



VILLA MARIA ACADEMY HIGH SCHOOL

EMPOWERING YOUNG WOMEN SINCE 1872

OFFICE OF CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

VMA Philosophy of Student Placement: Placement for Success!

Villa Maria Academy High School prides itself on maintaining its reputation as an academically rigorous college preparatory academy setting. Our philosophy of student placement is rooted in our belief that students should enter VMAHS postured for success and build from there. Our goal for all Villa Maria students is for them to meet the high standards of our curricular demands and experience the rich extracurricular tradition supported by our environment.

This general placement outline can assist in guiding preparation and readiness for any student considering admission to VMAHS.

Students in the Grade 9 year are typically scheduled for the following subjects¹:

Theology
English 1
World History 1
Math
Biology/Physical Science
World Language (Spanish, French, Latin)²
Requirements in Freshman Guidance, Art, Music, Technology

Of the courses listed above, Honors or Advanced Placement level are available to Freshmen in English, World History, Math, and Biology.³ Some Freshmen may be identified for coursework at the Advanced Placement level. In general, several factors are considered in a student's course placement, including:

- The HSPT score (primarily her CSQ and specific subtest scores as noted)
- 8th grade performance
- VMAHS placement test performance
- Previous standardized testing
- The recommendation of the sending teacher (when requested)

¹ The 2018-2019 Academic Catalog and scope & sequence of curriculum is available at www.vmahs.org under the "Academics" link.

² Students who have taken a full-year world language course at their sending school are qualified to sit for our world language placement exam. Students must attain a minimum passing score of 70 in order to be considered recommended for the next level of world language.

³ So-identified students will be recommended to pursue AP World History as their continuation of their World History sequence.

General Placement Guidelines for English:

In general:

- Students are required to take four years of English.
- Placement in Honors English 1 is dependent on the results of the HSPT and a timed writing sample.
- Placement in 10th through 12th grade honors courses is dependent upon a timed writing sample, the student’s first semester grade, and a teacher recommendation.
- English electives may be taken beginning in grade 11.
- Senior Seminars are required semester courses, and Seniors must take two to earn a full credit for the year.

| GRADE 9 | GRADE 10 | GRADE 11 | GRADE 12 |
|------------------|------------------|--|---|
| English 1 | English 2 | English 3 English electives as requested: • Creative Writing • Public Speaking | Senior Seminar courses: • Modern American Literature • The Literature of Social Justice • The Short Story English electives as requested: • Creative Writing • Public Speaking |
| Honors English 1 | Honors English 2 | Honors English 3 AP English Language & Composition ⁴ English electives as requested: • Creative Writing • Public Speaking | AP English Literature & Composition Honors Senior Seminar courses: • 20th Century Drama • Women in World Literature • Isolation vs. Belonging English electives as requested: • Creative Writing • Public Speaking |

⁴ At the discretion of the English Department, Honors English 3 students may be invited to participate in an independent study preparation for the Advanced Placement English Language and Composition Exam.

General Placement Guidelines for Social Studies:

In general:

- Students are required to take three years of Social Studies.
- Placement in Honors World History 1 is dependent on the results of the HSPT and a timed writing sample.
- Placement in 10th through 12th grade Honors and AP courses is dependent on the student’s first semester grade and a teacher recommendation.
- Social Studies electives may be taken beginning in grade 11.
- Curricular options will be investigated for those students who enter grade 9 at a level not listed.

| GRADE 9 | GRADE 10 | GRADE 11 | GRADE 12 |
|------------------------|------------------------|---|---|
| World History 1 | World History 2 | U.S. History Social Studies electives as requested: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Geography • U.S. Government • Law in America • Intro to Psychology | Social Studies electives as requested: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Geography • U.S. Government • Law in America • Intro to Psychology |
| Honors World History 1 | Honors World History 2 | Honors U.S. History or AP U.S. History Social Studies electives as requested: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Geography • U.S. Government • Law in America • Intro to Psychology • AP European History • AP U.S. Government • AP/Honors Microeconomics • AP Psychology | Social Studies electives as requested: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Geography • U.S. Government • Law in America • Intro to Psychology • AP European History • AP U.S. Government • AP/Honors Microeconomics • AP Psychology |

General Placement Guidelines for Mathematics:

In general:

- Students are required to take three years of math. Four years is strongly recommended.
- The standard sequence is Algebra 1 → Algebra 2 → Geometry. All students must take these courses. Placement out of one or more of these upon entering Villa Maria is dependent on results of a placement test and HSPT scores.
- Statistics electives may be taken concurrently beginning in grade 11.
- Curricular options will be investigated for those students who enter grade 9 at a level not listed.

| Grade 9 | Grade 10 | Grade 11 | Grade 12 |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|---|
| Algebra 1 Honors Algebra 1 | Algebra 2 Honors Algebra 2 | Geometry Honors Geometry Math electives as requested: • Statistics • Honors Statistics • AP Statistics | Pre-Calculus Honors Pre-Calculus Math electives as requested: • Statistics • Honors Statistics • AP Statistics |
| Honors Algebra 2 | Honors Geometry Geometry | Honors Pre-Calculus Pre-Calculus Math electives as requested: • Statistics • Honors Statistics • AP Statistics | Honors Calculus AP Calculus AB Math electives as requested: • Statistics • Honors Statistics • AP Statistics |
| Honors Geometry ⁵ | Honors Pre-Calculus Pre-Calculus | Honors Calculus AP Calculus AB Math electives as requested: • Statistics • Honors Statistics • AP Statistics | AP Calculus BC Math electives as requested: • Statistics • Honors Statistics • AP Statistics |
| Honors Algebra 2 ⁶ | Honors Pre-Calculus Pre-Calculus | Honors Calculus AP Calculus AB Math electives as requested: • Statistics • Honors Statistics • AP Statistics | AP Calculus BC Math electives as requested: • Statistics • Honors Statistics • AP Statistics |

⁵ For students who have completed Algebra 1 & Algebra 2 prior to grade 9 and have earned a satisfactory score on the Villa math placement test.

⁶ For students how have completed Algebra 1 & Geometry prior to grade 9 and have earned a satisfactory score on the Villa math placement test.

General Placement Guidelines for Science:

In general:

- Students are required to take three years of science.
- Three years of a lab science must include a minimum of Physical Science or Physics, Biology, and Chemistry. Physics is strongly recommended.
- Honors science placement is contingent upon strong Reading and/or Quantitative scores on the HSPT.
- Placement in Honors Chemistry is contingent upon placement in honors level math.
- Science electives may be taken at some levels beginning in grade 11.
- Curricular options will be investigated for those students who enter grade 9 at a level not listed.

| GRADE 9 | GRADE 10 | GRADE 11 | GRADE 12 |
|------------------|------------------|--|---|
| Physical Science | Biology | Chemistry | Science electives as requested: Physics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anatomy/Physiology • Astronomy • Environmental Science |
| Biology | Chemistry | Physics Science electives as requested: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anatomy/Physiology • Astronomy • Environmental Science | Science electives as requested: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anatomy/Physiology • Astronomy • Environmental Science |
| Honors Biology | Honors Chemistry | Honors Physics or AP Physics 1 Science electives as requested: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Honors Anatomy/Physiology • Honors Genetics • AP Biology • AP Chemistry • AP Environmental Science | Science electives as requested: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Honors Anatomy/Physiology • Honors Genetics • AP Biology • AP Chemistry • AP Environmental Science • AP Physics – 1 / Mechanics / Electricity & Magnetism |

General Expectations of Performance by Levels Available for 9th Grade Placement:

| College Prep | Honors | Advanced Placement |
|---|--|---|
| College Preparatory courses are offered for students whose command of skills enables them to accelerate at the pace required of a college preparatory curriculum. One half-hour/night of independent work is a general guideline for the College Preparatory level. | Honors level courses are offered for academically competent students who are able to pursue in-depth study and who are willing to spend extra time outside of class working independently. These courses require additional reading and writing assignments. Entrance into these classes requires department approval. The nightly independent workload for Honors courses may vary between subject area, but generally will be between 3-5 hours/week of work. Students are expected to manage their time to meet nightly and long-term deadlines. Summer work may be required. | 25 AP courses are offered to qualified students who wish to potentially earn college-level credits while still in secondary school (pending performance on the AP examination). Students in these courses must demonstrate motivation and previous academic achievement and be ready to take responsibility for extensive reading and writing assignments as independent study. Generally, students in AP courses do upwards of one hour of work/evening per course and may be required to complete summer work. All students enrolled in AP courses are required to take the AP exams for those courses in May of that year. |

Supported Learning Curriculum:

Students who we believe will meet success in fulfilling the Villa Maria Academy High School curriculum but who identify as having learning differences may have alternatively scripted programming, depending on the needs of the individual. The philosophy of our supported learning program is to empower the student to build upon her strengths. Therefore, students who are accepted in this band must follow the specific curricular recommendations set forth by the Academic Team, which includes a commitment to summer readiness work, with the end goal that all will meet the curricular targets of the Villa Maria diploma.

Placement Timeline:

| Date | Task |
|---------------|--|
| February 2019 | 2019-2020 Academic Catalog of course offerings available. Incoming students receive placement information. Students will make a world language choice, a choice between music appreciation and instructional music lessons, and a choice between Art 9 and Studio Art 1. Students seeking advanced standing in Math, English, and World Language will indicate choice of placement test dates. |
| March 2019 | Students return all placement information. Course selection choices of students in current grades 9-10-11 are being made. Incoming Class of 2023 sits for English/World History, Math, and World Language placement exams. |
| April 2019 | Course offerings for 2019-2020 school year are determined based on student course selections. Incoming Class of 2023 notified of placement decisions. |
| July 2019 | Students notified of course schedule for 2019-2020 school year. |