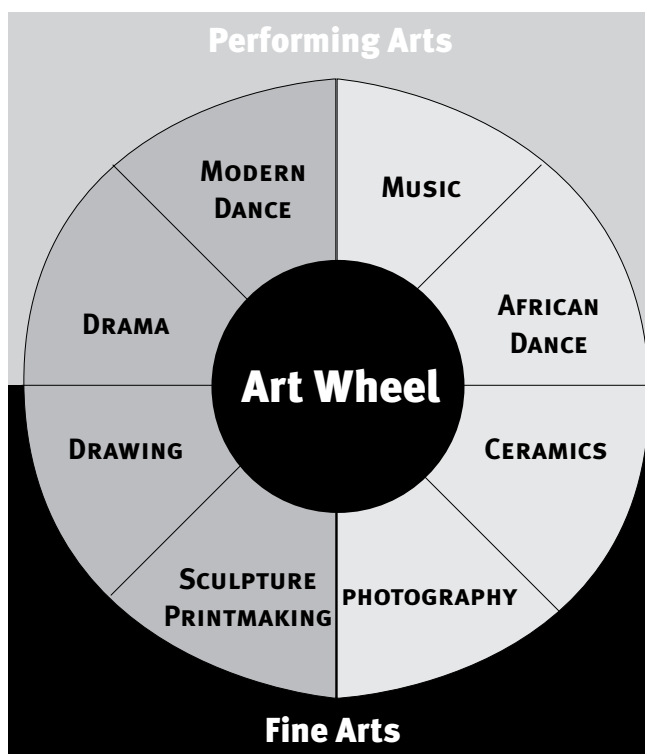
## Junior and Senior Years

As juniors and seniors, students select an artistic area of specialization on which to focus and are expected to enroll in the highest level classes in their area of specialization. Options include: Advanced Placement Visual Arts, Advanced Photography, Advanced Ceramics, Advanced Theater Projects, Dance Production, Advanced Afro-Haitian, Orchestra, Band or Jazz Ensemble.

Academic courses in the junior year of AHA! are American Literature and Cultural Studies, U.S. History and Chemistry. Seniors take Film Theory and Analysis, Composition, Government and Economics.

### AHA! Senior Inquiry Project

Seniors orient their year to support their Senior Inquiry Project. At the beginning of the year, students formulate a question relating to their artistic practice, their educational or professional goals and the community or world at large. Their year is then designed to pursue investigation of this interest by conducting an in-depth research project that includes interviews, readings and an internship in the community. In the Thesis Presentation at the end of the senior year, students present their findings to a panel of teachers, peers and community members, for review.



# Course Descriptions

## Freshman Year

### **HUMANITIES: ENGLISH (P)** YEAR • 10 CREDITS

This class challenges students as writers, develops reading skills, and introduces critical thinking, debate, and discussion. The thematic focus of the year, “*Us and Them*”, invites students to explore their own identity, to learn how to identify with others, to hear and be heard in a world of cultural and ideological differences. Students read a selection of fiction and nonfiction and write in a variety of genres, including: personal narrative, poetry, story, letter, journal and analytical essay.

### **HUMANITIES: HISTORY (P)** YEAR • 10 CREDITS

This class studies diverse social issues (including race, ethnicity, class, gender and sexuality) by looking at how artists throughout history have addressed their own cultural concerns. Students learn to analyze, question and respond to multiple points of view, building a strong foundation for continued studies in the Humanities throughout High School. Content is examined through historical, sociological, anthropological, cultural and psychological lenses.

### **ADVANCED BIOLOGY (P)** YEAR • 10 CREDITS

*Why is life so diverse? What are the fundamental processes that sustain life? How is new life created? How do all living things live together?* In addition to discussing these core concepts of biology, this course also explores applications of biological science and their effect on our world. By searching for answers to these guiding questions, students come to understand that science is not just work conducted in sterile laboratories. It is a way of questioning what is unknown and finding the answers ourselves. Like artists, scientists research the information of their senses to better understand and interpret their surroundings.

### **AHA! ART WHEEL (P)** YEAR • 10 CREDITS (5 PHYSICAL EDUCATION/5 VISUAL ARTS)

The AHA! Arts Wheel is a two-year sequence of visual and performing arts classes designed to give students a thorough introduction to all arts disciplines. It is a requirement for all AHA! Freshmen and Sophomores. Each year students choose one performing and one visual art from the following:

*Music in Culture, Ceramics, West African Dance, Photography, Theater, Sculpture & Printmaking, Drawing, and Modern Dance.* Students in the AHA! Arts Wheel make connections between design concerns and studio habits of mind that are common to all art forms. This builds a foundation from which students select an arts specialization in their junior and senior years. (*Note: 2008-2009 Arts Wheel courses listed in italics.*)

## Sophomore Year

### **HUMANITIES: WORLD LITERATURE (P)** YEAR • 10 CREDITS

This class is structured around the theme of the hero: *What is the hero’s journey? How does a hero become a hero? Is the hero a universal concept, or one limited to certain cultures? Is the hero always an individual, or can a group of people collectively be the agent for action, conflict, or change?* Students read a selection of novels, short stories, poetry and mythology from Africa, Asia, Latin America, the Middle East and Europe. Writings include narratives, literary response, comic books, persuasive essays, speeches and slide presentations.

### **HUMANITIES: WORLD HISTORY (P)** YEAR • 10 CREDITS

This course examines early civilizations, colonialism, industrialization, imperialism, revolution and globalization. Posing the question, *Who makes History?*, the course focuses on historical research, inquiry and analysis skills, with emphasis on understanding bias in historical documents. Through the development of critical thinking, reading, writing and research skills, students learn to understand the world around them and the major global changes of our time, leaving the class better equipped to thrive in our increasingly complex world.

### **HONORS ANATOMY (P)** YEAR • 10 CREDITS

The life sciences in AHA! are structured into a 2-year sequence: Freshmen study general biology, setting the stage for this course sophomore year. Honors Anatomy builds on student understanding of cells and extends knowledge in the more specific areas of anatomy and physiology. This course studies the human body — how it is built, and how its various parts function alone and with one another. Understanding one’s own body is essential for maintaining health and coping with disease. This course teaches students to critically evaluate the

latest fads in diet, trends in exercise, consequences of current fashion, doctors' recommendations, and claims about new approaches to health found in today's media.

**AHA! ART WHEEL (P)** YEAR • 10 CREDITS  
(5 PHYSICAL EDUCATION/5 VISUAL ARTS) See Freshman Year for course description.

## Junior Year

**AMERICAN LITERATURE (P)** YEAR • 10 CREDITS

American Literature examines the fiction, poetry, plays, radio, news, film, and myth of American Culture. The class explores what is meant by "American" stories, the mythology of America and of the American Dream as it is reflected in our culture. Students write poetry, drama, literary analysis, persuasive, and personal essays.

**U.S. HISTORY (P)** YEAR • 10 CREDITS

Following a review of the major events of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, this course examines significant turning points in American history in the twentieth century: changes in the ethnic make up of the United States; the emergence of the U.S. as a world power; causes and effects of the major wars; and the social movements towards equality for ethnic minorities and women.

**CHEMISTRY (P)** YEAR • 10 CREDITS

Why does soda fizz when you open a bottle? How does a cold pack get cold? Why does popcorn pop? The answers to these questions lie in the study of chemistry. This course focuses students on the world around them, equipping them with a basic understanding of the chemical behavior of matter. Topics include: atomic-molecular theory, weight relations, the mole concept, behavior of gases, solutions, the structure of matter, equilibrium, acid-base theory, oxidation-reduction reactions and chemical bonding.

**AHA! ADVANCED DRAWING AND PAINTING (P)  
(PRE-AP STUDIO ART)** YEAR • 10 CREDITS

This class thoroughly explores drawing and touches on painting and printmaking techniques. The focus is on improving drawing skills by making a connection between what the eyes see and what the hand records on paper. Drawing is best learned while translating the three dimensional to the two dimensional; for this reason we will draw mostly from life and a little from photographs. Students will work

with form and content: both the drawing and the idea behind the drawing will be emphasized. Using materials including graphite, paint, color pencil, charcoal, etching and screen-printing, students develop visual intelligence by gaining a thorough understanding of the principles and elements of design. Work generated in this course will prepare students for Advanced Placement Art in their senior year.

## Senior Year

**GENRE IN LITERATURE (P)** SEMESTER • 5 CREDITS

This course closely analyzes literature, focusing on a specific genre. Students read representative works within the genre, discuss common themes and elements, research literary criticism surrounding the genre and write several analytical essays. Student preference and availability determines genre. Some possible genres are Science Fiction, Gothic Literature, the American West/South/East/North, the Proletariat, Cinema, Education, Nature, etc. This class changes subjects every semester. This course fulfills UC/CSU English (b) requirements..

**COMPOSITION (P)** SEMESTER • 5 CREDITS

This course focuses students' writing skills specifically on artistic critique and personal expression. Following the Fall semester's foundation, students continue to analyze film from a range of perspectives and begin to critique a variety of artwork produced by fellow students. Students develop an overall ability to express their artistic ideas and opinions in writing. The personal expression portion of the course focuses on personal memoir and development of an Artist Statement related to the students' selected arts specialization and final portfolio presentation.

**ECONOMICS (P)** SEMESTER • 5 CREDITS

This Fall semester course introduces students to basic economic theories and principles as well as economic history and current economic issues. Students explore how globalization impacts their own lives and how the U.S. economy impacts the rest of the world. The course teaches students the foundations of macro and micro economics, statistical analysis and personal economic planning. As artists, we focus on the commercial aspects of the art world including an exploration of how value is placed on art.

**GOVERNMENT (P)**

SEMESTER • 5 CREDITS

This one-semester course examines the ways governments organize to meet the basic needs of the communities they serve. Students study the structure and function of legislative and judicial systems on the local, state, and federal level. Students explore issues of civil liberties, examine diverse models of government, and evaluate the effectiveness of the U.S. system of governance. The class studies current and historic struggles between the people and their governments as well as the roles artists have played in these struggles. The course emphasizes research and writing skills, public speaking and critical analysis of perspective.

**AP STUDIO ART (AP)**

YEAR • 10 CREDITS

See description in Arts Department.

**All Grades****STUDENT LEADERSHIP**

YEAR • 10 CREDITS

Open to any grade level, the purpose of this course is to teach effective and ethical leadership skills.

**JACKET**

YEAR • 10 CREDITS

Students in this course produce the school newspaper and make up the Jacket staff.

**YEARBOOK PUBLICATION**

YEAR • 10 CREDITS

The yearbook course produces the yearbook once a year. Students learn graphic design, business management, and how to write in a yearbook style. The requirements of the course include a willingness to work hard, work after school when necessary and sometimes on weekends in order to meet deadlines. **PREREQUISITE:** Teacher recommendation. This course does not fulfill BHS Senior English elective requirement.