



San Marcos Academy
CURRICULUM OVERVIEW
Upper High School (Grade 11)

Quintilian once said that the aim of education was, “*The good man speaking well.*” That is our goal for all of our students. When they achieve this goal, they will earn positions of leadership, whether they be in academia, sciences, business, politics, or the arts.

Upper high school students are expected to perform the following:

Juniors place a high priority on discovering, contemplating upon, understanding, and exhibiting what is the good, beautiful, and true in their lives. They observe the highest ethical standards, living to the glory of God and serving the betterment of others.

Juniors are self-governing. They consistently recognize and produce quality work. They consistently strive for excellence in a wide array of both academic and extra-curricular activities and interests.

Juniors are fully literate. They can read and comprehend varied and challenging texts. They conduct sound research followed by well-written compositions, characterized by eloquence, and sound arguments. Their speech is articulate with clear enunciation and persuasion. They are able to communicate with varied cultures and groups and to use a wide range of communication skills, including the latest technology and media to enlarge their spheres of influence.

Juniors determine and achieve worthwhile goals, maintain organization skills, exercise effective study habits, and eliminate attitudes or behaviors that would jeopardize their potential.

Juniors continually integrate and reconcile added knowledge into a view of the world as it truly exists in form, substance, and interpretation as revealed by God’s word. They correctly associate the complex inter-relationships of diverse, disparate, or abstract information. They consistently apply learning across-the-curriculum.

Juniors display appropriate behavior in a wide variety of settings. They demonstrate expanding social skills such as leadership, problem solving, coping, communication, observance of rules and social conventions. They understand and appreciate diverse cultures. They cultivate and maintain an interdependent social network. They are skilled at resolving conflict and consistently treat others with respect.

What does this look like at San Marcos Academy?

- Our Junior level students examine the Western tradition of art, history, literature, theology and philosophy, recognizing the "Great Conversation" of the ages and considering what it means to participate in it. Rather than relying solely on anthologies that skim the surface of thousands of events, SMA uses the most significant primary sources, thoughtfully treated with depth, to develop each student’s competency.
- In Junior level language arts, students work and rework compositions until both the form and substance of their thoughts are eloquent and persuasive.
- Math and science courses require students to solve problems, calculate using linear reasoning, and express their understanding of difficult concepts with words as well as through successful calculation and experiment.
- A draft of the capstone written thesis, a veritable rite of passage for seniors who are enrolled in the honors Language Arts curriculum, is submitted.

- Junior level honors classes reflect expectations near to that of college freshmen. As such, after the first grading period of the spring semester, no late papers are accepted without consequence. These will be given the minimum grade established by school policy. All major assignments with corresponding dates are provided in the syllabi at the beginning of each semester; any adjustment to the dates due will be communicated through approved media.

These expectations are accomplished within the context of the following courses of study:

English – For most juniors, they will take English III (American Literature). For students to be able to perform well in this class, they must have developed the appropriate grammar, composition, and rhetoric skills. Those who have yet to develop these skills at an acceptable level will likely be assigned to the Research and Technical Writing class. In order to enroll into the honors tracked course, students are expected to perform at a 90 cumulative average or higher on their previous Language Arts course. For all Language Arts courses, primary sources of the best American literary works are read, and students analyze works in their historical and cultural contexts. Essays are assigned throughout the course. By the end of the spring semester, all junior level students will select the theme for the Senior Thesis, conduct the preliminary research, documentation, and first draft. (Pre-requisite English I, II or 2 credits of ESL)

United States History – To be enrolled into the college dual-enrollment version, students must pass an entrance exam and be admitted into the college. All students will read and comprehend various historical works. They must be able to compare, contrast, and analyze historical events in depth and reasonably infer causal relationships. The course will enable students to analyze primary sources, as well as develop research and writing skills to enable them to include historical facts as evidence for their senior thesis.

Science – In eleventh grade, there are three science courses to honors students who have taken Biology and Chemistry. Students who have successfully completed honors Chemistry and Algebra II will take Advanced Physics. Others may take Anatomy & Physiology or Environmental Science. To complete any of these courses successfully, students should have a clear understanding of the scientific method, ability to perform at or near Algebra II comprehension level, demonstrate sound reasoning, and ability to follow lab procedures. Each class will enable the student to use scientific data as evidence for the senior thesis.

Math – Junior math students enrolled in the honors track will take either Precalc(H), College Algebra, and/or College Trigonometry. Most other students will be enrolled into Algebra II. Those who are not strong math students will enroll into Math Models. As with other college dual-enrollment courses, students must pass an entrance exam and be admitted into the college. To perform well in these math courses, mastery of Algebra I and Geometry courses are necessary. Students in the Math Models course must pass quarterly benchmark exams throughout the course; however, additional remediation will be available for those who need it. All junior math courses will enable students to use mathematical data as evidence in the construction of the senior thesis.

Languages – Honors students will have already completed requirements for foreign language. Those with special talents in language may take a second one or enroll in a fourth year of the same language when offered. Students in the eleventh grade will normally take the third year of Latin, French, or Spanish. To be able to perform successfully in any of these courses, students must have mastered the content in the first two years of the course.

Religion – New students who are enrolling for the first time as Juniors into SMA must take a religion course. Upper level students must take an Apologetics course for one semester of their religion courses. To complete these courses successfully, students must be able to read and comprehend texts, recall information, analyze materials, and make reasonable inferences. Each of these courses will enable students to be able to use religious truth as evidence in the senior thesis.

SAT Prep Course - It is recommended that Juniors take a SAT Prep course in the fall if it is offered. This is especially important, if they have not taken one yet. The first SAT test should be taken during the

spring semester of the Junior year. An extra fee may be charged for this non-credit-bearing class.

Electives – Continued enrollment in these classes are contingent upon the upper high school student’s contribution to the learning and satisfactory progress in the class. These electives consist of, but are not limited to, Athletics, JROTC, Band, Cheerleading, Visual Art, Clay, Journalism, Photography, Theatre Arts, Research & Technical Writing, Reading, and AP Computer Science. Other elective courses are offered through the SMA Distance Education program. On-campus electives are contingent upon meeting minimum enrollment requirements and staffing. Additional fees may apply.

What is the typical schedule of an SMA junior?

Regular College Preparatory Sequence – *The following course of study is recommended for those students intending to attend a college or university after high school, and satisfies both the Foundation and Multi-Disciplinary Endorsements.*

Grade 11
English 3 or Research & Technical Writing
Algebra 2
Chemistry
U S History
LOTE (Latin 3, Sp 3, Fr 3)
Religion or Elective
Fine Arts, Athletics or Elective
SAT Prep, Endorsement Course, or Elective

NOTE: For those seeking endorsements, elective sections should be carefully planned to ensure you are meeting the academic requirements. Review the graduation requirements, class ranking formula, policies and procedures that govern course selections in the student handbook.

Honors College Preparatory Sequence – *The following course of study is recommended for those students intending to attend a highly competitive college or university after high school, and satisfies both the Foundation and Multi-Disciplinary Endorsements.*

Grade 11
English 3(H)
Pre-Calculus (H), College Algebra, and College Trigonometry
Advanced Physics (H)
College U S History
Religion or Elective
Fine Art, Athletics, or Elective
2 SAT Prep, Endorsement Courses, or Electives

NOTE: For those seeking endorsements, elective sections should be carefully planned to ensure you are meeting the academic requirements. Review the graduation requirements, class ranking formula, policies and procedures that govern course selections in the student handbook.

Students with English as a Second Language and those enrolled into the Learning Skills Program – *Alternative graduation plans must be approved by the Academic Dean as determined in consultation with the LS Director and Guidance Counselor.*

What can eleventh grade students expect at San Marcos Academy?

- The eleventh grade class must be one of the most organized at the academy. Not only are students preparing to provide leadership for their senior year, but they are responsible for raising the funds

and organizing the junior-senior prom.

- Eleventh grade students are expected to take on leadership roles in the JROTC, band, and athletic teams.
- By attending the entire eleventh and twelfth grade years at SMA, students are eligible for graduation honors, Valedictorian or Salutatorian, with the appropriate class ranking based upon cumulative GPA, SAT/ACT scores, and Activity Points.
- Eleventh and twelfth grade students elect the prom King and Queen.
- Qualified eleventh grade students can start taking college dual-enrollment classes. It is possible to earn enough college credits to forgo the freshman year of college.
- Eleventh grade students can take AP Exams.
- Eleventh grade can drive their cars on campus, at the determination of school administration.
- Eleventh grade students take the PSAT test for candidacy as a National Merit Scholarship Qualifier (NMSQ).
- Eleventh grade students take the SAT/ACT to qualify for college admission. As such, their reading, writing, and mathematics must be at their peak performance.
- Eleventh grade students are eligible to be elected as Vice-President for the Student Council.
- Eleventh grade students can schedule two college days to apply for the right college or university.
- Eleventh grade honors students complete all of the preliminary work to get ready for their senior thesis.

What must I do to prepare for my junior year?

- Decide on what leadership role you would like to fulfill.
- Read those novels, literary and historical works that will be required for your core courses.
- Take a SAT or ACT prep course (e.g., Kaplan, Princeton Review).
- Spend some time getting better connected with your church or faith community.
- Plan to coordinate vacation trips to those venues that are nearby colleges you may be interested in visiting. Visit as many colleges and universities as you may be interested.
- Decide on a schedule that will optimize your grade point average, class rank, and preparedness for college.
- Identify those areas that need to be improved, and attend workshops at area colleges. For example, take a speed reading course, creative writing, or math reinforcement courses.