

## GCA Upper Academy (6<sup>th</sup>–12<sup>th</sup> Grade) Electives Descriptions

*Subject to change.*

Elective	Course Description
<b>Beginner Band</b>	Geared toward 6 <sup>th</sup> and 7 <sup>th</sup> Grade students, Band Class will explore a variety of music styles while working in the <i>Essential Elements for Band</i> series. Emphasis is on basic sight-reading skills, music theory, playing in an ensemble, and individual instrument proficiency. Students, as part of their grade, are expected to practice, rehearse and perform in concerts outside regular class time. Band students must enroll in both semesters. Students must purchase or rent their instrument if they do not already own one. Visit a Music and Arts store for details.
<b>Advanced Band</b>	Students will be exposed to a multitude of music styles while working in the <i>Essential Elements for Band</i> series. Emphasis is on sight-reading skills, music theory, playing in an ensemble, and individual instrument proficiency. Students, as part of their grade, are expected to practice, rehearse and perform in concerts outside regular class time. Band students must enroll in both semesters. Students must purchase or rent their instruments. Visit a Music and Arts store.
<b>Chess Club</b>	Each class will consist of interactive teaching and guided practice time. Beginner and experienced players are welcome and will be encouraged to improve their skill level.
<b>Choir</b>	Students will focus on sight-reading, tonal memory, rehearsal techniques, vocal technique and two-part vocal divisions. Students, as part of their grade, are expected to practice, rehearse and perform in concerts outside of regular class time. <u>Choir students are strongly encouraged to enroll in both semesters.</u>
<b>HS Debate and Speech</b>	Debate and Speech Class will focus on building the skills of critical thinking, forming and critiquing arguments, public speaking and formal debate. Students will encounter classical debates side by side with current events, and will learn to engage with the news to identify assumptions, biases and fallacies while building confidence in their public speaking and writing skills.

<b>Drama</b>	Students will learn the fundamentals of character development, stage movement, vocal techniques and improvisation. Students will participate in the annual talent show and will also have the opportunity to audition for one or more musicals and/or plays. Students, as part of their grade, are expected to practice, rehearse and perform in shows outside regular class time. Student must be enrolled in Drama Class in order to participate in the semester play/musical.
<b>MS Drawing</b>	Students will be taught basic drawing skills, participate in class critiques/discussions, and develop a portfolio of work. Students will learn to draw from observation with a variety of mediums including charcoal, graphite, marker, colored pencil, and conté sticks. Projects include rapid sketches, figure drawing, animals, portraits and more.
<b>HS Illustration</b>	Students will learn to communicate a story visually, develop drawing skills, critique artwork, and build a portfolio of drawings and paintings. Projects include designing a coloring book, illustrating short stories, comic strips, book covers, animals, and designing your own original character.
<b>HS Health (9<sup>th</sup> Grade)</b>	Students will be exposed to a blend of practical health knowledge, common sense and Godly principles. High School students must take ½ unit of Health Education in order to graduate. This course counts as ½ unit (.50 credit), and meets five days per week for one semester. All Freshmen are enrolled in Health since it is a graduation requirement.
<b>Journalism</b>	Journalism is an exciting, fast-paced course introducing students to the highly competitive fields of print and online reporting. Focusing on newspaper writing and website design, students will develop researching, interviewing, writing and editing skills as they produce both a print and online version of the GCA newspaper. Pick up your press pass, and don't miss out on this exclusive scoop!
<b>Life Skills</b>	Students will be taught practical skills for entering adulthood. The course includes college and career exploration, budgeting and money management, and household tasks.
<b>HS Makerspace Art</b>	Explore and experiment with mediums of your choice in an "open studio" environment. Choices include 3D printing, painting, sculpture, graphic design, clay, sewing, theatrical set design, and more. Students photograph their artwork periodically to document learning and participate in group critiques. 8 <sup>th</sup> Graders are eligible to register for open spots not filled by HS students.

<b>HS Photography</b>	Learn the basics of digital photography using a Nikon DSLR camera. Projects include depth of field, composition, shooting in priority modes, pan-action shots, shutter speed, and aperture. 8 <sup>th</sup> Graders are eligible to register for open spots not filled by HS students.
<b>Physical Education (PE)</b>	PE includes a variety of individual, team and lifetime sports and activities. Students learn the importance of physical fitness, developing athletic skills, and the fun of recreational activities, as well as the importance and knowledge of the rules governing these sports. Appropriate athletic shorts, T-shirts and tennis shoes are required. See the dress code. <b>Note:</b> High School students must take ½ unit (equal to 2 semesters, 5 days per week) of Physical Education in order to graduate. After-school High School sports may fulfill this requirement.
<b>MS Robotics</b>	Students will build and program simple robots and complete hands-on projects in various scientific and mathematics fields. Topics and projects may include motor control, gear ratios, torque, friction, sensors, timing, program loops, logic gates, decision-making, timing sequences, propulsion systems and binary number systems.
<b>MS Science Exploration</b>	Students will have fun learning the scientific method through various experiments. These labs will incorporate the basics of science, technology, engineering and botany/agriculture. This interactive class provides opportunities to explore God's world and ask meaningful questions. Students should bring a smock, apron or old shirt for messy projects. Glass jars, empty 2-L bottles, and paper towel/toilet paper tubes would be appreciated for labs.
<b>HS STEM/Coding 1</b>	Students will learn and/or review the basics of TI coding they began in 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade including guided engineering modules using a variety of TI Innovator sensors. Students will be assisted in building their own STEM projects while learning electronic circuitry and components. Assigned activities will help them learn STEM concepts and the engineering design process. Requires the TI Nspire CX or CX-2 calculator.
<b>HS STEM/Coding 2</b>	Students will build STEM projects while learning electronic circuitry and the use of specialized electronic components such as resistors, relays, MosFet, electro-magnets and diodes. The assigned activities will challenge them to learn the science concepts that support the development of engineering skills by designing and coding electronics. This course is designed to create opportunities for students to incorporate the principles of engineering design in activities that encourage them to design, build, and test projects that explore life and physical science using electronics and their imagination. Prerequisite: 8 <sup>th</sup> grade Coding, HS STEM 1, or equivalent.
<b>Yearbook</b>	For creative and enthusiastic students with digital photography experience who are detail oriented and enjoy designing layouts and conducting interviews. Good writing and editing skills are needed. Students will be required to attend several after-school activities to take pictures and gather details for captions and stories.