

2019-2020

# WATKINSON

Course Catalog &  
Academic Handbook

# CONTENTS

---

<b>Watkinson Graduation Requirements .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Middle School Curriculum &amp; Course Descriptions .....</b>	<b>5</b>
English .....	6
Math .....	7
Science .....	8
Social Studies/History.....	9
Language.....	10
Arts & Technology .....	11
Performing Arts.....	13
Middle School Activities .....	13
<b>Upper School Curriculum &amp; Course Descriptions.....</b>	<b>14</b>
English .....	16
Math.....	17
Science .....	19
History .....	22
Humanities.....	26
Language.....	27
Visual Arts.....	30
Performing Arts.....	33
Seminar Courses.....	34
After-School Activities .....	36
University of Hartford: College Now Program.....	38
Creative Arts Program (CAP) Diploma Requirements .....	39
Global Studies (GS) Diploma Requirements.....	40
<b>The Academy.....</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>Watkinson Academic Policies &amp; Procedures .....</b>	<b>44</b>
Course Selection Process – Middle School.....	44
Course Selection Process – Upper School .....	44
Course Changes.....	44
To Withdraw From a Course .....	45
Credit for Partial Completion of a Course .....	45

Course Modification ..... 45

Independent Study Courses..... 46

Academic Probation ..... 46

Student Withdrawal from Watkinson..... 46

Reenrollment at Watkinson..... 48

Waiver of Graduation Requirement..... 48

Attendance at Commencement ..... 48

Grades ..... 49

Comments ..... 51

Honor Roll ..... 51

Incomplete Grades ..... 51

Homework ..... 52

Examinations ..... 52

Study Halls ..... 52

Senior Year Second Semester ..... 53

Summer Reading..... 53

Making Up Credits During the Summer ..... 53

Transfer Credits..... 54

Special Academic Requests..... 54

Early Entrance into College ..... 54

How to Request a Watkinson Transcript ..... 55

# WATKINSON GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Watkinson provides a signed diploma and a college preparatory transcript to students who fulfill the school's academic requirements, including at least 20 college preparatory credits (we do not give academic credit for our own sports activities), completion of at least five full credit courses in the Senior or The Academy year, passing all courses taken in the final year, and meeting the course requirements listed below. Please note that most competitive colleges require additional credits for admission. Students hoping to attend a specific college or pursue a particular course of major study should consider a college's expectations when selecting their courses. Below are the minimum requirements to graduate from Watkinson:

## **English**

*4 years required*

## **Mathematics**

*3 years required*

Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II are required. Competitive colleges will look for four years of mathematics. Calculus or Pre-Calculus is strongly recommended for students who plan to study math or science in college.

## **Science**

*3 years required*

Biology and one Environmental Science required in Upper School. Competitive colleges will look for at least three sciences, usually Biology, Chemistry, and Physics. Students intending to major in science should take four years of science and may consider enrolling in an additional science elective junior and senior year. Chemistry and Physics may not be taken concurrently.

## **History**

*3 years required (including one full year of coursework in U.S. History)*

Students are encouraged to enroll in a history course each year, with electives in grades 11 and 12.

## **Languages**

*Completion through level 3 of one modern language*

Students are recommended to complete as many years of study as possible.

Three or four years are strongly encouraged. Students must earn an average of 70 or better for the year in order to advance to the next level.

## **Creative Arts**

*1 year required in either Performing Arts or Visual Arts*

# MIDDLE SCHOOL CURRICULUM & COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

## 6th GRADE

---

### Required Full-Year Courses

6<sup>th</sup> Grade Writing  
Study Skills/SSR 6  
English 6  
Math 6  
Science 6  
Social Studies 6  
Spanish I -6  
Arts & Technology 6

### Activity Requirement

Midday Activity, one every season

### Elective

Middle School Ensemble\*  
*\*Requires instructor permission.*

## 7th GRADE

---

### Required Full-Year Courses

7<sup>th</sup> Grade Writing  
Study Skills/SSR 7  
English 7  
Math (*by recommendation*)  
Science 7  
Social Studies 7  
Spanish I -7  
Arts & Technology 7

### Activity Requirement

Midday Activity, one every season

### Elective

Middle School Ensemble\*  
*\*Requires instructor permission.*

## 8th GRADE

---

### Required Full-Year Courses

8<sup>th</sup> Grade Writing  
Study Skills/SSR 8  
English 8  
Math (*by recommendation*)  
Science 8  
Social Studies 8  
Spanish (*by recommendation*)  
Visual Arts 8

### Activity Requirement

Midday Activity, one every season

### Elective

Middle School Ensemble\*  
*\*Requires instructor permission.*

# ENGLISH

---

## English 6

In English class, 6<sup>th</sup> graders address the essence of the Watkinson experience, our Core Values. Everything we read and write is connected to community, healthy living, respect, integrity, service, or diversity. Along the way, we develop the literacy skills required to comprehend complicated text and to express ourselves confidently in writing in a variety of ways. Our skill building work in vocabulary and grammar helps us achieve these goals.

## English 7

In 7<sup>th</sup> grade English, students examine literature through the lens of our essential question: What does it mean to come of age? Using a diverse selection of reading material – from fiction, non-fiction, poetry, and memoir - we learn to appreciate writer’s craft and the deeper meaning in literature. There are opportunities for both creative writing and literary analysis. To support their work in reading and writing, students complete assignments on grammar and vocabulary topics.

## English 8

In 8<sup>th</sup> grade English, we use the broad subject areas of reading, writing, speaking, and listening to explore the following essential question: How do I know who I am? Students explore fiction, memoir, newspaper articles, letters, essays, and poetry as a whole class, and improve their vocabulary through the online program Membean. Focusing specifically on learning the response paragraph in the first semester, students are taught how to incorporate textual evidence into their writing, while also analyzing for meaning. The signature project of 8<sup>th</sup> grade includes a unit of study on Shakespeare, which culminates in the presentation of a monologue.

## 6th Grade Writing

Students are asked to keep writing collections on Google Docs and to live “writerly lives.” This means that they will sharpen their observation skills as they record stories of their own lives around the Core Values. At regular intervals, we choose a writing seed idea and nurture it until it becomes a draft. The draft will be revised and edited until we are ready to publish. Self-evaluation is a critical piece of this method, so students will be given an opportunity to reflect on their own progress.

## **7th Grade Writing**

In 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Writing, students explore self as writer. They cooperate in groups, exchanging feedback with peers. Students write in class and at home and are expected to grow as writers as they choose and elaborate on ideas. In particular, 7<sup>th</sup> graders learn to create an argument, support an argument with evidence, compose a short story, and write a review. In addition, students also learn such useful information as comma rules and other punctuation.

## **8th Grade Writing**

In 8th Grade Writing, students further develop their writing voice and strategies for organization. Through exploratory writing on independent topics relevant to their lives, this workshop-style class pushes students to produce a solid piece of writing related to this subject. In addition, a mini-research paper lets students delve deeply into a topic of their interest. The revision and editing process is emphasized for good habit building. The course culminates in an Exhibition Project asking students to focus on what kind of learner they are. Students complete both a written essay and a formal presentation to finish this unit.

# **MATH**

---

## **Math 6**

In Math 6, we are dedicated to making each student a better thinker and communicator as well as mathematician. We make connections between the different processes and operations within mathematics while linking these to other disciplines and real experiences of students. Much of our work is on fractions, decimals, percents, and their applications in geometry, probability, and finance. Through our work on budgeting, personal data, and patterns in art, students are challenged to estimate solutions, make calculations, and communicate results logically. By constantly connecting math processes to phenomenon that students can see and experience, students develop a more meaningful framework of mathematics as a discipline.

## **Math 7/7A**

In Math 7, we focus on Pre-Algebra skills. Students will receive substantial reinforcement of arithmetic skills to build a solid foundation and ensure success in future mathematical endeavors. They apply many of the skills they have to solve novel and challenging problems. Students develop skills with integers and variables in real-world situations, apply multiplication and factoring in solving problems of geometry and scale, and use probability and statistics to predict outcomes in carnival games. By constantly connecting math processes to

phenomenon that students can see and experience, students develop a more meaningful framework of mathematics as a discipline.

## **Math 8**

In Pre-Algebra, we explore uses of variables, deepen our sense of numbers through mental math, and solve multistep equations modeling real-world events. We revisit skills involving fractions, decimals, and percents as we explore math phenomena around us. It is through these authentic problem-solving experiences that students begin to appreciate the value of mathematics and understand it as a connected discipline. Topics are presented through activities, investigations, and real-life examples. All students must own a TI-Nspire CX graphing calculator for class and homework. (*Open to students in grade 8 as recommended by the department*)

## **Algebra I - 8th Grade**

The main focus of Algebra I is effective communication in the language of mathematics. Central to understanding Algebra is relating abstract expressions to the situations they model. Once students are confident manipulating variables and equations, they are asked to make sense of data through graphing and linear analysis. Non-linear functions, inequalities, and systems of equations are introduced as well, with emphasis on the connections among graphical representations, variable expressions, and numeric data. Throughout the year, students receive substantial practice with ratios, exponents, radicals, and quadratics. Topics are often presented through hands-on activities, investigations of authentic data, or high-interest examples of math in the student's world. All students must own a TI-Nspire CX graphing calculator for class and homework. (*Open to students in 8<sup>th</sup> grade as recommended by the department*)

# **SCIENCE**

---

## **Science 6**

Essential Question: What is the process of science and how do we use it?

This is a yearlong class that examines topics in life, physical, and earth sciences and how they relate to each other. First semester, we study the nature of science, cells, and heredity. Second semester, we compare our ecological footprints with each other and with students around the world. As a culminating activity, each student designs and conducts a controlled experiment for an independent “green” research project. Second semester, we study Lego robotics, the physics of

flight, and Park River ecology. The health of the river is determined using benthic macroinvertebrates.

## **Science 7**

Essential Question: How does our natural environment reflect the interdependence of life, physical, and earth sciences? How do humans impact these interactions?

This is a yearlong interdisciplinary course examining the natural environment through the life, physical, and earth sciences. We will work on scientific processing skills to create lab reports that reflect learning of the content. The first semester focuses on basic principles of ecology and environmental science with an in-depth examination of birds of prey. Second semester, we continue to study the environment by doing independent research on energy and begin to move into the effects of climate change. We then move into the biotic and abiotic aspects of the earth's ocean before the final unit, which is an in-depth study of Long Island Sound with a research trip to Project Oceanology. Throughout the year, a lab and/or project is conducted related to each unit.

## **Science 8**

Essential Question: How have humans utilized the physical and chemical properties of our natural world to accomplish tasks?

This yearlong interdisciplinary course builds on science skills developed in seventh grade and prepares students for high school. We will work on scientific processing skills to create lab reports that reflect their learning of the content. We will explore the physics and chemistry of our environment and how humans have utilized the natural world to improve our own world. The first semester starts with a focus on Astronomy as an introduction to physical science. We then continue with motion, forces, and machines in nature and use our knowledge of basic physics terms to create a Rube Goldberg machine. Second semester will end with a focus on chemistry. Students will work with the Periodic Table of Elements and characteristics of the elements. Labs and/or projects are conducted related to each unit of interest.

## **SOCIAL STUDIES/HISTORY**

---

### **Social Studies 6: Water**

In 6th grade social studies, we examine the essential question: Is access to fresh, clean water a human right? Using a variety of texts and supplementary material, students explore topics from their local water, conservation, water around the world, and the future of water. We also engage in a number of hands-

on projects. In class, students work throughout the year on skills such as writing dialectical journals, taking two-column notes, and giving oral presentations. In addition, students become experienced with the important research skill of being able to comprehend and paraphrase the information they read. Short writing assignments are assigned in connection with research topics.

### **Social Studies 7: Ancient Civilizations**

Guided by the essential questions “How have civilizations developed?” and “What factors have led to the cultural distinctions between cultures?”, this yearlong course explores a range of ancient civilizations that shaped human history, focusing particular attention on six cultures: Egypt, Mesopotamia, China, India, Greece, and Rome. Students begin by defining the themes related to culture and determining what constitutes a civilization. Then, students examine the characteristics of these ancient civilizations, making connections to their modern-day status.

### **Social Studies 8: U.S. History**

Guided by the essential question “How has the experience of different peoples throughout America’s history impacted the foundation of modern America?”, this yearlong course offers a deeper understanding of this nation’s formation by examining its history through the unique lenses of specific peoples, recognizing that there is not just one perspective. Studying both current events and primary source documents, in addition to the textbook, students examine U.S. history from the Antebellum period, through the Civil War and Reconstruction, into the 20th century. In addition to oral presentation, this course emphasizes critical reading skills and the research process in order to prepare students for the content and work they will encounter in both 9th and 10th grade Humanities courses.

## **LANGUAGE**

---

### **Spanish I - 6**

This course is for beginning Spanish students in 6<sup>th</sup> grade. The main objective is to introduce students to the skill of language learning, as well as the sounds, vocabulary, and simple grammatical structures of Spanish. Students are assessed by quizzes (with both oral and written components), tests, and through homework. There is a test in June, as well as the baby book project.

## **Spanish I - 7**

Spanish I - 7 is a continuation of the work students began in sixth grade Spanish. They continue to build their content mastery of verbs, grammar structures, and vocabulary. Additionally, they continue to increase their proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Lastly, they broaden their understanding of the diversity of the Spanish-speaking world.

## **Spanish II - 8**

Spanish II - 8 is a continuation of the Spanish 1- 7 curriculum that students must have completed successfully with an average of 70 or better. Students will review and build upon the basic grammar and vocabulary that they learned in the previous year(s) through thematic units (for example: sports, home and daily routine, holidays, travel), adding past tenses, more in-depth vocabulary, and furthering their understanding of Spanish and Latin American cultures. This course prepares students to move on to the Spanish 3 class and will culminate in a final assessment.

## **English Language Learning (ELL)**

Middle school (8<sup>th</sup> grade) ELL is offered as curricular support outside of the regular schedule. The students meet with the teacher twice a week in a small group to prepare homework and receive support in reading and writing for all academic subjects.

## **ARTS & TECHNOLOGY**

---

Middle School is a time of exploration and inquiry when we provide our students the opportunity to experience multiple academic disciplines. Our 6th and 7th grade Exploration and Inquiry classes are designed with this philosophy in mind. During the 6th grade Exploration class, the students will explore digital literacy, visual arts, and music throughout the course of the year. The 7th grade Inquiry class, will provide the students with the opportunity to expand on their 6th grade experiences and more closely examine aspects of digital literacy, visual arts, and performing arts. In 8th grade, the students will delve deeper into the visual arts through the yearlong study of a variety of artists and art media.

### **Arts & Technology 6 Exploration Class**

Throughout the yearlong Arts & Technology 6 Exploration Class, students will investigate multiple aspects of the visual and musical arts as well as technology. During the Visual Arts component, the students will explore how artists express their ideas in a visual manner. This will include learning techniques related to

drawing, painting, and sculpture. These skills will be applied in a variety of unique projects. During the Music section of this class, the students will engage in music in all its facets: what different genres sound like, how music makes us feel, and how we make music come alive. The students will sing, play, dance, sound out rhythms, build instruments, and analyze music across the stylistic spectrum and from around the world. During the Digital Literacy component, the students will examine the role technology has in their lives. Students will learn how to utilize technology to find, evaluate, and create information using digital tools. These skills will improve student confidence in using technology and promote the awareness of technology resources and responsibilities that will benefit them in Middle School and beyond.

### **Arts & Technology 7 Inquiry Class**

During the yearlong Arts & Technology 7 Inquiry Class, students will explore a variety of aspects of the visual and performing arts and technology. During the Visual Arts component, the students will examine how artists are inspired and influenced by the world around them. They will learn skills and processes related to drawing, sculpture, and printmaking leading to still life drawing, clay work, and relief printmaking. They will also deepen their abilities to describe, analyze, and interpret works of art. Through the Performing Arts component of the class, the students will participate in exercises designed to familiarize them with actor preparation and technique. Students explore physical acting, improvisation, and creative writing, and study methods for dramatizing original stories. During the Digital Literacy portion, the students will investigate how technology helps us to be more productive, leading to a deeper understanding of the Internet and software applications we have on campus. This portion of the class builds on the 6<sup>th</sup> grade digital literacy skills and further promotes understanding of how technology can assist students find, assess, and create information while developing technical competence.

### **Visual Arts 8**

Essential Question: How can artists throughout history inform and inspire ideas for our work? This yearlong course offers students the opportunity to delve more deeply into the process of making and discussing art. Students will be given the opportunity to experiment with art media including drawing, painting, sculpture, printmaking, and more. Students will be exposed to a variety of art works and discuss their significance within the historical and cultural contexts in which they were created. They will invest themselves in understanding art through analyzing, interpreting, and judging a variety of artworks. Students will generate personal ideas related to each assignment and be given the freedom to shape their own experiences within the art classroom

## PERFORMING ARTS

---

### **Middle School Ensemble**

The Middle School Ensemble develops students' musical abilities through rehearsal and performance. Its curriculum is grounded deeply in musicianship, building students' skills in meter, rhythm, and pitch, and ultimately preparing the young performer to use the elements of musical scores to bring the drama in music to life. The Ensemble is a choral-orchestral group in which singers and players perform together, exploring music of a wide variety of styles. Two concerts, one in the late winter and one in the spring, anchor the academic year. *(Requires permission of instructor)*

## MIDDLE SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

---

Watkinson requires all middle school students to participate in midday activities each season of every year, in keeping with the school's commitment to fostering healthy living habits in our students. Activities meet during the school day. Students who sign up for a competitive team sport must also be committed to games once a week after school and occasional Saturdays. Below is a sampling of activities offered each season.

### **Fall Activities**

Boys MS Soccer *(competitive)*  
Girls MS Soccer *(competitive)*  
Tennis *(co-ed)*

### **Winter Activities**

Boys MS Basketball *(competitive)*  
Girls MS Basketball *(competitive)*  
Circus Arts  
Fitness

### **Spring Activities**

Tennis *(co-ed, competitive)*  
Spring Carnival  
Ultimate Frisbee *(co-ed)*

# UPPER SCHOOL CURRICULUM & COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

## 9th GRADE

---

### Required Full-Year Courses

World Studies: European  
Imperialism  
Math (*by recommendation*)  
Environmental Science  
Language (*by recommendation*)

### Required Semester Courses

Freshman Seminar:  
Communications (*1 semester*)  
Digital Citizenship (*1 semester*)

### Activity Requirement

Afternoon Activity, one every  
season

### Elective Courses

Ceramics  
Drawing (*by recommendation*)  
Foundations in Art  
Introduction to Acting  
Upper School Chorus\*  
Upper School Ensemble\*

*\*Requires permission of instructor*

## 10th GRADE

---

### Required Full-Year Courses

American Studies: We the People  
Math (*by recommendation*)  
Biology  
Language (*by recommendation*)

### Activity Requirement

Afternoon Activity, one every  
season

### Elective Courses

Creative Writing\*  
Ceramics  
Drawing  
Foundations in Art  
Painting (*Prerequisite: Drawing*)  
Sculpture  
Introduction to Acting  
Upper School Chorus\*  
Upper School Ensemble\*

*\*Requires permission of instructor*

## 11th GRADE

---

11<sup>th</sup> grade students must take at least 5 courses, but no more than 8. They are required to take an English course and are encouraged to take history, math, science, and a language. They may also choose to take a creative arts course and/or another elective.

### Core Courses

American Literary Experience  
History electives  
Math (*by recommendation*)  
Science (*by recommendation*)  
Language (*by recommendation*)

### Academic Electives

Creative Writing\*  
Digital Art & Design I

### Activity Requirement

Afternoon Activity, one every season

### Creative Arts Electives

Advanced Studio\*  
Ceramics  
Drawing  
Painting (*Prerequisite: Drawing*)  
Photography I or II\*  
Sculpture/Advanced Sculpture\*  
Advanced Theater & Film Practicum\*  
CAP Diploma Program/Seminar\*  
Introduction to Acting  
Upper School Chorus\*  
Upper School Ensemble\*

\*Requires permission of instructor

## 12th GRADE

---

12<sup>th</sup> grade students must take at least 5 courses, but no more than 8. They are required to take an English course and are encouraged to take history, math, science, and a language. They may also choose to take a creative art course and/or another elective.

### Core Courses

World Literature & Culture  
History electives  
Math (*by recommendation*)  
Science (*by recommendation*)  
Language (*by recommendation*)

### Academic Electives

Creative Writing\*  
Digital Art & Design I or II\*

### Activity Requirement

Afternoon Activity, one every season

### Creative Arts Electives

Advanced Studio\*  
Ceramics  
Drawing  
Painting (*Prerequisite: Drawing*)  
Photography I or II\*  
Sculpture/Advanced Sculpture\*  
Advanced Theater & Film Practicum\*  
CAP Diploma Program/Seminar\*  
Introduction to Acting  
Upper School Chorus\*  
Upper School Ensemble\*

\*Requires permission of instructor

## ENGLISH

---

*The English requirements for grades 9 and 10 are met through our Humanities courses. Please refer to that section of the catalog for details.*

### **The American Experience (11<sup>th</sup> Grade English)**

In this one-year course, students will deepen their understanding of the literary artistry of American writers, as well as further their understanding of American social and historical values. They will read novels, poems, plays, and essays written by a diverse body of American authors, ranging from the early colonial time period to current day. In looking at a variety of historical eras and focusing on both textual and historical details, students will be able to see an evolution of thought and style as it relates to the American writer.

Students will write critical essays and creative pieces to further show their understanding of American culture and artistry. They will work collaboratively on projects including essays and graded discussions. They will further hone their analytical skills with a continued emphasis on effective thesis development and supporting evidence. In addition, this course will include vocabulary study with an emphasis on SAT words.

### **World Literature and Culture (12<sup>th</sup> Grade English)**

In this one-year course, students will read novels, short stories, plays, and poems from around the world. Students will study older works of literature, along with more contemporary pieces, focusing on the culture from which they emerged. To enhance their understanding of each country or region, students will consider such topics as history, geography, traditions, religion, gender, music, food, and politics. Moving from text to text, they will debate and discuss the difference of what appears to be the universal or human experience and what seems specific to a particular people living in a given time and place.

Students will write critical essays and creative pieces (poetry, narrative) to further show their understanding of world culture and literature. Vocabulary study will arise from the literature. Assessments will include essays, discussions, oral presentations, and quizzes. They will also work collaboratively on projects, including group presentations and essays. They will further hone their analytical skills, with a continued emphasis on effective thesis development and supporting evidence, as well as other needed writing and study skills to take to college.

## **Creative Writing**

Creative Writing is a yearlong elective for serious students of fiction and poetry that looks at the stylistic evolution of the short story. Students will read as writers. Instead of simply identifying meaning, discussions will shift more towards how one creates meaning. In addition to a heavy reading load, students will be writing their own works of fiction to be critiqued in a workshop during class once a week. The first semester of the year will be a guided study of fiction, but for the second semester, students will be working on an independent project (novella, collection of short stories, etc.) of their choice. Students are responsible for creating their own deadlines and checkpoints. Some writers to be studied include: Chekhov, Hemingway, Carver, Paley, Welty, O'Connor, Hempel, Kafka, Millhauser, Kawabata, Ellison, etc. *(10th-12th grade elective; requires permission of instructor)*

## **MATH**

---

*Most students at Watkinson take mathematics every year. While the graduation requirement is the successful completion of Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II, virtually every student goes beyond the requirement. The department places students in appropriate courses each year. Depending on the year, the department may offer accelerated courses and slower-paced courses. The cognitive goal of the department is to effectively prepare students to think quantitatively, organize data, and relate their thinking to all other disciplines.*

### **Algebra I**

The main focus of Algebra I is effective communication in the language of mathematics. Central to understanding Algebra is relating abstract expressions to the situation they model. Once students are confident manipulating variables and equations, they are asked to make sense of data through graphing and linear analysis. Non-linear functions, inequalities and systems of equations are introduced as well with emphasis on the connections among graphical representations, variable expressions, and numeric data. Throughout the year, students receive substantial practice with ratios, exponents, radicals, and quadratics. Topics are often presented through hands-on activities, investigations of authentic data, or high-interest examples of math in the student's world. All students must own a TI-Nspire CX graphing calculator for class and homework. *(Open to students in grades 8 & 9 by department recommendation)*

## **Geometry**

This yearlong course integrates the investigation and application of Euclidean geometry, logical reasoning, coordinate geometry, and algebra skills. Students develop understanding of each concept by investigating geometric properties and reaching conclusions based on patterns they observe. Beginning with key definitions and postulates, students build skills toward writing multi-step proofs. Through geometric constructions, students strengthen spatial relationships and related measurements. The course concludes with a study of area, volume, and an introduction to similar polygons. In addition to developing skills of logical sequencing and rational thought, our curriculum encourages students to explore geometry as the underpinning of art, beauty, and nature. (*Prerequisite: Algebra I*)

## **Algebra II**

This course builds on the groundwork laid in earlier algebra and geometry courses, while introducing fundamental ideas of trigonometry and statistics. Algebra II provides the opportunity for students to hone their skills with linear and nonlinear functions, with a specific focus on quadratics and the real world situations they model. Students develop fluency with polynomial and radical expressions, as well as complex numbers. Graphing calculators are used extensively, enabling students to make frequent connections between equations, data tables, and visual trends. Overall, students are building a deeper and more robust understanding of multifaceted mathematical relationships and their applications. All students must own a TI-Nspire CX graphing calculator for class and homework. (*Prerequisites: Algebra I and Geometry*)

## **Pre-Calculus**

This course builds on and extends many of the skills introduced in Geometry and Algebra II. After mastering families of familiar functions, students move to a full examination of polynomials. The properties of exponential functions and logarithms are studied and applied to real-world problems. Students also complete their study of trigonometry, including the use of double- and half-angle formulas. Finally, the conic sections are discovered. If time permits, additional topics may include sequences, series, and matrices. (*Prerequisites: Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II*)

## **Calculus**

The study of calculus begins with limit analysis, leading to the definition of the derivative. Explicit and implicit derivatives are mastered, followed by applications: related rates, extrema of functions over an interval, and maximum/minimum problems. Students learn to use both the first- and second-derivative tests, leading to a full discovery of the curve sketching shown on the graphing calculator. Finally, students are introduced to integral calculus, and

learn to find areas and volumes. (*Prerequisite: Pre-Calculus*)

### **Senior Math Topics**

Using practical business problems and real-world personal financial issues, this course will explore areas of mathematics that help us understand, model, and predict financial processes and outcomes. Topics such as investments, the stock market, business start-ups, banking, credit cards, insurance, income taxes, business planning, home buying, and budgeting are the framework in which students will explore and master mathematical concepts. Skill areas include data analysis (scatter plots, averages, frequency distributions); fitting data to equations; linear, quadratic, exponential, and piecewise models; interest formulas (simple, compound, and continuous); and present and future value. (*Prerequisites: Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II*)

### **Statistics and Probability**

Statistics is an introductory course intended for students in a wide variety of areas of study. Topics discussed include displaying and describing data, the normal curve, regression, probability, statistical inference, confidence intervals, and hypothesis tests. Students will develop their understanding of each concept by applying their knowledge to real world situations, where the city of Hartford will serve as a primary focus. Students will also complete a major, culminating project on a topic of their choice. (*Prerequisites: Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II*)

## **SCIENCE**

---

### **Environmental Science**

Essential Question: How does our understanding of the environment help us live more sustainably? This yearlong course examines the living and non-living parts of the environment and their interconnectivity. Topics include sustainability, environmental justice, biodiversity, the impact of humans on the environment, energy use, and green building design. A one-day field trip to the Long Island Sound takes place in May as part of Watkinson's long-term study of populations and water quality in the Sound. Students conduct controlled scientific experiments and communicate their results through writing, presentations, and project-based learning. The goal of the course is to train students to think and act like scientists. (*Required of all 9th graders*)

## **Biology**

Essential Question: What mechanisms support life and how is all life interdependent? This full-year course will explore the fundamental concepts of life in all of its diverse forms. Inquiry and observation will be the cornerstones of learning through the major topics of study that include: the scientific method, statistics, biochemistry, cell biology and processes, genetics, and evolution. This is a lab-based class, with an emphasis on data analysis, graphing, and lab report writing. The goal of biology at Watkinson is to provide students with a broad background of the biological world around us, serving as a foundation for future studies in science. *(Required of all 10th graders)*

## **Chemistry**

Essential Questions: What is matter, how does it shape the world around us and how does the atomic structure of material dictate its properties, performance and usefulness? This is a full year course for juniors and seniors. Traditional chemistry topics (i.e. scientific measurement, states of matter, atomic structure, periodic trends, nomenclature, stoichiometry, bonding, energy, chemical reactions, the gas laws, solutions and solubility) are covered with emphasis on critical thinking, multi-step quantitative problem solving, scientific writing, and development of laboratory skills. Engineering, problem solving, and design thinking components provide real work application to our materials science work throughout the year. *(Prerequisites: concurrent enrollment in Algebra II or higher AND science teacher recommendation; cannot be taken concurrently with Physics)*

## **Physics**

Essential Question: Physics is the study of the world around us and the rules of nature. How can we extend our understanding of the forces and rules of nature to manipulate in new ways and to our advantage? Physics is a full-year course studying the combined disciplines of physics, mathematics and basic engineering in computer, electrical, materials and mechanical engineering. The goal of the course is for students to explore motion, mechanics, properties of matter, sound, light, heat, and electricity/magnetism through advanced applications of STEM and a flight engineering design model. Principles of flight, engineering design principles, and the application of physics are woven together throughout the year. *(Open to 11th and 12th grade students; concurrent enrollment in Pre-Calculus or higher AND science teacher recommendation; cannot be taken concurrently with Chemistry)*

## 11th & 12th GRADE SCIENCE ELECTIVES

### **Anatomy and Physiology**

Essential Question: What are the systems that make up the human body, and how do they function as a whole to maintain homeostasis? Anatomy and Physiology is a yearlong class that provides an overview of the human body. The focus of this class is to provide students with a broad overview of the major human body systems and their associated diseases. There is a strong emphasis on terminology, research, and medical science. This class will also address epidemiology, pathology, and sports medicine. Students who complete this course will be proficient in medical terms, body systems, research, and scientific writing. Students will also have an opportunity in this class for First Aid/CPR/AED Certification. *(Prerequisite: Biology; can be taken concurrently with Chemistry, Physics, or another science elective)*

### **Botany**

Essential Question: How are plants important to people in today's society? Botany is the study of the diversity, development, ecology, and evolution of organisms in the plant kingdom. Students in this class will discover the importance of plants in our society and different cultures around the world. We will explore plant evolution through hands-on learning both inside and outside of the classroom. Students will identify key innovations that have allowed plants to survive changes to the environment. Additionally, students will learn novel techniques currently used to study plant genetics and how these techniques help us to understand plant responses to current and future environments. Students will identify, classify, and build their own collection of plant specimens using a dichotomous key. *(Prerequisite: Biology; can be taken concurrently with Chemistry, Physics, or another science elective; this is a full-year course; offered alternate years)*

### **Forensic Science**

Essential Question: How can science help bring justice to our society? Forensics science is a course in which students study the application of science to the legal system. Forensics is a lab-intensive course that examines how biology, anatomy, chemistry, physics, and environmental science can be used to examine crime scenes. Students will learn standard forensic techniques and use critical thinking skills to analyze mock crime scenes as well as case studies based on real life investigations. Additionally, throughout the year, students will explore criminal justice reforms and the social justice implications of race and privilege in our society. *(Prerequisite: Biology; can be taken concurrently with Chemistry, Physics, or another science elective; this is a full-year course; offered alternate years)*

## **Zoology**

Essential Question: How are animals essential for the survival of humans?

Zoology is the study of the diversity, behavior, and ecology of the animal kingdom. This is a hands-on class, rich with labs, dissections, and activities, wherein students will observe animals in the classroom and conduct fieldwork to study animals on campus. Students will explore how zoology is an important foundation for medical, veterinary, and wildlife careers and the ecological, economic, and medical benefits that animals provide humankind. Additionally, students will explore the role humans play in the sustainability of wild populations of animals. (*Prerequisite: Biology; can be taken concurrently with Chemistry, Physics, or another science elective; this is a full-year course; offered alternate years*)

## **HISTORY**

---

*The World History and U.S. History requirements are met through our Humanities courses. Please refer to that section of the catalog for details.*

### **11th & 12th GRADE HISTORY ELECTIVES**

#### **African-American Experience: Plessy to 1968**

The purpose of this course is to offer student's an in-depth examination of the African-American experience from 1896 to 1968. Beginning with the Plessy v. Ferguson decision that legalized segregation, students are exposed the political, legal, social, and cultural elements that defined the experience of African-Americans during this time in our country's history. Using a variety of primary sources, the goal is for students to gain a greater appreciation and understanding of the African-American experience, and to apply this knowledge to a discussion on the status of race relations today.

#### **African History**

This elective is a semester-long survey of peoples and countries of the continent. There is an emphasis on culture, religion, and the impact of the slave trade, colonialism, and Africa's diverse solutions to universal human problems. Picking up on the theme "What happens to a people's society when different cultures meet?", there is an on-going dialogue of Africa's status during various stages of imperialism, and how that impacts Africa's relationship with the world today. The course seeks to develop and challenge the students' critical thinking, reading, writing, and research skills, and asks them to pay greater attention to current events related to Africa.

## **The Borderlands: Understanding the American West**

In 1893, Frederick Jackson Turner, a controversial American historian, claimed that American democracy was forged along the constantly moving line of the nation's Western border. His claim echoed through the past century, as the American Identity and Western Mythology were nearly inseparable. Students will work to understand America's fascination with and idealization of the West by shedding light on its iconic facets that loom large within the nation's collective psyche. Through the region's geography, its native and non-native peoples, its heroes and villains, and the United States Government's handling of all of the above, students will grapple with the continuing importance of the American West in truly comprehending what it means to be an American.

## **Chinese History**

This semester-long elective examines one of the oldest continuous civilizations in the world, with focus on the formation of Chinese society, understanding its stability, consideration of its encounters with revolution and the western world in modern times. Asking the question, "Does China ever really change?", students analyze various periods of China's history and how they relate to its current status as a global power. The course also seeks to further develop and challenge the students' critical thinking, reading, writing, and research skills, and encourages them to pay greater attention to current events in China.

## **Comparative Religions**

This course provides a concentrated look at the role of religion in various cultures. We will study the branches of Islam, Christianity, and Judaism, as well as the religions of Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism, Shinto, Zen, and Ba'hai. The arts and rituals associated with these faith traditions will inform our study.

## **Education in America**

What are schools for? What makes education in a democracy unique? What counts as evidence of that uniqueness? What roles do schools play in educating citizens in a democracy for a democracy? In this course, students will engage these questions while investigating education as a social, cultural, political, and economic process. From questioning the use of bells to signal the passing of time in our hallways to exploring the distinct lack of change in the way school has worked for the past 150 years, students will pursue the reconsideration of what schools are and can be in our current and future America.

## **Ethics**

The study of ethics is a response to the philosophical question, "What is the best life for a human being?" It covers the concepts of good and evil, right and wrong,

character, virtue, and justice. In Ethics, we will focus on three main questions: "What are ethics?", "What does it mean to be a good person?", and "Is there any universal standard of right and wrong?" The texts will include classics such as Plato's *Republic*, and John Stuart Mill's *Utilitarianism*, as well as more recent writings. The class will also combine writing about ethics with debates over specific issues.

### **Global Hot Spots**

Global Hot Spots will focus on the subject of oil: its production, American and international dependency on it, the environmental and political implications of this dependency, and the consequences of oil depletion. The class runs mostly as a seminar, meaning that student participation is imperative. Readings derive from books, newspaper and magazine articles, and websites. There will be a field trip and guest speakers. Students will also write a research paper that elaborates on a topic from our studies.

### **Human Rights**

What are Human Rights? We'll start by addressing this question, especially by looking at the history of Human Rights law, starting with the Nuremberg trials and the Declaration of Human Rights. The course will include a unit on genocide that will touch briefly on the Holocaust and address other instances of genocide, before and since WWII. Learning through service will be required: students will choose what actions they want to pursue from options addressing poverty, free speech, human trafficking, environmental issues, and more.

### **Introduction to Sociology**

This one semester course is designed to provide students with a foundation in the study of sociology. After a review of key terms, concepts, and individuals, we will examine the following: culture, socialization, gender socialization, agents of socialization, social class, and social structure. Throughout, we will examine the role that the media plays, and also offer cultural comparisons from a sociological perspective. Students will select a current issue for independent research and lead a small group discussion after concluding their research.

### **Modern American Government**

This course will examine the relationship between the branches of government, focusing on recent development. After covering the powers and responsibilities of each branch and a historical context, students will look at current issues, such as health care, campaign finance, the economy, etc. Special attention will be given to the mid-term elections and a look ahead at the Presidential election.

## **Philosophy**

“Philosophy” is the ancient Greek word for the love of wisdom. In this class, we will seek to gain wisdom through reading, writing, and debating about questions that have sparked curiosity for over two thousand years. Topics include the difference between right and wrong, what knowledge and science are, the existence of God, and the nature of the mind. The study of philosophy is one of the best pursuits for the development of critical thinking, problem solving, and writing skills.

## **Presidential Politics**

This course will examine, in depth, the upcoming presidential election. Close attention will be paid to the swing states as well as the impact of the media. Students will be asked to follow newspaper, internet, and television coverage of the campaigns and make frequent assessments and predictions. The last weeks of the semester will have the class examine who won the election, why, and how the election is a historic one. (*Offered in U.S. presidential election years*)

## **Social Music-Making, Past, Present, and Future**

The music that people make together is the story of their shared desires: from prayer to protest to praise, social music-making has allowed us to weave, or tear apart, the fabric of our communities. This seminar will examine the music and social circumstances of moments in human history, beginning and ending with the modern era — ultimately questioning our values of community in the American twenty-first century. This is a one semester course; open to all upper-division students. No musical experience required.

## **Urban Studies**

This class will explore the American city. It will address how the physical environment influences problems like poverty, homelessness, and troubled schools. Students will learn how cities developed, using Baltimore and Hartford as case studies. Students will be asked to explore neighborhoods in Hartford and learn about urban planning and design, community action, and local government structure. The class will focus on a range of issues from public health crises to racial and class inequality.

## **U.S. and the Middle East**

The purpose of this course is to provide students with an understanding of U.S. policy in the Middle East and the events and principles that have shaped this policy. Using a variety of sources, students will be immersed in the history of the region to help build their understanding of current American policy and issues affecting the region. Students will be called upon to use their critical reading,

critical thinking, writing, and research skills to become experts themselves, and become policy advisers on specific issues.

### **War on Terrorism**

This course examines the War on Terrorism from the perspective of history. We begin with events surrounding the attacks of September 11, 2001, and conclude near the present day. The class operates as a seminar, meaning that discussion plays a dominant role. Our sources range from journalists' accounts of the war to sociological studies of Afghan and American cultures. Guest speakers and a field trip also feature and students will pursue a research project reflecting their own related interests.

## **HUMANITIES**

---

### **World Studies: European Imperialism (9<sup>th</sup> Grade)**

First in a series of two year-long courses centered on the idea of humanity's need for stories and storytelling, World Studies will consider the broad arc and impact of European Imperialism. Beginning with the concept of Individualism, students will study humanities' most ancient texts, which explicate the tension between the needs of the individual and the needs of society, and apply these concepts to the Renaissance and Enlightenment thinking that gave primacy to the individual, and because of which Capitalism and the Merchant class emerged. Following this, students will consider stories of post-Enlightenment European Imperialism in African nations, India, Asia, and South America, through various lenses and points of view, as represented in primary, secondary, and fictional accounts, focusing on systems and structures of power. Finally, in a close look at Revolution, students will study historical and fictional accounts of independence movements and their aftermath, looking closely at how systems of power are challenged, dismantled, and rebuilt. Throughout, students will consider the overarching question of how stories are told depending on who tells them (and how), and develop skills in active reading, research, and analytical, evidence-based writing. (*This is a 2 credit, full-year course*)

### **American Studies: We the People (10<sup>th</sup> Grade)**

The second in a series of two year-long courses centered on the idea of humanity's need for stories, American Studies will take up the question of, "Who are 'We the People,' and who and what defines us?" As a continuation of the 9th grade focus on the needs of individuals and the needs of society, as well as the power of storytelling, 10th grade Humanities students will take a thematic approach to making meaning of these ideas within the scope of America and its history through primary, secondary, and fictional texts. Early on, students will

create a foundational understanding of the historic and ongoing debates that determine the size and scope of our federal government, and how they as individuals have access and agency within systems of power. From there, we will unpack the complexity of American identity on both individual and collective levels, and look at what happens when crisis stresses those identities, incites rebellion, and demands reform. From these ideas, we will direct our attention to marginalized voices, such as those disenfranchised by race, class, and gender. Throughout, students will consider dynamic questions surrounding all that comes with being an American, and deepen skills in actively reading all kinds of text; finding bias and taking perspective; researching and analyzing; as well as thesis-driven and evidence-based writing. *(This is a 2 credit, full-year course)*

## LANGUAGE

---

*Language placement for new students is based on the recommendation of the Chair of the Language Department.*

### **American Sign Language (ASL)**

*All ASL students work together to create an interpretation of a song to perform for the Watkinson community during the year.*

### **American Sign Language I**

ASL I is an introduction to American Sign Language and American deaf culture. Students are introduced to commonly used signs and basic rules of grammar. The course also explores information related to the deaf community. Both beginning expressive and receptive skills are developed through a variety of activities, drills, and creative projects. The final exam in June will consist of an assessment of receptive and expressive skills (including fingerspelling, facial expression, and body language), as well as a cumulative assessment of vocabulary knowledge.

### **American Sign Language II**

ASL II is a continuation of American Sign Language I. Students will continue to build a vocabulary base while expanding on different grammatical features, including both receptive and expressive skills, different forms of verbs, and conversational skills. Students will begin to learn glossing (written ASL) and classifiers (handshapes associated with a particular semantic). In June, there will be a final exam, which will consist of a cumulative assessment on all chapter material covered during the last semester. This will include the grammatical structures, as well as expressive and receptive skills, and vocabulary knowledge.

## **American Sign Language III/IV**

This course is designed for students in both American Sign Language III and IV. It is offered over a two-year cycle and can be taken in either order. The material is taught in units, not consecutively. Specialized vocabulary and topics are based on student preference. Students deepen their understanding of deaf culture, hold discussions, and tell stories completely in ASL. Total language immersion is encouraged. There will be a final project in which the students will be able to choose a children's story to interpret in order to show mastery of this level of ASL.

## **English Language Learning (ELL)**

Watkinson offers English Language Learner (ELL) classes for international students. The goal of ELL at Watkinson is to build a linguistic, cultural, and skill base for international students with an eye toward success at Watkinson and, later, at an American college. Part language learning, part academic support, part skill practice, the course offers students the opportunity to gain a more even footing with their American peers.

International students are required to take a minimum of two years of ELL, including at least one year of general ELL (for 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> graders), and one year of Advanced ELL (for 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> graders). Students may take two years of each or both; the course goals will be the same, but the curricular topics will change each year. As ELL classes are for credit, students must complete the full year. Certain students may test out of the requirement after one year, based on ELL class performance, recommendations from other classroom teachers, and current TOEFL scores.

## **ELL**

Designed in consultation with the 9th and 10th grade faculty, this course prepares international students with the skills, language level, and general cultural knowledge needed to succeed in an American high school. Frequent oral (discussion and presentation) and writing practices are stressed (*Open to students in grades 9-10*)

## **ELL Advanced**

Designed to prepare students for college, this course covers the basic linguistic skills (reading, writing, listening, and speaking) needed to be accepted (SAT, ACT, and TOEFL) and to succeed in an American university. American culture and historical context are present as a thread throughout the curricular work. (*Open to students in grades 11-12*)

## **French IV/V**

This course is designed for students who have successfully completed French III or IV. There is a general review and fine-tuning of grammatical structures coupled with readings, films, songs, news, and other resources to expose students to the modern French-speaking world. Oral development and vocabulary acquisition will be stressed. There are regular quizzes and occasional graded written assignments. The final project involves a creative writing “author’s tea” in which students share their work.

## **Spanish I**

Spanish I is an introduction to the language for students with no or very little background in Spanish. In this course, students will learn the fundamentals of learning a language, basic grammatical structures, vocabulary, and culture through a variety of activities including skits, reading, writing, video, song, and poetry. The students will also study various –ar, –er, and –ir verbs in the present tense, including regular, irregular, and stem-changing verbs. This course will culminate in a final assessment at the end of the year.

## **Spanish II**

Spanish II is a continuation of the Spanish I curriculum that students must have completed successfully with an average of 70 or better. Students will review and build upon the basic grammar and vocabulary that they learned in previous years through thematic units (for example: sports, home and daily routine, holidays, travel), adding past tenses and furthering their understanding of Spanish and Latin American cultures. This course prepares students to move on to Spanish 3 and will culminate in a final assessment.

## **Spanish III**

This course is designed for students who have successfully completed Spanish II with an average of 70 or better. This course offers an intensive grammar training that includes review of the preterite and imperfect tenses, instruction on the future, conditional, and present perfect tenses and the imperative mood. Students will study themes that will allow them to develop language to speak about ideas, interests, and preferences in Spanish. Through many modalities, including structured conversation, video production, writing, and reading, students exercise their language skills. Students have an oral and written final exam based on the material covered during the last semester.

## **Spanish IV**

This course is offered to students who have successfully completed Spanish III with an average of 70 or better. Topics covered pertain to subjects of interest in current events, social justice topics, film, and literary pieces. The class is

conducted in Spanish. Grammar includes review of major verb tenses and introduction to the present subjunctive. Students receive basic instruction on cultural and traditional aspects of the Spanish-speaking world, with an emphasis on equity and social justice. There will be a final oral and written assessment in June.

### **Spanish V/VI**

This course is offered over a 2-year cycle for students who have successfully completed Spanish IV or V with an average of 70 or better. This class is conducted in Spanish and students are required to participate in class using Spanish only. This course includes a yearly intensive review of all major grammar components, including review of verb tenses and the subjunctive. Students may read and discuss a variety of texts and films. Topics cover a wide range of historic and cultural aspects of the Spanish-speaking world. Students practice their own writing through several original compositions. There will be a final oral and written assessment in June.

## **VISUAL ARTS**

---

### **Ceramics**

This class is intended to give the students a working knowledge of techniques and tools to use when working in clay. The students will focus on shape, form, texture, control, and surface treatments. Hand building and the wheel are the main approaches used in this class. The goal is to establish confidence in their work as potters and sculptors. Assignments are designed to let the students explore the history of ceramic art while working on their own skills. They will also be exposed to modern ceramic artists and their perspective on developing art in our time. The students will become more sensitive to clay as a medium of modern expression. (*Open to all students in grades 9-12*)

### **Drawing**

This introductory yearlong course teaches drawing skills with an emphasis on the elements and principles of art. The students will explore realistic and expressionistic drawing of still life, landscape, human figure, and abstract subject matters. We will experiment with pencil, charcoal, ink, pastel, and a combination of media during the year, as we study printmaking, color theory, linear perspective, and art history. (*Open to students in grades 10-12; by recommendation only for students entering grade 9*)

## **Foundations in Art**

This introductory course provides students with a basic foundation in the visual arts. This class will focus first on two-dimensional work such as drawing, painting, printmaking, and photography, then move to three-dimensional work such as ceramics, weaving, and sculpture. The course combines art production with the processes and content of visual thinking, visual problem solving, and art history. Students will develop their artistic abilities for both personal growth and communication while being exposed to the basic elements and principles of design. Media will be explored that may later be investigated in greater depth in other art department courses. Throughout the course, criticism and relevant art history information will be addressed. *(Open to students in grades 9-10)*

## **Painting**

This class builds upon the drawing class with painting media. We will start with ink wash, then move to watercolor, acrylic, and finally oil paint. The students will create still life, figurative, landscape, and abstract paintings that employ their own creativity and choices. The emphasis will be on composition, expressiveness, and creativity. The students will also study monotype printmaking, the human figure, and art historical painters. *(Open to students in grades 10-12; prerequisite: Drawing or permission of instructor)*

## **Advanced Studio**

Essential Question: What is good art? This yearlong course is intended for the highly motivated junior or senior art student who has completed Drawing and/or Painting. The curriculum includes design principles, drawing, painting, printmaking, multi-media, art history, a self-directed body of work, and a final portfolio. *(Prerequisite: Drawing and Painting or permission of instructor)*

## **Sculpture**

This full-year class introduces the second year student to more techniques involving construction, carving, and casting. Along with clay, new materials are introduced such as stone, plaster, found objects, wood, metal, and natural fibers. This course will enhance the student's basic knowledge of working three-dimensionally. The course combines art production with the processes and content of visual thinking and problem solving. Students will develop their artistic abilities for both personal growth and communication while working in the round. Throughout the course, criticism and relevant art history information will be addressed. *(Open to students in grades 10-12; prerequisite: Ceramics or Foundations or permission of instructor)*

## **Advanced Sculpture**

This full-year class is designed for third year students who are interested in extending their own style and production in 3-D arts. Students can combine 2-D arts with the 3-D, with a focus on personal style and portfolio development. Materials include, but are not limited to, clay, plaster, wood, casting resins, and metals. This class runs concurrently with Sculpture. (*Open to students in grades 11-12; prerequisite: Sculpture or permission of the instructor*)

## **Digital Art and Design I & II**

Essential question: How does understanding how to use digital tools inform your thought processes in creating a work of art? This course is a hands-on introduction to the field of graphic design and digital multimedia. In this course, students will explore the fundamental concepts, terminology, techniques, and applications of digital imaging to create original work. Throughout the course, emphasis is placed on the elements and principles of design, and critical thinking and visual problem-solving skills are used to produce digital art through the use of computers, digital cameras, scanners, and drawing and painting software. Throughout the year students will have the opportunity to evaluate and respond to their own work and that of their peers to measure artistic growth. This course incorporates hands-on activities, as well as the use of technology. (*Open to students in grades 11-12; open to students in grades 9-10 by permission of instructor*)

## **Photography I**

Photo I is designed to give the students a working knowledge of the mechanics of modern digital cameras, uses of lenses, along with editing and printing. In this yearlong course, students learn many aspects of photography, including camera settings, composition, and photographic impact. Assignments are designed to let the students explore the history of photography, uses of photography, and to encourage them to develop their own style. They will begin to use photography as a tool of expression as they create their own electronic portfolio. Students must own their own digital SLR camera. (*Open to students in grades 11-12; by recommendation only for students entering grade 10*)

## **Photography II**

Photo II is designed to give students a deeper working knowledge of digital photography techniques. The focus is on individual statements and the manner in which they deliver their message to an audience. Students create their own portfolio of work physically and online. Assignments are designed to involve the student in all aspects of photography, further develop craft and skill, and give the second year student more opportunities to share their work with the community through public shows. (*Prerequisite: Photo I or permission of instructor*)

## PERFORMING ARTS

---

### **Upper School Chorus**

The Upper School Chorus develops students' musical abilities through choral rehearsal and performance. Its curriculum is grounded deeply in musicianship, building students' skills in meter, rhythm, pitch, and vocal production, and ultimately prepares the young singer to interpret scores and bring the drama in music to life. The chorus, a mixed ensemble of male and female voices, performs music in a wide variety of styles; two concerts, one in the late winter and one in the spring, anchor the academic year. *(Requires permission of instructor)*

### **Upper School Ensemble**

The Upper School Ensemble develops students' musical abilities through instrumental rehearsal and performance. Its curriculum is grounded deeply in musicianship, building students' skills in meter, rhythm, pitch, and instrumental methods, and ultimately prepares the young instrumentalist to interpret scores and bring the drama in music to life. The ensemble, a chamber orchestra of winds, brass, and strings, performs music in a wide variety of styles; two concerts, one in the late winter and one in the spring, anchor the academic year. *(Requires permission of instructor)*

### **Introduction to Acting**

This course introduces students to a wide tool kit of acting techniques, including improvisation, scene study, the basics of Method acting, Linklater style vocal training, and Viewpoints work. Students enhance their skills at interpreting existing texts and creating new work for the stage. Collaboration and self-presentation are daily aspects of class. Active participation during class time is required.

### **Advanced Theater & Film Practicum**

This class provides a way for experienced acting and/or film students to gain more intensive practice at creating new work and taking on advanced projects. Projects will be tailored to the group and will include acting for the camera; production of short original films; directing practice; and playwriting. CAP students in theater and film form the core of this class; permission of instructor is required for others. *(Offered alternate years)*

## SEMINAR COURSES

---

### **Freshman Seminar**

A year-long course comprised of two semester classes, Communications and Digital Citizenship, the Freshman Seminar prepares students to thrive in our largely project-based, often process-intensive interdisciplinary high school curriculum. They also lay the groundwork for the written personal reflections that they will do in 10th Grade Exhibitions and, ultimately, their college essays.

#### **Communications**

Communications is a one-semester ninth grade course in which students develop their skills for communicating visually, orally, and in writing. The writing in this course is autobiographical, which pushes students to deepen the ways they reflect on and communicate their experiences as growing human beings. By the end of the course, through series of drafts and revisions, students will produce three polished pieces about who they are and what has shaped them. They will also build project, process, and oral presentation skills with a particular focus on understanding and learning to identify/discuss Watkinson's Essential Skills across the curriculum, ending with a self-designed visual and/or oral presentation to show their development in these communications areas.

#### **Digital Citizenship**

Digital Citizenship is a one-semester ninth grade course that asks students to consider the impact of the Internet on our lives, our society, and the world. Along the way, they also develop several technology skills that help prepare them for continued personal, academic, and professional success, including creating original graphics, conducting online research, posting online content, and engaging in effective online communication.

### **Senior Seminar**

The Senior Seminar is a cohort-style class that brings together a small group of seniors with one teacher for a year-long experience. Each section of Senior Seminar functions as an individual cohort, but also operates within the shared context and goals of the Senior Year experience. Therefore, there are opportunities for grade-wide experiences throughout the year, where shared experiences will bolster and enrich the sense of community among and between the members of the class and their teachers. In this way, the work of the Senior Year becomes visible to the larger school community, imbuing younger students with a growing sense of what it means to be a senior at Watkinson.

The Senior Seminar is a year-long class which:

- Supports the existing college application process
- Provides the setting for a life skills curriculum appropriate to the developmental needs of pre-flight adolescents
- Serves as the primary locus for The Senior Project and Exhibition

### **Expectations**

The Seminar is a credit-bearing, required class and serves as a built-in structure to prompt, support, and challenge each senior to accomplish meaningful and important work as a capstone to their high school education. The course stresses the importance of strong individual efforts, including self-advocacy, resilience, and the value of critical friendship and collaboration, as well as involvement. Senior Seminar teachers coach each individual student to develop primary areas of interest for the Senior Project, to narrow these ideas toward a topic, and to articulate a rich Essential Question. Together with their teacher and the cohort group, students make their way through the Senior Project journey. In addition, Senior Seminar serves as a supplemental support to the college application process, a place to work on application materials and for meaningful discussion and peer-to-peer feedback. Finally, the class provides a structure for important learning relevant to the unique needs and demands of pre-launch adolescents, including a focus on life-skills, transition to college and independent living, and personal health and wellness.

## AFTER-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

---

Watkinson requires all upper school students to participate in after-school activities each season of every year in keeping with the school's commitment to fostering healthy living habits in its students. Two of the three activities selected each year must be physical activities. Activities meet after school three to five times per week. Students enrolled in a three-day-a-week activity may leave campus at the end of the academic day on the days their activity does not meet to make time for off-campus community service, internships, and jobs, or they may register for a supervised study hall in the ALC. Students who sign up for a competitive team sport must also be committed to games once a week after school and possibly a few Saturday games.

Students may opt to fulfill their after-school activity requirement by participation in an approved off-campus activity by submitting a completed request form at the start of each season.

Below is a sampling of activities offered each season.

### FALL ACTIVITIES

**5 days per week:** Cross Country (*co-ed, competitive*)  
Girls Soccer (*Varsity, competitive*)  
Boys Soccer (*Varsity/JV, competitive*)  
Theater Production  
Girls Volleyball (*Varsity/JV, competitive*)  
WatkInterns (*Athletic Department Interns*)

**3 days per week:** Fencing  
Fitness  
Service through Gardening  
Table Tennis  
Tennis (*recreational*)  
Yearbook

### WINTER ACTIVITIES

**5 days per week:** Girls Basketball (*Varsity/JV, competitive*)  
Boys Basketball (*Varsity/JV, competitive*)  
Theater Production  
WatkInterns (*Athletic Department Interns*)

**3 days per week:** Community Service  
Dance/Barre

Fitness  
Running Club (*recreational*)  
Table Tennis  
Tabletop Games  
Tennis (*recreational, fee*)  
Yearbook

## **SPRING ACTIVITIES**

**5 days per week:** Girls Lacrosse (*Varsity, competitive*)  
Girls Tennis (*Varsity, competitive*)  
Boys Tennis (*Varsity, competitive*)  
Frisbee (*Varsity, competitive*)  
Theater Production  
Track (*Varsity, competitive*)  
WatkInterns (*Athletic Department Interns*)

**3 days per week:** Baseball (*club team*)  
Service through Gardening  
Table Tennis

## UNIVERSITY OF HARTFORD: College Now Program

---

Watkinson seniors have the opportunity to enroll in the University of Hartford's *College Now* program. Watkinson's College Counseling Office will invite students who meet the University's criteria to apply for the program in the spring of their junior year. The University considers grades, recommendations, and SAT/PSAT scores. Approved students are then eligible to choose one course each semester from a select offering of courses at the University. Students do not pay tuition. However, students do pay for textbooks, lab, and registration fees. Students will follow the University's academic calendar in terms of dates of attendance, add/drop period, cancellations due to inclement weather, etc. Each three-credit University course and corresponding grade will appear on the Watkinson transcript as 0.50 credits. The University course cannot count toward the annual five-credit minimum course load required at Watkinson, nor is the grade factored into the Watkinson GPA. Students may not drop a University course without permission from the Director of College Counseling and the Academic Dean for Grades 11-12. Watkinson graduates may order an official transcript through the National Student Clearinghouse to be sent to their college of matriculation for credit and/or placement consideration by visiting: [https://hartford.edu/aboutuofh/office\\_of\\_provost/registrar/transcript\\_request.aspx](https://hartford.edu/aboutuofh/office_of_provost/registrar/transcript_request.aspx). Watkinson cannot provide official transcripts of University of Hartford coursework.

## CREATIVE ARTS PROGRAM (CAP) DIPLOMA REQUIREMENTS

---

Upper school students who have a deep commitment to visual art, music, dance, theater, writing, or film, and who have already achieved considerable skill in their area of concentration, may apply by audition or portfolio review to the CAP diploma program. The aim of CAP is to add breadth (in terms of cultural literacy, arts exposure, global arts, and creativity studies) to the depth of work that students are doing in their individual arts studies with teachers, mentors, ensembles, productions, and personal projects. Students must apply to the program before they begin their junior years at Watkinson in order to fulfill the minimum two-year program membership required for the diploma. Students new to Watkinson as juniors have the option of applying in the first term of their junior year, but should only do so if they have strong preparation before arriving at the school.

Upon admission to the program, all CAP diploma students develop a program of study with the CAP director. Each program will be tailored to meet the individual student's interests and needs, but all programs will require an additional 7-10 hours of work each week outside of school. Finally, to earn the CAP diploma, CAP students must also participate in all master classes and scheduled field trips, share their work with the school community on a regular basis, and successfully complete the CAP Diploma Seminar, a one-year class, in their junior year.

# GLOBAL STUDIES (GS) DIPLOMA PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

---

Students with a passion for studying from a global perspective can opt for a special diploma in Global Studies.

**The goal of the Global Studies Program is to develop active, engaged global citizens.** Students work to understand how their actions and experiences intersect with the world-at-large and use this knowledge to effect positive change by developing the following skills...

- Thinking critically and creatively, including adopting a multiperspective approach that recognizes the different dimensions and angles of an issue
- Applying systems thinking to analyze the interdependence of contemporary and historical economic, social, and environmental issues
- Demonstrating civic and community engagement
- Going deeper through dialogue with those who have different opinions and backgrounds
- Constructing multicultural competence and cultivating empathy throughout their learning

As students master these skills, they explore nine themes: the arts, the environment, globalization, global public health, human rights, non-violence and war, religion, sustainability, and technology/communication.

The program also involves extensive learning and service beyond Watkinson. Students travel off campus to events in greater Hartford, New York, Boston, and have the option to travel internationally through service learning trips to the Dominican Republic and Uganda.

Students apply to the program near the end of 10<sup>th</sup> grade or during the beginning of 11<sup>th</sup> grade. In senior year, students design and implement a yearlong capstone project that meshes a personal interest with one or more of the global studies themes to demonstrate mastery of the program skills. They graduate from Watkinson with a special diploma in Global Studies and expertise in themes that hold particular personal interest.

***Program Expectations:***

- 1) Attend and respond in writing to at least nine (9) Global Studies events throughout the year, beyond Global Studies Seminar, that engage in the program themes.
- 2) Participate in service learning work in Hartford.
- 3) Develop a *Plan of Action* describing the student's participation in the Global Studies Program. This includes committing to extra-curricular activities related to the program's mission: to develop in students the power to be knowledgeable and effective world citizens – acting locally and globally – and to foster respect for diverse people and cultures.
- 4) Go public with their work by attending and/or creating events that engage the wider community and blogging about their experiences and/or learning in the program.
- 5) Build and curate a digital portfolio website in 11th and 12th grade showing how the student has engaged and developed insight into the program themes.
- 6) Reflect on their work at the end of each term, modifying the *Plan of Action* as needed and curate work on the portfolio website.
- 7) Summer reading before the junior and senior years.
- 8) Coordinate the student's academic schedule with the Global Studies Director and take classes that engage the themes of the program and provide a global perspective.
- 9) Take a minimum of one (1) globally-focused history electives over the course of the 11th and 12th grades. History classes that fulfill this requirement include: African History, Chinese History, Comparative Religions, Global Hot Spots, Human Rights, Introduction to Sociology, U.S. and the Middle East, and War on Terrorism.
- 10) Either engage in three years' formal study of foreign languages or American Sign Language, or demonstrate speaking or reading proficiency in a foreign language.
- 11) While foreign travel is not a requirement, students are strongly encouraged to participate in at least one of Watkinson's service trips to the Dominican Republic, Jordan, Uganda, or elsewhere.

***Junior Expectations:***

1) Juniors are expected to attend the *Global Studies Seminar* with the seniors on prearranged dates to work with the seniors, develop a *Plan of Action*, write end of the term reflections, and build and maintain a digital portfolio website.

***Senior Expectations:***

1) Take and pass ***Global Studies Seminar***, a yearlong 12th grade elective. This seminar is a yearlong, interdisciplinary inquiry into the themes of Watkinson's Global Studies diploma program. These include: the arts, the environment, globalization, global public health, human rights, non-violence and war, religion, sustainability, and technology/communication. Students also research and develop a capstone project, relating to one of the themes, that meshes a personal interest with building expertise in a particular aspect of global studies. Reading, writing, class discussion, student-led teaching, and travel off campus form major parts of this class.

2) Complete a capstone project that reflects the student's learning in at least one of the main themes of the program. This yearlong project involves experiential learning, community engagement, research at the University of Hartford Library, a research paper, and event(s) designed by the student. The 12th-grade Global Studies Seminar devotes time to defining, researching, and completing the projects. This project is shared publicly in the spring of senior year.

The Academy at Watkinson is a yearlong program designed to bolster confidence, skills, and knowledge necessary for a successful transition to college. It is designed for students who are college bound, but might not yet be college ready. It is highly customizable and flexible in treating each student as an individual with specific passions, interests, and needs.

Below are the requirements for completing this one-year pre-college program. Upon successful completion, students will be awarded an Academy Certificate of Completion on the day of graduation. Students who do not adequately fulfill these requirements will earn an Academy Certificate of Participation.

### **The Academy Requirements**

1. Watkinson classes - semester and/or full year; minimum 3 required per semester
2. University of Hartford class(es) - 1 to 4 semester courses total
3. Participate in Watkinson Advisory programming
4. Utilize support from the College Counseling Office
5. Academic support/coaching, as recommended

# WATKINSON ACADEMIC POLICIES & PROCEDURES

## **COURSE SELECTION PROCESS - MIDDLE SCHOOL**

---

Students in the Middle School take a combination of core yearlong classes and semester classes in performing and visual arts as well as technology. In the event that a student would benefit from a revised curriculum, the Head of Middle School, in consultation with the student's parents and teachers, will address the matter.

Returning students make their selections for the next year during Course Selection Week in late February from courses recommended by department heads and classroom teachers. Advisors monitor this process with each advisee.

## **COURSE SELECTION PROCESS - UPPER SCHOOL**

---

A total of 20 credits is required for a Watkinson diploma. The minimum course load is 5 credits per year for grades 9-12. Special arrangements regarding course load may be made with the Academic Dean and the student's advisor, with parental approval. We recommend that students maintain honors level work in order to petition for 7 or more credits in any given year.

Returning students make their course selections for the next year during Course Selection Week in late February from courses recommended by department heads and classroom teachers. Advisors monitor this process with each advisee. The Academic Deans make final placement decisions.

## **COURSE CHANGES**

---

Students may make changes to their course selections during the first three weeks of the semester. To drop and/or add courses after the term has started, students must complete a Course Change form, available in the Registrar's Office. Students must obtain the approval/signatures of their parent(s), advisor, teachers involved, the Academic Dean and/or Division Head, and, for seniors, the Director of College Counseling. We consider the reason for the request, the

student's credit status, and overall academic program to determine if the change is in the student's best interest. The dropped course will not appear on the student's record and no credit will be given for the course.

## **TO WITHDRAW FROM A COURSE**

---

If a student needs to withdraw from a class after the midpoint of the term, the student will not receive any credit for the course and will receive a grade of W (withdrawal). The course and grade of W will remain on the student's transcript. To withdraw from a course, the student must complete a Course Change Request form, available in the Registrar's Office. The student must obtain the approval of their parent(s), advisor, teachers involved, the Academic Dean and/or Division Head, and, for seniors, the Director of College Counseling.

## **CREDIT FOR PARTIAL COMPLETION OF A COURSE**

---

Most Watkinson courses run the length of the school year. If a student elects to withdraw from a full-year course at the completion of the first semester, partial credit will not be awarded and a grade of W (withdrawal) will be recorded on the student's transcript. Only in the event of an extreme situation (prolonged illness, etc.) will partial credit be considered and only at the discretion of the course teacher, Department Head, and the Academic Dean, in consultation with the Academic Policy Committee. This same group will be consulted to determine the merits of awarding a Pass/Fail grade for a single semester of work due to extraordinary circumstances.

## **COURSE MODIFICATION**

---

Occasionally, a student may only be able to complete a course by having some of the course requirements modified to compensate for a particular learning style. In this case, a form describing the modification will be attached to the student's transcript. The appropriate Dean will coordinate the modification.

## **INDEPENDENT STUDY COURSES**

---

Students may petition for an Independent Study if the school is not offering courses in their area of interest. Successful independent studies require genuine independence and maturity on the part of the student and active support from a coordinating teacher. Independent Study applications may be requested from the Registrar or the Academic Dean of grades 11 and 12. Applications for the next school year must be submitted to the Academic Dean by May 15 of the current academic year. Applications will be reviewed and students will be notified if their proposal is accepted.

## **ACADEMIC PROBATION**

---

Any student who falls below a grade of 70, or below an Effort grade of 3, in two classes in a semester will be placed on Academic Probation. Academic Probation is designed to provide more structure and very close monitoring to help students raise their level of achievement. The Academic Deans and Division Heads, in consultation with teaching faculty, reserve the right to place a student on probation at any time during a given semester, should the student's academic standing warrant this. In the case of a senior dropping to probation status, all senior privileges are removed until the next grading period. Students on Academic Probation must fulfill the guidelines as established by the appropriate Academic Dean in order to return to good standing. The student will meet with parents, teachers, advisor, and Academic Dean to ensure full cooperation at home and to agree on a specific course of action. If there is no substantial improvement, at the end of the school year the faculty will decide whether the student should return to Watkinson. We will take extraordinary personal circumstances into account when determining a student's academic standing.

## **STUDENT WITHDRAWAL FROM WATKINSON**

---

### **Withdrawal Process**

If a student chooses to withdraw from Watkinson, the student's parent or guardian must inform the School in writing. The family must either meet with or notify John Crosson, Assistant Head of School/Director of Admissions. In addition, the parent must submit an official letter of withdrawal (an email is acceptable) to Mr. Crosson. After receipt of the official letter from the parent, the Admissions Office issues a letter of withdrawal from Watkinson.

The family must also contact the following offices to finalize the Withdrawal process:

1. Registrar's Office: The parent should request that an official copy of the student's academic records be sent to another school, if necessary. In order to release the student's records, the parent must complete the *Authorization to Release Student Records* form. This form is available in the Registrar's Office or online at <http://start.watkinson.org/Transcript.release.auth.form.REV.1718.pdf>. Transcript requests are typically processed, at no charge, within one week of receipt, provided a student's account is in good standing with the Business Office.
2. Nurse's Office: The parent should provide the nurse with information regarding where to send the student's medical records, using the records release form available in the Registrar's Office.
3. Business Office: The parent should contact the Student Accounts Manager regarding any tuition insurance claims and/or outstanding bills.
4. Information Technology Office: The parent should email [support@watkinson.org](mailto:support@watkinson.org) to contact a member of the Watkinson IT staff. They will provide the parent and student with information on how to save the student's work to another Google drive. The student's Watkinson account will be closed as soon as the withdrawal is official.

### **Medical Leave/Withdrawal**

When students are deemed unable to attend school for medical reasons, parents may request, or the school may require, a medical leave. Such a leave requires an agreement between school leadership, parents/guardians, and the student's medical team. Prior to a student's return from medical leave, Watkinson requires a written report from a physician and/or psychologist to determine the student's readiness to return. There are times that a family, in consultation with the student's medical team and school leadership, may choose to withdraw a student from school for medical reasons. Under certain circumstances, the school may also require a medical withdrawal. If it is determined that a medical withdrawal is most appropriate for the student and family, the parent should follow the steps outlined above to ensure that the student's records are obtained.

### **Academic Impact of Withdrawal**

When a student withdraws at any point during the academic year, the grades for all yearlong classes are changed to W and no credit is earned. If the student has successfully completed a semester course, the grade and credit earned will remain intact.

## **REENROLLMENT AT WATKINSON**

---

Watkinson's enrollment agreement represents an annual contract between parents and the school. In February, parents of students who are in good standing in grades 6-11 will receive a reenrollment agreement for the following year. On the basis of student records for the year, some students are not offered a contract. In these cases, progress in areas of concern - academics, behavior, or attitude - is reviewed at the end of the second semester. During the second semester, the Academic Dean, in consultation with the Dean of Students, oversees the progress of these students. In some cases, the Academic Dean and Dean of Students may decide that it is in the best interest of the school and/or the student that the student not return to Watkinson the next year. If this student has completed and returned a reenrollment agreement with a deposit, the deposit will be refunded.

## **WAIVER OF GRADUATION REQUIREMENT**

---

Watkinson may waive a graduation requirement when a specific learning challenge is involved and when testing and classroom experience show a legitimate learning difficulty. Students and parents must specify the reason for the waiver request and it must be approved by the Academic Policy Committee. In rare cases, a student who enters Watkinson as a senior without having taken a required course may receive a waiver.

## **ATTENDANCE AT COMMENCEMENT**

---

We invite all seniors and Academy students who are in good standing at the end of the school year (both academically and as school citizens) to participate in Commencement. Good academic standing assumes passing all courses in the student's final year. A student who has failed one course, and has been given an extension by the Academic Dean to complete the course for credit in summer school, is eligible to participate in Commencement. In some cases, the faculty may invite a senior or Academy student who has failed more than one course or been unable to complete courses (because of an illness, for example), but who is in good standing as a school citizen, to participate in Commencement. The diploma will be awarded upon successful completion of the summer course. A student is considered to be in good standing as a school citizen unless his or her conduct has resulted in a School Council recommendation that he or she may

not graduate or participate in Commencement because of a serious abuse of the school's expectations of good citizenship. The Head of School must approve this type of School Council recommendation. Examples include cases of extreme dishonesty, bullying, harassment, or other forms of serious disrespect for the school's values during a student's final year at the school. A senior or Academy student who is expelled during his/her last year may neither receive a diploma nor participate in Commencement. In some cases, such a student may be allowed to complete credits on a "home bound" basis, receiving a completed transcript when academic requirements for graduation are met.

## **GRADES**

---

Academic and effort grades, as well as teachers' comments, are sent to the student's parents at the midpoint and end of each semester. Watkinson's dual system, grading academics and effort, is based on the belief that attitude and motivation are significant components of learning. Cumulative averages reported on student transcripts reflect Watkinson coursework only. The lowest passing academic grade is 60. Below is a more detailed description of effort grades.

### **Effort Grades**

Effort grades are assigned on a scale of 1 to 5, 1 being the highest. An effort grade of 3, therefore, may be considered an "average" grade. The attributes of each level of effort grade are outlined below:

#### **1 - Outstanding**

- student always completes assignments on time
- shows superior diligence and initiative in preparing assignments
- is always focused on the job to be done
- always brings textbooks and relevant materials to class
- is always willing to work, not only on immediate assignments, but also on other skill-building problems presented
- is always prepared for tests
- promptly makes up assignments in case of absence
- takes initiative in completing make-up work
- takes initiative in seeking extra help
- can provide the instructor with useful feedback about areas of uncertainty
- participates in class with enthusiasm and positive energy
- consistently behaves in a responsible and cooperative manner

## **2 - Good**

- student generally completes assignments on time
- may occasionally submit a late or perfunctorily performed assignment (but no assignments are missing at the end of the semester)
- promptly makes up assignments in case of absence
- consistently prepares for class
- consistently prepares for tests; does not fail any test based on effort
- always brings textbooks and relevant materials to class
- consistently participates in class in a positive way
- is focused on the job to be done
- always behaves acceptably in class

## **3 -Satisfactory**

- student's effort does not stand out negatively or positively
- participates consistently, but not necessarily vigorously
- completes assignments regularly, with occasional lateness
- is occasionally inconsistent about make-up work
- comes to extra help sessions when required
- does not fail tests or quizzes based on effort
- may require encouragement to get going
- participates, but is more of a passive than an active learner
- shows satisfactory, if undistinguished, attitude and behavior

## **4 - Insufficient**

- student often submits late or incomplete assignments
- shows little inclination to make up missing work
- fails several tests or quizzes based on effort
- does not take advantage of extra help sessions
- is immature in meeting responsibilities
- may be late to class more than once
- has negative energy in class, may distract others
- is reluctant to start or finish work

## **5 - Unacceptable**

- student often submits assignments late or not at all
- makes no effort for tests and quizzes
- avoids making up missed tests
- does not come to extra help or tutoring sessions
- exhibits disruptive classroom behavior, has negative effect on class
- is likely to fail course because of chronic neglect

## COMMENTS

---

We believe that communication among parents, teachers, students, advisors, and administrators is vital. At the midpoint and at the end of each semester, teachers provide grades and comments for all students. All grades and comments are delivered electronically via our parent portal system. Advisors write letters to students twice yearly, summing up each student's performance as well as addressing extracurricular, social issues, and any other facets of the student's life at Watkinson about which advisors may have particular insights.

## HONOR ROLL

---

We have two honor rolls, one for academic achievement and one for effort, which are both are posted at the conclusion of each semester. A student who carries a full course load and whose semester average is 90 or above is awarded high honors; 85 to 89, honors. However, students will not be placed on the Honor Roll in a given semester if one or more of their courses is below an 80 or any effort grade is below a 3. The Effort Honor Roll consists of students with no effort grades below 2. Effort grades earned in the Learning Skills Program do not apply. Students who meet at least one of the following criteria and who are earning credit in a minimum of five classes receive Honors Recognition for the year if:

- a) they have been on the Academic and/or Effort Honor Roll in each class for the entire academic year;
- b) their combined average for both semesters in each class is an 85 or above.

## INCOMPLETE GRADES

---

Students earning incomplete grades have up to two weeks following the close of the marking period to complete the work. In the case of an extended medical leave, the time period for work completion will be determined by the Academic Dean on a case-by-case basis. If an incomplete grade is given, students will receive an "I" (Incomplete) and no effort grade on their report card until the missing work is submitted. When the coursework is completed, the teacher will evaluate the work and revise both the academic and effort grades. The updated grades will be recorded and a revised grade report will be sent to the student and parents.

## **HOMEWORK**

---

Teachers assign homework on a regular basis in all Watkinson courses; they expect it to be completed on time. Teachers do consider homework in determining course and/or effort grades. Copying another student's homework is considered academic dishonesty. Homework assignments will be course and grade appropriate. The classroom teacher will communicate time allowances for late work as well as grading expectations. Policies may vary, particularly in the Upper School. In cases of illness, students are responsible for obtaining missed homework assignments from the teacher or student online classroom portal.

## **EXAMINATIONS**

---

Teachers have a choice between giving exams or projects at the conclusion of each semester. For courses without exams, the last week of each semester will be used for project presentations, tests, or regular class activities. Each department determines its own policy.

## **STUDY HALLS**

---

### **Afternoon Study Hall for Middle School Students**

Optional Middle School After School Study Halls are available and supervised by classroom teachers each day. Students may stay the entire time or leave when a parent/guardian contacts the study hall supervisor.

### **Class Day Study Hall**

All students in grades 6 - 9 must attend study hall. Ninth grade students who have earned high honors (an average of 90 or above) in the first semester of their freshman year, and students in grades 10 and 11 who have achieved high honors or effort high honors (all 1's in effort) during the previous semester, have the option, after signing in, of selecting an outdoor work area on the patio in front of the Arts and Athletic Center, in the front yard, or at the gazebo. Seniors are exempt from study halls, unless on probation. When students are not scheduled for a class, they are assigned to a study hall. Each student is required to personally sign in at the beginning of the study hall block, whether exempt from Study Hall or not. Students are expected to follow the mode of conduct appropriate for each workplace. With written classroom faculty permission, Upper School students may use the ALC, Art Barn, Photography lab, or

Ceramics studio. With written classroom faculty permission and permission from the Dean of Students, students may use the University of Hartford library.

## **SENIOR YEAR SECOND SEMESTER**

---

Seniors must pass every class in which they are enrolled in the second semester in order to graduate. Any senior falling into probationary range in one or more classes during the second semester will be required to attend study hall until they have raised their average. The Head of Upper School, the Academic Dean, and the Dean of Students, in consultation with the faculty, will determine whether a student will receive final credit for graduation.

## **SUMMER READING**

---

The Watkinson faculty is committed to the belief that extensive reading is essential to the process of becoming an educated person. The summer reading lists are posted on our website. Students should expect to be assessed on their reading upon return to school in September.

## **MAKING UP CREDITS DURING THE SUMMER**

---

A student may make up a course failed during the year by successfully completing a summer school course at an accredited institution, which must be approved in advance by the Department Head and the Academic Dean. Make-up courses should be the equivalent of 30 hours. The failing grade received during the year will remain on the student's permanent record; the student may be required to repeat the course during the next school year to receive credit. A student who is unable to attend summer school to make up a failed course may receive individual tutoring, which must be approved in advance by the department head and the Academic Dean. Credit will be awarded after successful completion of a Watkinson-approved examination. Students may be required or advised to take some summer courses for academic reinforcement. Summer study for credit requires advance approval of the department head.

## **TRANSFER CREDITS**

---

Watkinson accepts college preparatory credits from other accredited institutions. Non-college preparatory credits, such as shop or physical education credits, do not count toward Watkinson's 20-credit graduation requirement. In order for a course to be considered for transfer credit, the student must have earned a minimum grade of 60 in the class. We do not count Middle School credits from other schools toward fulfillment of Watkinson graduation requirements. Credits earned in grades 6-8 as high school level college preparatory courses (such as Algebra I or Spanish I) will only count towards placement in Upper School. To have courses considered for transfer credit, an official transcript from the transfer institution must be sent to the Watkinson Registrar's Office. The appropriate department and/or division head will review the transcript. If the transfer credit is accepted, it may be used to fulfill graduation requirements. However, the course will not be listed on the Watkinson transcript and the grade and credit will not be included in the student's Watkinson grade average/GPA.

## **SPECIAL ACADEMIC REQUESTS**

---

Students interested in participating in programs outside of Watkinson must meet with the Academic Dean to discuss the details of the program. Requests will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by both the Academic Dean and the Academic Policy Committee.

## **EARLY ENTRANCE INTO COLLEGE**

---

In rare instances, students may apply to graduate early from Watkinson. Any student who wishes to graduate early must submit a proposal for approval to the Head of School and the Academic Policy Committee during his or her sophomore year.

## HOW TO REQUEST A WATKINSON TRANSCRIPT

---

Students may request a copy of their academic records by completing an *Authorization to Release Student Records* form, available in the Registrar's Office and online at

<http://start.watkinson.org/Transcript.release.auth.form.REV.1718.pdf>

There is no fee charged for standard transcript requests. All transcript/records requests must be made in writing. Requests may be faxed, scanned, emailed, mailed, or hand-delivered. If a student is under 18, a parent/guardian must sign to authorize the release of records. Releases are good for up to one year. At the Registrar's discretion, additional requests may be appended to the original authorization by email.

It is Watkinson policy not to email transcripts. Due to privacy concerns, the school recommends that all records be mailed. However, the school will email transcripts/records to another school or college with explicit written consent, as designated on the release form.

# Watkinson

SCHOOL

*inventive learning since 1881*

