

Making an Informed Choice
about

Three Grade 9 Opportunities
for all Students

At Arrowhead High School

2012-2013

Making an Informed Choice about Three Grade 9 Opportunities for All students for 2012-13

Introduction

In order to provide a guaranteed and viable curriculum based on the National Common Core standards in English Language Arts and the National Council for the Social Studies and to assure all students are College and Career Ready, Arrowhead High School will offer following 3 opportunities open to all Grade 9 students for 2012-13.

By providing three viable learning environments, each focusing on the National Common Core, Arrowhead High School will provide parents and students a choice that best fits the student's individual strengths.

The three opportunities are English 9 CORE and Social Studies 9 CORE, Integrated Learning Academy (ILA), and AP Human Geography with English 9 Honors.

Common Characteristics for each Opportunity

All three choices are available to students. Parents and students will choose the best fit for their son or daughter. All choices are based on the following:

- On the national standards called the "Common Core." These standards focus on essential skills in reading, writing, speaking/listening, grammar, research and technology.
- Are aligned with the National Council for the Social Studies.
- Have rigor.
- Will use the same end of semester skilled-based common assessment.
- Will use direct instruction, individual assignments, small group work, and projects.
- Will adapt to the learning needs of students by providing varied assignments, use of questions, and choices in interim assessments.

English 9 CORE and Social Studies 9 CORE– Both Required for Graduation

Description – The Core classes provide all students with an opportunity to apply reading, writing, speaking, listening, and research and media skills to four themes in – Power, Citizenship, Culture and Conflict in these two subject areas. . English 9 and Social Studies 9 will appear as 2 credits each on the transcript.

Learning Environment – Students who choose the English 9 Core and Social Studies CORE will meet in alternate day block classes for 84 minutes. These teachers will assure that students will have the necessary skills. There will be four major assessments, one each quarter, that will connect the learning for students and be applied in each course. This is not teamed, nor is it an integrated learning environment. However, students will have very similar classroom experiences regardless of who teaches the class.

Indicators of Match for Students - Students of all abilities and learning styles will find success in the Core. Critical thinking skills will focus on all levels of thinking. Students who are used to a more

traditional learning environment but want to see how their learning and work is connected through two subject areas will benefit from this choice.

Integrated Learning Academy (ILA) – English 9, Social Studies 9, Science 9, Art, Business (all needed for Graduation)

Description – The Integrated Learning Academy will provide an integrated learning and inquiry-based learning experience with increased focus on science, social studies, English, art and business. The themes are College and Career Readiness, Matter and Structure Interaction, Energy, Motion and Forces in our Lives, and Earth Interaction. English 9, Social Studies 9 and Science 9 for 2 credits each will appear on the transcript. Art Survey and Business Multi Media for 1 credit each will appear on the transcript.

Learning Environment – Students in the Integrated Learning Academy will be learning through team teaching by the same group of teachers who create flexible use of time and space (periods 7-10) to integrate key themes using project-based and problem-based approaches, as well as traditional ways of learning. The National Common Core learning standards for each subject area will be blended together creating an engaging and unique approach to solve real life problems. Each student will have an advisor from the teaching team. Students will partially direct their own learning by scheduling training sessions on key concepts and skills. Students will use a personal electronic device and cloud based applications to communicate and share information on a daily basis.

Indicators of Match for Students

Students of all ability levels and learning styles will find success in the Integrated Learning Academy. In particular, those students who like independence, who are really curious, who think “out of the box,” who are creative, and may tend to push limits will find this a match. Those students, who ask higher level thinking questions, see big picture and want to know why may especially benefit.

Advanced Placement (AP) Human Geography and English 9 Honors –English 9 Honor will meet the requirements for graduation; however, those taking AP Human Geography will meet the Social Studies credits for graduation but students still need to take either the AP Politics and Government or Political Science to meet graduation requirements.

Description – AP Human Geography is an appropriate college level course for capable grade 9 students. According to the College Board, this course “designed to introduce students to the systematic study of patterns and processes that have shaped human understanding, use, and alteration of the Earth’s surface. Students employ spatial concepts and landscape analysis to examine human social organization and its environmental consequences.” Topics include geography as a field of inquiry, population, cultural patterns and processes, political organizations, agriculture and land use, industrialization and economic development, cities and urban land use. Students are expected to take the AP Human Geography exam that includes both a 60-minute multiple-choice section and a 75-minute free-response section. The English 9 Honors course will align with AP Human Geography, focusing on the skills necessary for the exam. AP Human Geography and English 9 Honors will appear on the transcript for 2 credits each.

Learning Environment

This is a more teacher-directed choice using a national curriculum that is recognized by the College Board, and upon successful performance on the AP exam, students will earn college credit. The classroom will use more interactive lecture and discussion and focus on higher level thinking skills. Students will be expected to comprehend higher level texts and write critically at a higher level. Teachers in the AP Human Geography and English 9 Honors will work collaboratively to prepare students for success. While students will be required to sign up for both offerings, the courses are not teamed, nor are they integrated. However, there will be strong alignment of skills and knowledge between the two courses. Students must enroll in both offerings

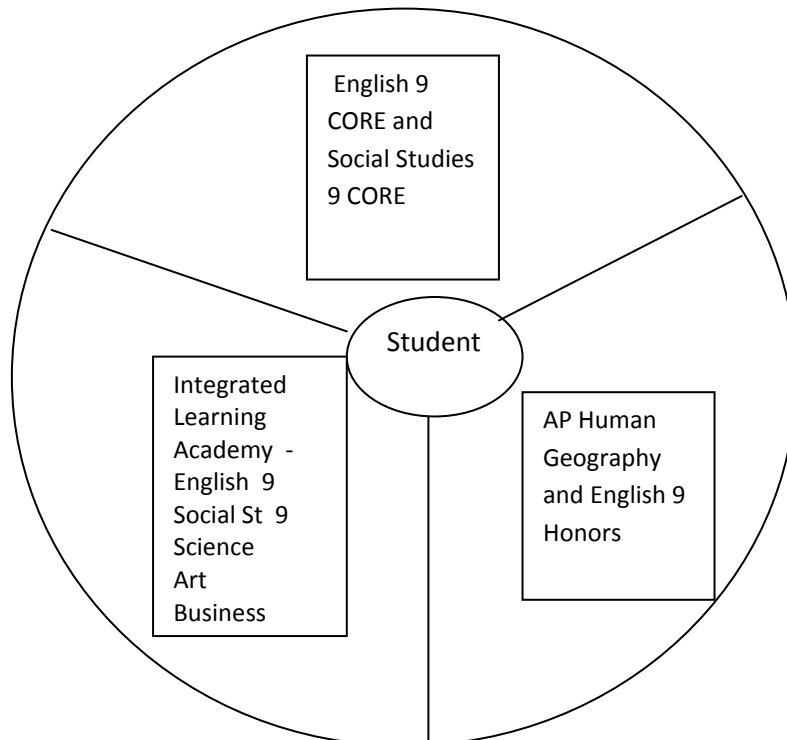
Indicators of Match for Students

While students of all ability levels and learning styles may benefit from this choice, those students who take direction well, manage their time, commit to being prepared by completing the required homework, readings, and writings will find the most success. Students who have found past success in the structure of school and work hard at doing well may especially benefit. In addition, students will have an opportunity to take an ACT practice test (retired test) in January to assist in making an informed choice about their readiness.

For More Information Contact:

Arrowhead High School – 369-3611, Bonnie Laugerman, Director of Learning at ext. 4204,
laugerman@ahs.k12.wi.us

Diagram of Grade 9 Choices for Parents and Students to Make an Informed Choice



FAQ
Arrowhead High School
Making informed choices about Grade 9 options effective 2012-13

1. What is different about the honors program at AHS for 2012-13?

- The process used in the past has been altered. The choices for parents and students have been altered. This is now process of making an informed choice based on the description of the choices, the learning environment and the best match for how my son or daughter learns. There is no application, no appeal, and no formal teacher recommendation.
- Honors Science – There will be no application. but there is a placement test. Interested students should take the ACT at Arrowhead on January 7 and Science test at Arrowhead on Feb 25. **Must have G/T recommendation and Science teacher recommendation.**
- Math- Students will move to the next math course offering. They should take the ACT on January 7. There is a flyer available to explain those choices for students who are gifted or very strong in math. **Must have teacher recommendation.**
- English/Social Studies
 - For AP Human Geography with English 9 Honors, students should take the ACT on Jan. 7.
 - Choice of three learning environments with Integrated Learning Academy (ILA), English 9 CORE and Social Studies 9 CORE and AP Human Geography with English 9 Honors

2. How do I make an informed choice? When do I need to choose? Who can help me?

- Always start with your parents, teachers, G/T coordinator and counselors
- Personal motivation
- You can opt to take an ACT test with writing option [free of charge] on January 7 at AHS. This is expected for those students considering AP Human Geography with English 9 Honors and also for Science Honors or biology and Advanced Algebra/Trig or Advanced Algebra/Geometry Block
- Students sign up for courses after January 17-18 Freshmen orientations. Course selection forms will be due to K-8 schools in late January. The K-8 schools will forward all student course selections to Arrowhead High School no later than February 3.

3. Are students expected to take an ACT test if considering AP Human Geography/English 9 Honors, Honors Science and Advanced Algebra Choices?

- Yes. If you want to take any of these classes, you should take the test. There is no cut score to get into the AP Human Geography class. However, an ACT reading score of 23 or greater will indicate that the student has a 50 % chance of getting a 3 or better on the AP exam [Source: AP indicators of success, www.act.org].
- A retired ACT exam will be given Jan. 7, free of charge to anyone interested. This test will incorporate a writing sample. Students need to report by 7:45 am to North Campus, entrance 5, and are expected to be finished by 12:00. More details will follow.
- **Please preregister for the ACT test with Kim Dion at 262-369-3611 ext. 4113 or dion@ahs.k12.wi.us.**
- Results from this test will be ready by the January 17-18 Freshmen Orientation sessions. One session will be held from 5:15 to 6:15 pm on January 17 in the SC Study Hall.
- If a student takes the ACT in December, the student can use those results for the course selection process and not come for the January 7 test but could attend the January 17 test results meeting.

4. What happens if I make the wrong choice?

- If AP Human Geography is too difficult, individual circumstances will be considered.
- If it is essential that AP Human Geography be dropped then English 9 Honors will be dropped too
- Careful consideration must be made based on the choices available. There is a strong likelihood that space availability in other options will be very limited.

5. What is AP Human Geography?

- It introduces students to the systematic study of patterns and processes that have shaped human understanding, use and alteration of the Earth's surface. It will provide a learning experience equivalent to that obtained in most college introductory human geography course. An exam score of 3 or better will give the student one semester of college credit.

- 6. Is the AP Human Geography open to all grade levels?**
 - Not at this point.
- 7. Can a 9th grade handle an AP class?**
 - Yes. The curriculum is appropriate for any student 9-12 according to the College Board. A well organized, motivated and high level nonfiction reader will be able to handle the course.
- 8. What is the difference between Honors and AP courses?**
 - An AP course is based on National curriculum and exam. Students can earn college credits.
 - An Honors course is offered at the local level with curriculum developed at the local high school. All Honors courses will be different from high school to high school.
- 9. If a student does not take an Honors class, can the student still take AP courses later?**
 - Of course. No matter what courses freshmen take, they can always take an AP course later. When students are ready for the rigor of an AP course, they should take them.
- 10. What is an example of the nature of the rigor?**
 - While all choices develop and emphasize writing, students in AP Human Geography will need to write informed opinion based documents. The emphasis is on why, rather than what. Students are expected to take the College Board exam in May.
 - ILA students are expected to incorporate college level research skills, perform controlled experiments, apply knowledge to real world situations and communicate their findings using multiple formats.
 - CORE students will have a variety of writing choices based on higher order thinking skills like remembering, understanding, applying, analysing, evaluating, and creating, based on individual learning levels.
- 11. What changes are being considered for 10th grade for 2013-14?**
 - Although not yet completed, parallel courses are being considered for the 10th grade level [ie. Social Studies 10 CORE and English 10 CORE; ILA 10; and AP [one of the Social Studies AP courses] and English 10 Honors].
- 12. How will the Academy and CORE learning environments meet the needs of highly gifted students?**
 - Highly gifted students in the ILA and the CORE classes will create relevant and meaningful learning experiences that will be challenging. Students will develop leadership skills while using innovation to solve real-world problems. Both the Academy and CORE classes will foster creativity. The ILA offers differentiated instruction where students can explore topics of interest.
- 13. Can I mix and match my choices among the 3 options?**
 - No
 - AP Human Geography without English 9 Honors and the reverse? No.
 - English 9 Honors with SS CORE? No
- 14. What will the requirements be for graduation for Class of 2016?**
 - Social Studies CORE and English 9 CORE, ILA courses, and English 9 Honors will meet graduation requirements. Students who take AP Human Geography must still fulfill the government graduation requirement by either taking AP Government and Politics or Political Science during high school.
- 15. Will there be block and gender offerings for English/SS grade 9 students?**
 - These choices have been eliminated for Freshmen.
 - AP Human Geography/English 9 Honors will have 40 minute classes each
 - Social Studies CORE/English 9 CORE will have 84 minutes alternate days for each course
 - ILA--flex time among the four courses during 7-10 periods
- 16. Who should I contact if I have questions?**
 - Please preregister for the ACT test with Kim Dion at 262-369-3611 ext. 4113, dion@ahs.k12.wi.us by January 2, 2012.
 - Bonnie Laugerman, Director of Learning, 262-369-3611 ext. 4204, laugerman@ahs.k12.wi.us
 - Visit Arrowheadschoools.org/academics/ILA.cfm for more information on the Academy

Application Procedure for Science 9 Honors

2012-2013

Arrowhead Area public school students who meet the criteria below will be recommended for the assessment portion of the Science 9 Honors selection process by their G/T Program Coordinator and their 8th grade Science teacher. The list of recommended students will be communicated to Kim Dion, Administrative Assistant to the Office of Student and Staff Learning at 262 369-3611, ext. 4113 or dion@ahs.k12.wi.us.

This assessment will be held from **8:45 am until approximately 10:00 am on the Saturday, February 25, 2012 at Arrowhead High School—North Campus—Rooms N105, N107, N125 and N129.** Students will need **two #2 pencils with erasers and a basic calculator** for the exam. The results of this assessment will be one of many tools used to determine ninth grade science placement (Science nine, science nine Honors, Biology or Biology Honors). Students who score exceptionally well on this science assessment will be waived from Science 9 Honors to Biology or Biology Honors. If students have an interest in the Biology Honors course—they will need to follow through with the application process for this course.

The Science Nine curriculum involves the topics of general physics, chemistry, earth science, and astronomy. The honors course strives to develop a deeper understanding of concepts at a more abstract level. Honors students will be required to develop investigations and data collection procedures. They will then use these procedures to identify and manipulate variables and apply mathematics at a more advanced level. The honors course is designed for students with very high ability and motivation. The Arrowhead High School curriculum guide provides additional detail on courses. It is important to note that a freshman's science selection **does not** limit what he/she is eligible to take as a sophomore, junior or senior-- i.e. they may go on to take other honors or AP science courses in future years.

HONORS SCIENCE 9 APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

1. Must take Geometry concurrently or have already completed Geometry,
AND
2. Be identified as level 2 or 3 gifted by Arrowhead Area criteria in the intellectual and/or science area,
3. **or** have ACT scores ≥ 25 in math and science and reading (≥ 23).

1. What is the difference between Science Nine Honors and Science Nine?

Answer: In general the students in the Science Nine Honors course will be more challenged due to emphasis on the following:

- Higher level of mathematics
- Higher level of critical thinking skills
- Greater difficulty of lab activities and extensions

2. Is it true that for a student to be accepted into Science Nine Honors they must take the exam on February 25th.

Answer: Yes

3. If my son/daughter is not recommended by the 8th grade GT person, may they still take the exam on February 25th.

Answer: We are relying on the grade eight GT staff to provide us with the list. If your son/daughter is not recommended you will need to contact the elementary school...i.e. we will not test anyone not on the recommended list.

4. Why do ninth graders at AHS have to take Science Nine when many other high schools start their freshman in Biology?

Answer: The purpose and history of the Science Nine curriculum is to provide a solid foundation for the science program at AHS. This is especially true of the laboratory experience. AHS is unique in that it is a union high school with 8 feeder schools, all who have different programs in science for grades 6 through 8 with varying degrees of lab sophistication. The Science Nine course (and Honors) provides all students the opportunity to rise to a common level to allow a smooth path through the science courses offerings at AHS.

5. If my son or daughter cannot attend the exam date on February 25th is there an alternative date?

Answer: Parents are asked to understand that this date is firm and that the only exception should be illness or family crisis. In case of this occurrence the parents should contact Cheri Kaiser, science department chair, at Kaiser@ahs.k12.wi.us.

6. When will I find out where my son/daughter will be placed in science?

Answer: Parents will receive a letter indicating their child's placement within one month of taking the February 25th exam. The letter will indicate the reason for the placement—i.e. placement into Science Nine or Science Nine Honors. If a student has performed extremely well on the exam they will be notified, in a similar mailing, of the alternative options of Biology or Biology Honors placement.

**Mathematics: Recommended Choices for
Strong Math Students entering Grade 9
At Arrowhead High School for 2012-13**

Advanced Algebra/Trigonometry

Course Description:

This course is for 9th grade students with a strong aptitude and enthusiasm for learning mathematics. Students in this course sequence will be able to complete 2 semesters of college Calculus (AP Calculus BC) and one semester of college statistics (AP Statistics) by the end of the 12 grade. Students may elect to opt out of the sequence after one year and can do so without penalty by moving laterally within the other available Arrowhead math courses. Students who do not initially enroll in this course in the 9th grade cannot move into this course sequence at a later time. The Advanced Algebra/Trigonometry course is intended for students achieving at approximately the 85th percentile or above of the incoming 9th grade class with regard to achievement on standardized assessments (i.e. ACT) and previous course grades. A teacher recommendation is required on the 9th grade course selection sheet.

Advanced Algebra

Course Description:

This course is for students who have been identified with strong abilities in math and expect to take AP Calculus AB and AP Statistics by the end of the 12th grade. The Advanced Algebra course is intended for students achieving at approximately the 80th percentile or above of the incoming 9th grade class with regard to achievement on standardized assessments (i.e. ACT) and previous course grades. It is strongly recommended that students achieve at an A level in both Algebra and Geometry before taking Advanced Algebra in the 9th grade.

Geometry/Advanced Algebra Block

Course Description:

This course is for students who have been identified with strong abilities in math and expect to take AP Calculus AB and AP Statistics by the end of the 12th grade. The Geometry/Advanced Algebra Block course is intended for students achieving at approximately the 80th percentile or above of the incoming 9th grade class with regard to achievement on standardized assessments (i.e. ACT) and previous course grades. It is strongly recommended that students achieve at an A level in Algebra before taking the Geometry/Advanced Algebra Block in the 9th grade.