

## OVERVIEW OF JUDAIC STUDIES

The Judaic Studies curriculum at Northwest Yeshiva High School has been designed uniquely for our students. The program is responsive to the educational and intellectual needs of our students and aimed at cultivating Torah scholarship.

Although our course offerings in Lemudai Kodesh are rather broad in their scope, there are a number of overall curriculum objectives. It is toward fulfillment of these objectives that the overall program is designed.

- The primary objective of our curriculum is to inspire and prepare our students to be committed Jews and valuable members of their community. To accomplish this objective, we must establish within our students not only knowledge of Torah, but also a love for learning, Mitzvot, and Am Yisrael. This can be accomplished only by giving them an understanding of the Torah, and by not limiting them to rote memorization.
- In the design of any curriculum, it is essential to distill from the vast body of knowledge encompassed by the Torah the information which is most relevant and appropriate for the students. After this determination has been made, it is the objective of the curriculum to systematically transmit to the student, as clearly and efficiently as possible, information which has been delineated.
- Many of our students continue their Jewish education in various Yeshivot. We must, therefore, carefully consider the demands and expectations they will face as they continue their education and prepare our students in an appropriate manner.
- It is the policy of the Yeshiva to instill within the students the ability and motivation to continue their studies independently. Specifically, this means emphasizing reading and translating skills and familiarizing the students in a broad sense with the various types of Torah literature, e.g., Gemara, Mishna Torah, Shulchan Aruch.

## JUDAIC STUDIES COURSES

Minyan  
(Prayers)

Talmud/Torah SheBe'Al Peh  
(Rabbinic Legislation and Literature)

Chumash  
(Biblical Text and Commentaries)

Halacha  
(Rabbinic Legislation and Codification)

Navi  
(Prophets)

Jewish History

Parasha  
(Weekly Torah Portion)

Topics in Torah Thought

Introductory Judaic Studies



## MINYAN

(Prayer)

Tefilah—prayer—is one of the most fundamental elements of Jewish practice. In prayer, we have the opportunity to reflect on ourselves and to develop our relationship with the Creator. It is fitting that our Sages established the practice to begin our day with tefilah and also to return to this experience during the course of our daily activities.

At NYHS, Shacharit (the morning service) and Mincha (the afternoon service) are held Monday through Thursday. On Friday, Shacharit is conducted.

The Tefilah program has three objectives:

1. Students should be familiar with the Sephardic or Ashkenazic daily services and, if applicable, prepared to conduct services.
2. Students should appreciate the value and beauty of prayer.
3. Students should experience the special opportunity to participate in the tefilah process.

NYHS provides a variety of formats for morning tefilah. These include:

- Ashkenazic Minyan—the traditional Ashkenazic daily prayer service conducted in an atmosphere of focused attention.
- Sephardic Minyan—the traditional Sephardic daily prayer service conducted in an atmosphere of focused attention.
- Instructional Tefilah—a special service focusing on learning the fundamentals of the prayer service focusing on how to navigate the siddur, reading and translation skills needed for understanding prayer. This class is open to students with limited, or no dayschool background.

- Ideas in Tefilah—a discussion of the fundamental ideas that form the basis for prayer. This class is open to 1st and 2nd year students, and students without previous day school background.

Please note that not all students are eligible for all classes.

## HONORS SHACHARIT (MORNING) MINYAN Expectations, Attendance, and Grading Policy

Students are evaluated on the basis of three criteria: attendance, participation and conduct. Minyan begins at 8:00. Students are expected to be ready to begin at that time.

All men are expected to have Tefillin. Tefillin are to be worn from the beginning of davening until the end of davening. A student who loses, or does not have, Tefillin is responsible to procure a set.

Davening starts with Berachot. Any student entering the Beit HaMidrash after the last brachah is regarded as “late”.

Yishtabach will be recited at 8:14. Students entering the Beit HaMidrash after 8:14 are regarded as “absent.” Nonetheless, these students are required to report to Minyan. If a student is present or is in school, but fails to attend, the absence will be treated as an unexcused absence.

If a student forgets to bring his Tefillin, he is to daven as normal, and only after the Amida should he borrow a pair from a friend.

Each student should follow the service from his/her siddur. This requires that the siddur be open to the correct place.

Tefilah requires complete attention. Talking during Tefilah is distracting and disrespectful.

Students are to remain in the Beit HaMidrash for the entire Davening.

Services are led by the students. Each student in Advanced Torah Study levels will lead the Davening each semester. Other students will be assigned appropriate responsibilities.

Students will be evaluated and graded on the basis of attendance, participation, and conduct. Students will earn points for leading the services and for other elements of participation.

### TALMUD/TORAH SHE BE'AL PEH (Rabbinic Legislation and Literature)

The Talmud program at the Yeshiva encompasses three broad objectives. Among the various Talmud courses offered, these three objectives are combined. The stress differs in the individual courses. Therefore, these objectives should be viewed in the broad sense of guiding considerations within the totality of the Talmud curriculum.

- Students are given the basic skills and background needed for Talmud study. Specifically, this requires the development of vocabulary with stress placed on the appreciation of the significance of key terms, e.g. mathvay, daika nami, kashya, etc. The building of vocabulary is stressed and reinforced in all Talmud courses. Included within this objective is the establishment within the students of an understanding of the Talmudic style.
- Students are familiarized with the process of cross-examination and taught to learn the criteria for a valid question and an appropriate answer. Stress on Talmudic style is primarily limited to basic level courses, with the goal of preparing the student for a deeper understanding of the

material in the advanced level course. Thus, in basic level courses, significant time is spent developing the student's understanding of the Talmudic procedure of cross-examination. It is our goal to complete this portion of

his training prior to the student's entry into the advanced course.

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- The curriculum has been developed with the design of exposing the students to the breadth of the Talmud. Towards this objective, each year of study will emphasize a different area of Jewish Law. For the coming year students will concentrate on Moed and in future years, the emphasis will shift to Nezikin and Nashim. Less emphasis will be placed on the area of Zeraim, Kadshim, and Taharoth. However, there will be some exposure to this material as well. The key consideration in choosing the material to which the student will be exposed is the relevance of the material to the student's future studies in a post-high school Yeshiva. It is our objective to establish within the student the fund of knowledge most necessary for these continued studies. Therefore, areas which will not be significantly emphasized in future studies will receive a secondary stress in our curriculum. The objective of broadening the student's data base is shared by all of the Talmud courses.
- Not only is it necessary for the student to understand the superficial logic of the material, but also to become acquainted with the conceptual foundation upon which Talmudic discussions are based. Although it is not within the parameters of our program to thoroughly train our students in the ability to identify and to find these concepts, we thoroughly familiarize our students with the criteria upon which a conceptual understanding is founded. Specifically, we train the student to appreciate a valid conceptual question and answer and to differentiate a valid question and response from a "klutz kashya." Emphasis on this third objective is primarily limited to the advanced course.

Thus, whereas the basic level courses are designed to develop the student's appreciation and understanding of the superficial logic of the Talmud, in the advanced courses the emphasis is shifted to an understanding that is greater in depth.

### TALMUD or TORAH SHE BE'AL PEH

This course reviews the development of the Oral Law, followed by emphasis on mastery of vocabulary, textual skills, and the method of dialogue employed by the Talmud. Rashi will be used as a major commentary on the text. The text studied will be selected with a view for both practical and theoretical training.

### INTERMEDIATE TALMUD or TORAH SHE BE'AL PEH

This course is designed to build upon the foundations established in Talmud, Level 1. Vocabulary is increased. Rashi is completely integrated into the study of the text. Students study additional commentators, with emphasis on Tosafoth. The students master the relationship between the commentaries and the text. Greater emphasis is placed upon independent learning.

### ADVANCED TALMUD or TORAH SHE BE'AL PEH

Prerequisite: Successful completion  
of one year of Basic Talmud /Torah She Be'al Peh

This is an advanced Talmud course. Heavy emphasis is placed upon completion of development skills and vocabulary. This training is extended to encompass other commentaries, including, but not limited to, Tosafoth and Rambam. Towards this end, students are required to prepare the material upon which classes will be independently based. Appropriate assistance is offered by the instructor, with the objective of directing students to increasing levels of independence.

Students are introduced to a deeper understanding of the material. In addition, rapid expansion of the student's fund of knowledge is stressed.

### CHUMASH

(Biblical texts and commentaries)

The mastery of Biblical texts and commentaries is an essential component of a Torah education. These are the most basic works of Judaism. Northwest Yeshiva High School, therefore, emphasizes the study of these areas. There are three objectives in this department.

1. Students will become familiar with various Biblical texts and commentaries to develop skills and to build vocabulary. The styles of the various texts and commentaries differ significantly from one another. The students will become fluent in numerous texts, ranging from Chumash to Neveim Achronim, and in various commentaries, including Rashi, S'forno, Ramban, and others.
2. The Biblical texts constitute the backbone of Jewish knowledge and scholarship. Therefore, students will become acquainted with the material in the broad sense. All five books of the Chumash will be covered. Students will also study Neveim Achronim and Kesuvim. Although some of this material may be familiar to the students on the elementary level, they will nonetheless receive a thorough review in order to ensure mastery of the subject matter.
3. The study of Biblical texts will incorporate the development of an appropriate understanding of Torah Machshave (philosophy and perspective). Stress will be placed primarily upon the development of a proper understanding of Midoth (character) and ethical behavior. Towards this end, the curriculum is designed to delineate specific areas within the various texts and commentaries through which this objective can be met.

All grades will study the same Chumash in any given academic year. This will facilitate the transfer of students between grade levels when necessary. Occasionally, a study of the Haftorah (weekly selection from the Prophets) will be included.

When possible, students will be provided with the opportunity to study Chumash in classes conducted in Hebrew. Students who prefer to participate in classes conducted in English will be able to do so.

- This course will cover an entire Sefer of Chumash. The students will be familiarized with this material in a broad sense. Emphasis is placed upon specific areas which are central to Jewish thought and those areas which relate in the practical sense to the students' own lives and to our society.
- In this manner, the course will endow the students with an appreciation of the relevance and timelessness of the wisdom of the Chumash. Developmental skills will be stressed and vocabulary will be expanded. Integration of other commentaries will be determined by the level of the individual student. The novices will primarily work on Rashi; more advanced students will be directed towards the more difficult commentaries.

## HALACHA

(Rabbinic Legislation and Codification)

The Halacha program at Northwest Yeshiva High School has been designed to satisfy the unique needs of our specific student body. The program incorporates three objectives.

Students are introduced to the breadth of the Halachic system. Although emphasis is given to the laws governing daily practices, exposure is provided to the wide variety of areas dealt with by Jewish law. Students quickly learn that Halacha is not limited to "ritualistic" matters, but extends to civil law, marriage, divorce, marital relations, and ethical conduct.

Students are taught that Halacha is not a collection of arbitrary unrelated regulations, but instead, is built around a general framework in a systematic manner. Basic themes and concepts are identified and their relationship to the specific legal regulations is clearly delineated. This objective is also to differentiate, in the perception of the students, philosophy from law. They learn that legal matters must be inherently consistent and that philosophical justifications are not a sufficient explanation for legal regulations.

Students are introduced to basic texts which are the foundation of Jewish Law. The primary text used is the Shulchan Aruch, with the commentaries Kaf Hachayim and Mishna Brurah.

- Students will continue in their four-year cycle of learning the legislation and codification of various topics in Jewish Law. These topics include, but are not limited to, Shabbat, holidays, theft, torts, loans, marriage, prayer, and Kashruth. Contemporary issues are also dealt with from a halachic point of view.
- Students will develop skills in mastering primary texts. They will extract the fundamental concepts from the texts and analyze the laws as well as the process of legislation. The course will also focus on the practical application of these legal networks. Analysis of various customs and how they fit into the legal system will be studied as well. Various legal authorities will be introduced as supplemental course work.
- The goal of this course is to produce a student who understands the mechanisms behind the law and the intricacies of analysis, and who can arrive at the actual conclusion of what the law is. Over a four-year period, a student will develop the ability to locate and determine laws throughout the Shulchan Aruch, the Code of Jewish Law.
- Because of the heterogeneous background of our various students, the course has been adapted to incorporate the various Sephardic and Ashkenazic customs and practices. In order to properly familiarize our students with the customs and practices specific to their individual communities,

two resources are utilized: the Kaf Hachayim, which is a Sephardic Commentary Digest to the Shulchan Aruch, and the Mishna Brurah, which is an Ashkenazic Commentary Digest to the Shulchan Aruch. In addition, community rabbis are consulted in order to determine specific practices. In more difficult areas, community rabbis are solicited to offer guest lectures, e.g. Hilchot Pesach and other holidays.

## NAVI (Prophets)

This is a survey course. Each quarter, a different selection of Kesuvim or Neveim Achronim will be chosen as a text. Students will become familiar with the style and general content of these writings. Among the texts which will be studied are Mishle, Tehillim, Yermiyahu, Yeshayahu, Yechezkiel and Trai Assar.

## JEWISH HISTORY Goals and Sequencing

The Jewish History program offered by Northwest Yeshiva High School is consistent with the overall method and orientation of the school. Specifically, the history of the Jewish people is presented in the context of Torah Judaism. The Jewish history program embodies four objectives:

1. To familiarize the students with the outline of Jewish history from the Babylonian exile to the modern day. Special emphasis is given to the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries and the modern Zionist movement and State of Israel.
2. To review the development of Jewish law from the codification of the Mishnah, writing of the Gemara, and spread of responsa literature through modern times.

3. To introduce and explore key Torah personalities and Torah role models in each period.
4. To review Jewish history from the perspective of Torah prophecy and to outline the fulfillment of the prophecies in subsequent history.

Students are required to complete one year of Jewish History. A one-quarter course in Jewish History is offered each year. Each one-quarter course covers a different period of Jewish History:

- Period 1: Destruction of the First Temple until the fall of Betar (586 BCE-135 CE)
- Period 2: Redaction of the Mishnah to Spanish Golden Age (210 - 1412 CE)
- Period 3: Expulsion from Spain to Rejection of Uganda Project (1492 - 1905 CE)
- Period 4: World War I to Present Day (1914 – 21<sup>st</sup> century CE)

All sections of Jewish History will study the same period in any given academic year. This feature will ensure that each student will study each period during his/her four years at NYHS.

## TOPICS IN TORAH THOUGHT

Northwest Yeshiva High School prepares its students to become active and committed Jews. This goal is accomplished by providing students with a firm base of Torah knowledge and with the motivation to make a life commitment to Judaism. This motivation can best be cultivated through appreciation of the wisdom and awareness of the fundamental principles of the Torah, and the power of Judaism to enrich our lives.

Students will study the application of Torah to their interpersonal relationships, and to their relationship with the Creator. Students will be exposed to various classical texts in Torah thought, including the writings of Rambam, Sefer Halkarim, and other classic texts.

This course is a general introduction to Jewish thought. A wide variety of topics will be covered using a selection of texts. Emphasis will be placed upon the fundamental tenets of Jewish thought.

## PARASHA (Weekly Portion)

Parasha is designed to give the student a general knowledge of the weekly Torah portion and to identify themes within the Parsha. In addition, specific areas within the portion will receive a deeper analysis. Various classical commentaries will be utilized. When appropriate, the class will also discuss the weekly Haftorah (selection from the Prophets). Mitzvot and topics in Jewish law which stem from the Parasha may be taught.

## INTRODUCTORY JUDAIC STUDIES

Students with limited background in Torah are provided with introductory courses in Judaic studies. Skill development is emphasized, with the ultimate goal of integrating students into advanced-level courses.

Course Offerings include:

- Ideas in Tefila
- Introductory Tefila
- Introduction to Oral Law
- Introduction to Torah She'Be'Al Peh
- Introduction to Chumash
- Introduction to Navi (Prophets)

## OVERVIEW OF COLLEGE PREPARATORY STUDIES

The College Preparatory Studies program of Northwest Yeshiva High School consist of required full cycles in Language Arts, Social Studies, Mathematics, Science, and Foreign Language. Instruction is also offered in Fine Arts, Physical Education, and Health. Special programs (such as Math Day at the University of Washington), assemblies, field trips (to museums, art galleries, the University and public libraries), play-going, and guest speakers, enrich our program. Student writing reaches wider audiences through the publications Panim and Reflections, and through writing contests and computer writing networks. Science Fairs, Model United Nations, annual Yeshiva banquets, and political assemblies are among the forums that have been used to showcase student learning and abilities.

We are committed to our program and to the educational values it embodies, and we are committed to the students with whose care we are entrusted. Each student is a precious individual to whose nurturing and education we are devoted. Though our program is rigorous and our standards are high, Northwest Yeshiva High School has an open-door policy, and we seek to serve well all students who come our way. We accommodate individuals of wide-ranging abilities and interests. We understand that persons learn at different speeds and in different ways, and our teachers work to give individual attention to students. We strive to help students to learn and grow, to maximize their strengths and overcome their weaknesses, and to make as much progress as possible in fulfilling their potential. Among the major goals that we have set for the College Preparatory Studies program are these:

- To provide a strong secular college preparatory education in Math, Science, Language Arts, Social Studies, and Foreign Language.
- To develop in students a love of learning and a commitment to a lifetime of learning.
- To encourage students to see life and learning as interrelated; to break down barriers between the classroom and the wider world.

- To expose students to a wide variety of learning activities, both academic and experiential in character.
- To recognize and accommodate the individuality of students – their varying interests, aptitudes, and learning styles.
- To nurture curiosity, open-mindedness, and intellectual honesty.
- To build student self-confidence, self-esteem, and self-pride.
- To motivate students to study on their own.
- To build critical thinking skills.
- To foster creativity.
- To prepare students to be able to interact with, and relate to, people in other cultures and other lands.
- To instill respect for other cultures and tolerance for differing beliefs.
- To encourage good citizenship.
- To instill an ethic of self-improvement.
- To inspire a commitment to the service of others.

In sum, the College Preparatory Studies program strives to provide an education of unsurpassed excellence.

**COLLEGE PREPARATORY STUDIES COURSES**

- Language Arts I, II, III and IV
- World History
- U.S. Government
- U.S. History
- Senior Social Studies: Contemporary World Problems and Economics,  
Philosophy, or Psychology
- Fine Arts
- Geometry
- Algebra II/Trigonometry
- Pre-Calculus, Calculus
- Statistics
- Introduction to Science
- Introduction to Physical Science
- Biology, Advanced Biology
- Chemistry
- Physics, Conceptual Physics
- Spanish Language, Levels I, II and III
- Hebrew Language, Levels I, II, III, IV and V
- Independent Study
- Physical Education
  
- Elective Courses for 2007 -- 2008:
  - Writing
  - Yearbook
  
  - First Semester
    - American Law
    - Art
  
  - Second Semester
    - American Film
    - Speech

**LANGUAGE ARTS**

All Language Arts courses integrate reading, writing, and language study (vocabulary, grammar, mechanics, and such.) The Language Arts faculty has established minimum, core reading and writing requirements for each year of high school, and these are printed below. Any instructor teaching the courses will (a) ensure fulfillment of these requirements and (b) require reading and writing well beyond them.

Reading consists of a broad menu of short stories, novels, plays, poetry, and nonfiction. Writing includes critical writing (exposition and persuasion), imaginative writing, and personal writing.

With varying emphases, depending on the class and instructor, Language Arts courses are designed to help students:

- Strengthen critical reading skills
- Acquire fundamentals of literary study and analysis
- Think analytically, perceptively, and logically
- Develop complex thinking skills, such as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.
- Think imaginatively
- Acquire the resources to work independently
- Write well in critical, personal and imaginative modes.
- Write clearly and precisely
- Enlarge the stock of words at their command

- Know the fundamentals of English grammar, usage and mechanics.

More-detailed course descriptions are provided in the syllabuses given to students on the first day of school and to parents at the annual Open House.

## LANGUAGE ARTS, GRADE 9

### Required Writing

Students will demonstrate competence in the following writing tasks. A portfolio will be kept for each student. The portfolio will hold a successful example of each kind of required writing.

#### Critical Writing

- Coherent paragraphs representing each of the following means of paragraph development; example, classification, cause and effect, definition, assertion and evidence, assertion and reasoning. (Paragraphs will demonstrate competence in the writing of sentences.)
- One expository essay that informs
- One expository essay that analyzes
- One mastery paper relating to literature (750 words)

#### Imaginative Writing

- Two imaginative papers (500 words each)

#### Personal Writing

- One statement of aspirations (500 words)
- One statement of aspirations (500 words)

# COLLEGE PREPARATORY STUDIES

### Required Reading

- Night by Elie Weisel
- A play by William Shakespeare
- Assorted short stories, poems and nonfiction

## LANGUAGE ARTS, GRADE 10

### Required Writing

Students will demonstrate competence in the following writing tasks. A portfolio will be kept for each student. The portfolio will hold a successful example of each required kind of writing.

#### Critical Writing

- One theme paper relating to literature (1,000 - 1,500 words)
- One character analysis (1,000 - 1,500 words)
- One persuasive essay using reasoning (750 words)

#### Imaginative Writing

- Two imaginative papers (length not specified)

#### Personal Writing

- Autobiography (1,000 word minimum)

### Required Reading

- John Knowles, A Separate Peace
- George Orwell, 1984 or Ray Bradbury, Fahrenheit 451
- Edmond Rostand, Cyrano de Bergerac
- William Shakespeare, Macbeth

**LANGUAGE ARTS, GRADE 11****Required Writing**

Students will demonstrate competence in the following writing tasks. A portfolio will be kept for each student. The portfolio will hold a successful example of each required kind of writing.

**Critical Writing**

- Two persuasive essays using evidence and reasoning (1,000 words each)
- One persuasive essay using evidence and reasoning (350 word maximum)
- Two essays on discrete literary elements (600 word minimum for each)
- One comprehensive literary critique (1,250 words)

**Imaginative Writing**

- Two imaginative papers (length not specified)

**Personal Writing**

- Credo (350 words)

**Required Reading**

Both required and recommended readings are drawn exclusively from the works of American authors.

- F. Scott Fitzgerald, *The Great Gatsby*
- John Steinbeck, *The Grapes of Wrath*
- Mark Twain, *Huckleberry Finn*
- Arthur Miller, *The Death of a Salesman*
- Dee Brown, *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee*
- Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Self-Reliance"
- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., "Letter from a Birmingham Jail"
- Henry David Thoreau, "Civil Disobedience"

For additional reading, works by the following authors are recommended: Willa Cather, Kate Chopin, Stephen Crane, William Faulkner, Dashiell Hammett, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Joseph Heller, Ernest Hemingway, Henry James, Barbara Kingsolver, Sinclair Lewis, Bernard Malamud, Carson McCullers, Hermann Melville, Arthur Miller, Flannery O'Connor, Grace Paley, Dorothy Parker, Edgar Allan Poe, Chaim Potok, J.D. Salinger, William Saroyan, Upton Sinclair, John Steinbeck, William Styron, Amy Tan, James Thurber, Mark Twain, Kurt Vonnegut, Robert Penn Warren, Eudora Welty, Thornton Wilder.

**LANGUAGE ARTS, GRADE 12****Required Writing**

Students will demonstrate competence in the following writing tasks. A portfolio will be kept for each student. The portfolio will hold a successful example of each required kind of writing.

**Critical Writing**

- Compare / contrast essay (1,500 words)
- Interpretive essay (1,000 words)
- Review of a performance (350-word minimum)

**Imaginative Writing**

- Two imaginative papers (length not specified)

**Personal Writing**

- Statement of aspirations (500 words)
- Letter to the editor (length not specified)

**Required Reading**

- William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*
- Richard Mitchell, *The Gift of Fire*

For additional reading, works by the following British and Continental European authors are recommended:

Drama-- Samuel Beckett, Anton Chekhov, Wilhelm Goethe, Henrik Ibsen, Moliere, William Shakespeare, George Bernard Shaw, Sophocles, and Oscar Wilde.

Fiction -- Jane Austen, Honore de Balzac, Albert Camus, Miguel de Cervantes, Geoffrey Chaucer, Anton Chekhov, Joseph Conrad, Charles Dickens, Fyodor Dostoevsky, George Eliot, Gustave Flaubert, Ford Maddox Ford, E.M. Forster, Thomas Hardy, Hermann Hesse, Victor Hugo, Henry James, Jame Joyce, Franz Kafka, Thomas Mann, Guy de Maupassant, Jonathan Swift, Leo Tolstoy, Voltaire, and Virginia Woolf.

## SOCIAL STUDIES

The Social Studies faculty has established core knowledge and skill requirements for World History, U.S. Government, and U.S. History. Beyond these requirements, instructors determine course content.

Social Studies courses are as follows:

Grade 9, World History (one semester)

Grade 10, World History (one semester)

Grade 10, U.S. Government (one semester)

Grade 11, U.S. History (two semesters)

Grade 12, Contemporary World Problems (first semester)

Grade 12, Psychology, Economics, or Philosophy (second semester)

More-detailed course descriptions are provided in the syllabuses given to students on the first day of school and to parents at the annual Open House.

## WORLD HISTORY, GRADES 9 AND 10

Required Units of Study  
(ONE SEMESTER)

- Egypt or Near East
- Greece
- Middle Ages or Renaissance
- At least one of the following:
  - Non-Western Civilization
  - Rome
  - The Byzantine Empire
  - Christianity
  - The Reformation

Required Units of Study  
(ONE SEMESTER)

- At least three of the following:
  - The Intellectual Revolution (The Enlightenment)
  - The French Revolution
  - Industrialism
  - Nationalism
  - Imperialism
  - World War I
  - The Russian Revolution

Required -- The Student as Historian

The following issues will be part of the curriculum:

- Primary and secondary sources
- Lenses of history: ways to craft an understanding of the past
- What happened vs. the account of what happened and why they are not the same
- Analysis of causation

**Required Writing**

- At least two papers (analytical or persuasive) each semester
- One research paper (10-page minimum) done during one of the two semesters

**Required Reading**

- A textbook
- Supplementary readings
- Both primary and secondary sources

**Required Speaking**

- One oral presentation, not more than five minutes long.

**U.S. GOVERNMENT, GRADE 10****Required Bodies of Knowledge**

We construe knowledge to mean both “awareness” and “solid understanding.”

- Introductory and Background Topics
  - Unitary governments / federal governments / confederations
  - Dictatorship and democracy
  - Presidential government / parliamentary government
  - Direct democracy / indirect (representative) democracy
  - Competing claims of liberty, equality, and justice
  - The Constitution and Fundamental Concepts and Principles
- A. The Constitution
1. Preamble
  2. Fundamental content
  3. Amending the Constitution

4. Interpretation: strict construction vs. liberal construction
  5. Constitution as the supreme law of the land
- B. Basic Concepts of Democracy
1. Fundamental worth of the individual
  2. Equality
  3. Majority rule
  4. Minority rights
  5. Compromise
  6. Individual liberty
- C. Basic Principles of the Constitution
1. Popular sovereignty
  2. Limited government
  3. Separation of powers
  4. Checks and balances
  5. Judicial review
- D. Federalism
1. Delegated powers of national government: expressed, implied, and inherent
  2. Reserved powers of the states
  3. Exclusive powers of the national government
  4. Concurrent powers
- Federal Court System
  - Structure: District Courts, Appeals Courts, Supreme Court
  - Jurisdiction
  - How the Supreme Court works
  - Bill of Rights
- A. General Issues
1. Scope of the Bill of Rights
  2. 14th Amendment’s “Due Process Clause”
  3. Relativity of individual rights
  4. Rights in conflict

## B. First Amendment

1. Freedom of religion: Establishment Clause, Free Exercise Clause, and key court cases relating to each
2. Freedom of speech: important subtopics and major court cases
3. Freedom of press: major court cases
4. Freedom of assembly and petition

## C. Other Components of the Bill of Rights

1. Due process: procedural and substantive
2. Police powers of government
3. Privacy
4. 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Amendments
5. Rights of the accused
6. Equal Protection Clause

### Additional Topics

Though separate units of study are not required for the following topics, the topics should be touched upon within the context of required units.

- Congress
- Bicameral structure
- Conceptions of legislator's role
- Powers: expressed, implied, and inherent
- Process: the committee system and how a bill becomes law
- The Presidency
- President's many roles
- Selection and election, including Electoral College
- Presidential power
- Other Components of the Executive Branch
- Executive Office and Cabinet
- Bureaucracy
- State and Local Government
- Interest Groups
- Political Parties

## U.S. HISTORY, GRADE 11

### Required Units of Study

- The Constitution and Founding of the Nation
- The Civil War
- The Great Depression and/or New Deal
- At least one unit from each of the following groups:

#### Group One

- The Colonial Period and/or Puritanism
- The American Revolution

#### Group Two

- America, 1865-1900 (Industrialism/The Gilded Age)
- The Progressive Era (ca. 1900-1917)
- World War I

#### Group Three

- World War II
- The Cold War
- The Vietnam War

### Required -- The Student as Historian

The following issues will be part of the curriculum:

- Primary and secondary sources
- Lenses of history: ways to craft an understanding of the past
- What happened vs. the account of what happened-and why they are not the same
- Analysis of causation

**Required -- Thinking Curriculum**

(The skills presume knowledge and comprehension, and therefore emphasize application, analysis, and synthesis.)

- The ability to write clear expository prose.
- The ability to organize material and then write clear, logical analytical prose.
- The ability to recognize cause and effect.
- The ability to recognize patterns and connections when they are present.
- The ability to synthesize patterns and connections when they may not be readily apparent.
- The ability to think empathetically.

**Required Writing**

- At least two papers (analytical or persuasive) each semester.
- One research paper (ten-page minimum) done during the course of a single semester.

**Required Reading**

- A textbook
- Supplementary readings
- Both primary and secondary sources

**Required Speaking**

- One oral presentation, not more than five minutes long

**Required Contact and/or Involvement**

- One oral history interview

**SENIOR SOCIAL STUDIES**

CONTEMPORARY WORLD PROBLEMS and PSYCHOLOGY, ECONOMICS,  
or PHILOSOPHY, GRADE 12

First semester of their senior year, students take Contemporary World Problems.

Second semester, they elect to take Psychology, Economics, or Philosophy.

**CONTEMPORARY WORLD PROBLEMS**

This semester-long course in Contemporary World Problems begins with several broad historical overviews. We read excerpts from *The Wealth and Poverty of Nations* by David Landes and *Guns, Germs, and Steel* by Jared Diamond. We then study a small number of important current issues, as student interest dictates, by reading current articles in journals such as by reading current articles in journals such as *Foreign Affairs*, *The Atlantic*, *Harper's* and *The New Yorker*, among others.

The goal of the course is to give senior students a sophisticated understanding of major current issues so that they are well prepared for intellectually-lively college campuses. Wherever possible, students will read those seminal works that first defined the issue in a way that brought it to the forefront of public awareness. Students will write extensively on these topics and will be asked to do a power point presentation on some facet of a contemporary world problem.

**PSYCHOLOGY**

The course conceives of psychology broadly—as study of behavior, the brain, the “mind” and consciousness. Therefore, we will consider not only the work of psychologists, but also of neuroscientists, cognitive scientists, philosophers, and others.

We will study important bodies of knowledge on these subjects and consider the answers—incomplete, tentative, imperfect, and (in some cases, no doubt) erroneous—that science, social science, and relevant philosophy provide to such BIG questions as:

- What are the true causes of human behavior?
- Is there only one substance, or is “mind” something different from “matter”?
- How are mind and body connected?
- How do we account for consciousness?
- Is human nature the product of inborn tendencies or of experience and upbringing?
- How do we know what we know? Are our ideas built into our minds, or do we develop them from our perceptions and experiences?
- How does perception work? Are our impressions of the world around us true representations of what is out there? How can we know whether they are or not?
- What is the right road to true knowledge—pure reasoning or data gathered by observation?
- What are the principles of valid thinking, and what are the causes of invalid thinking?

Among the units of study are:

- The Brain
- Objective and Subjective Reality
- Altered States (Sleep, Dreams, and Hypnosis)
- Behavioral Psychology
- Cognitive Psychology, Intelligence, Thinking, and Memory
- Personality Theory / Sigmund Freud and His Ideas
- Abnormal Behavior
- Treatment of Psychological Disorders

**ECONOMICS**

The course is an introduction to one of the most powerful and enduring revolutions in history—the Market Revolution (capitalist revolution) and the upheavals it has wrought (for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer). The course is part history, part philosophy, and part social science. History and philosophy provide context. Social science is the heart of the course.

**History:** The course traces highlights of the Market Revolution’s march through the centuries, including such milestones as the Industrial Revolution, the development of modern “mixed” economies, the information revolution, and the emerging global economy. The course examines key periods in the economic history of the United States.

**Philosophy:** We look at the Market Revolution from different perspectives and weigh major arguments in praise and criticism of it. In particular, we consider the ideas of three major thinkers: Adam Smith, Karl Marx, and John Maynard Keynes.

**Social Science:** The course introduces (1) the macroeconomic fundamentals of the modern “mixed” market economy of the United States and (2) the basic issues of the emerging global economy.

The major Macroeconomic topics are:

- National income, product, and output
- The business cycle
- Recessions and depressions
- Saving and investing
- Economics of the public sector
- Fiscal policy: government spending and taxes
- The federal budget, deficits, and the national debt
- The Federal Reserve Board and Monetary Policy

### PHILOSOPHY

This course is devoted to a close and careful reading of Plato's Republic. Classes are given over to discussion. Students write an essay each week.

### MATHEMATICS

#### ALGEBRA I

Algebra I is a one-year course covering beginning algebra skills. It starts with the idea of variables, properties of different types of numbers, solving linear and quadratic equations, solving and graphing linear inequalities, graphing linear and quadratic functions, writing linear equations, solving systems of linear equations and inequalities. It introduces exponents and exponential functions, operations with polynomials, radical equations, and rational equations and functions. It also introduces counting and probability techniques. Each of the topics included in the course contains a strong problem solving/applications component.

#### GEOMETRY

Geometry involves the study of mathematical structure through the use of deductive reasoning and the application of proof. This course covers the concepts of congruence, parallelism, similarity, and perpendicularity, as well as the properties of circles, polygons, and solids. Algebraic concepts are reviewed and applied to coordinate geometry.

#### ALGEBRA II / TRIGONOMETRY

This course is an extension of Algebra I and Geometry. Study of number of properties is extended to include complex numbers. Systems of equations containing two and three variables are solved graphically, algebraically, and with matrices. The function concept is studied in depth including linear functions, polynomial functions, power functions, and rational functions. Sequences and series and conic sections are explored. In addition to a more in-depth study of the content found in the description of Algebra, some of the following topics may be included: logarithmic and exponential functions, additional applications of matrices and determinants, and introductory trigonometry.

#### PRE-CALCULUS

This course is designed to use the knowledge and applications of a graphing approach in mathematics to understand the concepts necessary for calculus. The role of the Pre-Calculus course is to introduce practical applications of the subject matter, and to prepare students for mastery of the mathematical concepts.

The course intends to cover the following topics during the year: graphs and polynomial functions, exploring functions, trigonometry and applications, and sequences, series, probability, and statistics.

Lectures will be used to introduce concepts initially, but students are expected

to thoroughly read assigned chapters and ask questions when topics are not fully understood. A detailed course outline is provided to students.

### CALCULUS

A calculus course is offered to those seniors who took Pre-Calculus in their junior year. Emphasis varies, based on the needs and desires of the students. Advanced Placement Calculus is offered to those wishing to pursue the rigorous study required to succeed in that program. A less-rigorous course is offered for those who desire to learn the basics of calculus in order to get a jump on college-level calculus. Topics for both courses are basically the same. The difference comes in the depth of study.

Students study the concept and definition of limit and its application to derivatives and integrals. Techniques of derivatives and integrals are studied, with careful attention paid to the theory and development of those techniques. Various applications of derivatives and integrals are explored.

### SCIENCE

The science curriculum consists of seven courses: Introduction to Science and Introduction to Physical Science (Grade 9), Biology (Grade 10), Chemistry or Advanced Biology (Grade 11), Physics or Conceptual Physics (Grade 12). All courses cover the conceptual development of these subjects plus elements of theory and experimentation. Whenever possible, a computer is used for computations and graphics.

Often, classroom lectures are supplemented with demonstrations. Regularly scheduled laboratory sessions allow the student to perform experiments, collect data, and analyze and summarize results. Students are asked to record their experiments in a hardbound notebook.

### INTRODUCTION TO SCIENCE

(GRADE 9)

The first semester traces the history of scientific thought, from Greek Science through the present day. It explores the development of the principal theories that form the basis of the science of Art, of Astronomy and Cosmology, of Medicine, of Geology, and of Evolutionary Biology. The course tells the story of how each field developed by focusing on some of the individuals who propelled the scientific revolution of the past five-hundred years.

### INTRODUCTION TO PHYSICAL SCIENCE

(GRADE 9)

The second semester offers the lab component of the course. This work is, first of all, designed to teach students the fundamentals of the scientific method. Students begin by learning how to use a balance and a graduated cylinder. From that simple start students will do extensive lab work, all of it leading to a basic understanding of just why it is that scientists—and now we too, are convinced that atoms exist. The text used for the course is the award winning IPS text Introductory Physical Science. The course is lab oriented, and students learn by hands-on-experimentation. The introduction of theories and concepts only comes after lab work has shown the logic of such conclusions.

### BIOLOGY

The objective of Biology is to give the student an understanding of the story of life on Earth. The course will place an emphasis on applying the scientific method and developing critical and creative thinking skills.

With knowledge of biology at the microscopic level, we will turn to the study of organisms. Examining plants and animals from the simplest to the most complex will give the student a sense of the diversity of living things and their fit in the environment. Next, we will cover the various systems of the human body, their

function, interaction and role in maintaining health. Finally, we will investigate the interaction of biological systems with the environment, including the topics of population growth and its impact on the environment.

Students will be introduced to background chemical principles as needed to understand biology during the year and will make use of laboratory work, biology samples, magazine articles, CD-ROM and Internet-based reference materials.

### ADVANCED BIOLOGY

Advanced Biology is designed for students with a deep level of interest in Biology who have successfully completed a first course in high school biology and who are actively considering further study in the life sciences or medicine. The course will allow the students to use their base of knowledge in biology to investigate in depth key biological fundamentals and current events in the field. Key topics of study include biochemistry, bacteria, plants, animals, and human diseases. Key activities include laboratory experiments, individual research projects, web research, and dissections.

### CHEMISTRY

Chemistry is a course derived from a program of study designed with the support of the National Science Foundation. Our goal is to give students a hands-on introduction to the basic principles of chemistry —the central science. All major principles are introduced by experiments in the lab and students should develop there an excellent understanding of major chemistry principles and their connection to empirical, experimental evidence.

The text used in the course is *The World of Chemistry* by Zumdahl, Zumdahl and DeCoste (Houghton, Mifflin, 2002). All students receive a lab manual of experiments produced for the course. In addition to the labs, of which there are approximately 15 each semester, students also research and present to the class one project lab each semester.

The topics, organized by units, are: Introduction to Chemistry and the Mole concept; Types of Chemical Reactions, Balancing Equations and Stoichiometry; Modern Atomic Structure; Energy changes in Chemical Reactions; Gases and the Gas Laws; Equilibrium in Chemical Reactions; Acid and Base chemistry; and Oxidation Reduction reactions. A review study packet along with sample test questions is given out at the beginning of each one of these eight units.

### PHYSICS

Physics is the label given to our efforts to gain a more fundamental understanding of the way things work in this universe. Its roots are as deep as the effort of the Pythagoreans (Sixth-century BCE) to discern what makes some musical notes sound harmonious. Modern physics is usually considered to have begun with Galileo, whose experiments led him to propose theories that appeared to contradict both common sense and the writings of Aristotle. Isaac Newton expanded upon Galileo's work to devise a theory of gravity and to propose three laws of motion that serve as the foundation of mechanical physics. His views on motion, force and mass are the key themes of the first part of the course.

The universe is suffused with energy and matter. Energy affects the condition of matter. We will investigate the behavior of matter in different states, then learn about thermodynamics, energy in motion. We will investigate mechanical waves and electromagnetic waves. Light is such a wave, so we will examine vision and color, reflection and refraction. Electricity is nearly as fundamental as gravity, and we will study the basics of electricity. We will learn something about the strange world of subatomic particles, whose behavior is subject to uncertainty and the wave/particle duality. Introducing Special Relativity, we will see that matter and energy are intrinsically related and that space and time are not constant, but are woven together to comprise the field of experience. We conclude with an appreciation of Einstein's Theory of General Relativity, which totally transformed our understanding of gravity.

Each student will get the opportunity to deeply investigate some are of special interest by writing a research paper. The textbooks provide excellent problem sets

to help students gain mastery of the principles under investigation, and students should expect to have thirty minutes of homework each night. There will also be supplemental readings by such authors as Einstein, Ganow, and Feynman. Lectures will be enhanced through classroom discussions and experiments.

## FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Northwest Yeshiva offers students a choice of two foreign languages: Spanish and Hebrew.

The Spanish Language Department introduces students to the study of the language and the cultures of Spanish-speaking peoples. All skills – speaking, reading, writing, and listening – are stressed.

The Hebrew Language Department provides five levels of instruction. Level 1 is designed for students entering Northwest Yeshiva High School with little or no previous study of Hebrew language. Students who have previously studied Hebrew at the elementary level will enter the Hebrew language program at Level 2. The program combines the use of texts, Hebrew language newspapers, Hebrew language videos, and audiotapes. At each level, students study both classical and modern Jewish literature. The scope of the course is not limited to instruction in Hebrew language. Students are introduced to modern Israeli culture and current events.

### SPANISH LANGUAGE, LEVEL I

This course introduces students to the basic grammatical structures and vocabulary of Spanish. Learning a language is like learning to play a musical instrument: it's important to know the theory and technique behind it, but unless the student practices frequently, he/she will not become proficient. In order to maximize exposure to Spanish, students will engage in both mechanical and more communicative types of activities. A progressively higher percentage of the class will be taught in Spanish as student comprehension improves.

Students will write one composition during the class, focusing on creative use of vocabulary and general techniques of good writing. Topics concern daily life, and how people live in Hispanic communities. The textbook used in this class is Paso a Paso, which will be supplemented by other materials (including music, video, art and writing).

### SPANISH LANGUAGE, LEVEL II

This course is a sequel to Spanish I. Additional grammatical topics are covered, and increasing student vocabulary is an important focus. Students are expected to converse in Spanish during structured group work. The class will be primarily taught in Spanish. Further aspects of Hispanic culture and history will be investigated. Readings include poems and short works of literature. Students will write two compositions during the class, with an emphasis on proofreading and accuracy of expression. We will use Paso a Paso in class, along with other media.

### SPANISH LANGUAGE, LEVEL III

This course is a sequel to Spanish II. In this course, the remaining basic grammar of Spanish will be introduced. Students work frequently in groups to practice conversation. The class will be conducted in Spanish, with only rare exceptions. Travel, art and literature are some of the topics investigated, as well as some aspects of history related to the Spanish language. Students will write two compositions during the class, focusing on ways to make their writing more fluid and expressive. Most of Spanish for Mastery 3 will be covered in this class. The book used in this class is Paso a Paso (Book 2), and will be used in concert with other pertinent materials.

**HEBREW LANGUAGE, LEVEL I**

The first level of Hebrew instruction is designed for students with little or no previous background in Hebrew language. The objectives in this level are for students to read and write Hebrew, in both the standard and cursive form. In grammar, students begin to study tenses, basic sentence structure, and two of the seven verb structures. The basic text is Yesodot Halashon 3 and 4. Students will be introduced to current events in Israel through the Jerusalem Post and daily conversations in Hebrew.

**HEBREW LANGUAGE, LEVEL II**

This is the entry level course for students with Hebrew language background. Vocabulary will be enriched. Students will begin to read texts without vowels. Grammar will be studied more intensively. All tenses will be covered, as well as two additional verb constructions. All materials in Level II are in Hebrew. The basic text is Yesodot Halashon 5 and 6. Newspapers used in the course will include Olam Hadash and HaMishpacha.

**HEBREW LANGUAGE, LEVEL III**

Emphasis is on conversation and oral skills at an advanced level. Vocabulary will be increased. Students will continue the study of grammar with the completion of the remaining three verb constructions. Students will become more fluent in the reading of Hebrew without the use of vowels, and introduced to Jewish literature and Israeli culture. The basic text is Yesodot Halashon 7 and 8. Newspapers readings will be from HaMishpacha.

**HEBREW LANGUAGE, LEVEL IV**

This level represents the achievement of fluency. Conversational oral skills will be developed to the level necessary to converse easily in Hebrew. Students will

continue to review vocabulary and grammar, and become fluent in reading Hebrew texts without vowels. Greater emphasis will be placed on the study of modern Hebrew literature, poetry and Israeli newspapers. The texts for Level IV are Lashon Latichon Part 1 and 2. Newspaper readings will be from Yediot Achronot.

**HEBREW LANGUAGE, LEVEL V**

In this advanced level, emphasis will be placed on Modern Hebrew literature. Students will become familiar with the fine points of Modern Hebrew idiom. The texts for this level are from Israel, and correspond to high-school level studies in Israel. Students will continue to read Yediot Achronot.

**FINE ARTS**

The study of art contributes to the growth and depth of students in many ways. The purpose of the Fine Arts course is to introduce students to the history and techniques of fine art as they relate to culture, language, history, knowledge of oneself and understanding others.

**FINE ARTS (GRADE 9)**

The Fine Arts course is envisioned as one that will integrate the development of technical skills with the growth of physical and spiritual expression. Students will be offered course work in both two-dimensional and three-dimensional media. Special areas of study will include drawing and painting, printmaking and sculpture.

This course will emphasize some of the basics of drawing and painting, such as the arrangement of compositional elements, creation of form with the use of shadow and light, quality of line and textural description. The reductive process of linocut printmaking will be introduced, as well as the creation of sculpture with clay and assemblage.

The class will explore the observed subject and the development of personal imagery. Students may also combine imagery from their religious studies and rituals with their artistic studies in order to deepen the bond between art, spirituality and daily activity. Students will finalize this overview course with completion of a piece of art in a medium of their choice. This approach will allow for further investigation into a particular medium, beyond the introductory level.

To enrich and expand upon the students' experience with technique and expression, critical thinking skills will be sharpened through class discussion. Topics will include the significance of the arts culturally and socially, as well as the study of artists, both historical and contemporary.

### PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND ATHLETICS

All students are required to take the Friday physical education class at the Stroum JCC or join an NYHS sports team each year.

A student receives a grade and credit for their participation in PE or on a sports team. If a student takes a team sport and a regular PE class, the student may register for one or both semesters of PE but not for only one quarter. In all cases, students must attend at least eighty percent of the sessions each quarter to get PE credit.

For students not enrolled in the PE course at the SJCC, the school day ends immediately prior to PE. These students are encouraged to leave school at this point. Students not enrolled in the PE course at the SJCC should not go to the SJCC.

### PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Physical Education classes are held every Friday at the end of the school day. The classes are conducted by the members of the athletics and fitness staff

of the JCC, using that facility's various venues. All of the classes are gender-separate.

Each year's program includes several of the following: aerobic exercise, workouts using fitness machines, calisthenics, weightlifting, running, basketball, racquetball, softball, swimming, water polo, martial arts, gymnastics, and (for boys) wrestling.

Periodically, there are units of instruction on health, first aid, and CPR.

The JCC staff, in consultation with the school administration, sets policies pertaining to attendance, late arrival, attire, and conduct. In its enforcement of those policies, the JCC staff has the Yeshiva's full support.

### INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS

Students may earn all of their Physical Education credit by participating in the school's interscholastic sports program.

These sports are offered during the 2008-2009 school year:

- Cross Country (for men and women)
- Women's Volleyball
- Women's Basketball
- Men's Basketball
- Track (for men and women)
- Golf (for men and women)

Participation in a season of any of these sports earns a year of P.E. credit.

**ATHLETIC POLICY**

Grading when more than one class/team sport is taken in an academic year

If a student takes more than one team sport, or a team sport and a regular P.E. class in a year, the grades received in both classes will be recorded and averaged into the student's GPA.

Early dismissal for athletic events not sponsored by NYHS

If a student joins a high school team for a sport not offered by NYHS, then the current approved absences for NYHS athletic events will be granted under condition that:

1. The student is a member of a WIAA team sport.
2. NYHS receives prior notice of the team's events schedule.
3. The student is responsible for all material covered in missed classes due to the sporting events.

P.E. credit requirements towards graduation

All students are required to take the P.E. class or its equivalent every academic year he/she is enrolled in NYHS.

A student may, in unique situations with extenuating circumstances, apply for a P.E. credit waiver.

**INDEPENDENT STUDY**

Seniors and, on occasion, juniors, may elect a course of independent study. The independent study must be in an academic area from either Judaic or General Studies.

A student wishing to take an independent study course should first meet and consult with the respect Dean of that program. The student will then need to find a member of the faculty willing to create and supervise a course of independent study. The faculty member will submit a written course proposal to the appropriate Dean that outlines the course of study, topics, student expectations and requirements and means for evaluating student performance. The course may be for one or two semesters of credit.

After the academic program is approved by the administration, the independent study proposed will need the approval of the student's parents. In the past, students have taken independent study in Gemara, Halacha, Literature, U.S. History, Language Arts and Chemistry.

**ELECTIVES**

Each year the Yeshiva offers several elective courses. Most electives are one semester long. Elective courses for a given year are determined by a survey of eligible students the previous spring. Students may take electives in lieu of a fourth-year of Science, fourth-year of Math, and/or fourth-year of Foreign Language.

For the 2008-2009 school year, the second-semester courses are American Film, Drama/Speech and World War II. There are two year-long electives: Writing and Yearbook.

**SECOND SEMESTER ELECTIVES****AMERICAN FILM**

In this class, to paraphrase MGM, you will see more stars than there are in heaven. Some may be old “friends and others may be new to you. The stars include Charlie Chaplin, Buster Keaton, the Marx Brothers, Laurel and Hardy, W.C. Fields, Humphrey Bogart, Clark Gable, Katherine Hepburn, Gary Cooper, Orson Welles, Bob Hope and Bing Crosby, Marlon Brando, John Wayne, George C. Scott, Clint Eastwood, and a whole galaxy of others. In addition to watching the stars shine, you will get a real sense of how the motion picture industry in America developed. The work for the course is about as easy as work for a class can be. There are no major papers and no minor papers (i.e., no papers at all). There will be a series of tests, but the major portion of the work involves watching the stars perform.

**DRAMA**

Students will study the components of production, from playwriting to set design to character creation. By exploring drama through improvisation, students will spontaneously develop plot and character and stumble upon quirky and humorous ideas to use as starting points for scene development. Each student will have the opportunity to learn blocking and directing techniques and put them into practice. In addition, acting skills will be honed, and a play performance will cap off the semester. Students will contribute to all aspects of the production.

**SPEECH**

The course will focus on public speaking. Students will create and present several formal speeches. These will include an introductory speech, informative speech, demonstration speech, persuasive speech, and oral interpretation of literature. Students will gain experience in interview techniques as well as impromptu, extemporaneous, and oratorical speaking.

**WORLD WAR II**

An in-depth introduction to the greatest war in history, a titanic struggle between the Allied Forces (America prominently among them) and the Axis Powers (Nazi Germany and its allies). Focusing primarily on the United States, we will not overlook failures and blunders, but we will emphasize the ways in which American institutions (public and private), leaders (giants such as Franklin Roosevelt, George Marshall and Dwight Eisenhower), and ordinary citizens rose to a monumental challenge and helped to bring about victory that was by no means inevitable. The course entails substantial reading: large chunks of the best biographies, histories, memoirs, and monographs. The course will have a seminar format, with much discussion and debate, based upon the readings.

**YEAR-LONG ELECTIVES****WRITING**

Students will write creatively (fiction, nonfiction, and poetry) and journalistically, producing a publication that includes both creative and journalistic writing. Students will also read from these writing genres. For the journalistic component of the course, students will hone interviewing, writing, editing, and production skills.

**YEARBOOK**

This class (limited to two or three students, selected by teachers from among those students expressing interest) produces the NYHS Yearbook.