

## **Elective Descriptions – The Humanities**

In Forms VI-VII, Cistercian students must choose one elective course each semester. These courses meet twice a week, and are intended to round out the established curriculum in more particular areas of interest common to both students and teachers. The hope is that these courses both spark new excitement and support existing academic passions toward a fuller education. Faculty will often offer courses that grow out of their own academic pursuits and so these electives also serve to strengthen the faculty and the general academic conversation on campus through continual professional growth.

While the Cistercian curriculum is very structured as a whole, the elective system is by its design and nature very fluid. If a teacher can design a course that appeals to at least six students, then they are allowed to offer the course. If a student can gather six comrades and approach a teacher to request a course be offered, then the School will do its best to meet that need. It regularly occurs that alumni, alumni parents, and other outside professionals temporarily join the faculty to offer elective courses that meet needs which the full time faculty may be unable to fill. For example, courses in Architecture, Finance, Law, Marketing, and Epidemiology have been taught in recent years.

As these courses meet just twice a week and are not required of all students at a given grade level, these courses do not receive an Honors designation. However, through repeated exploration in an academic area, a student can both encounter and produce high-level, thoughtful work in a particular subject area.

The following courses fall under the general description of *Humanities* and are categorized within several subgroups (sometimes with membership in more than one, depending on cross-over academic areas). Thus, an individual course, by its very nature, may be listed under more than one section.

### **History, Languages, and Culture**

#### **The American Civil War**

Between 1861 and 1865, millions of Americans warred against each other, leaving over 600,000 dead. On its single bloodiest day, the Civil War took more lives than were lost in America's entire War for Independence. Why did the Civil War happen? Was it inevitable? Abraham Lincoln said it best: "Both parties deprecated war, but one of them would make war rather than let the nation survive, and the other would accept war rather than let it perish, and the war came." To understand ourselves as citizens today, we must understand this greatest conflict of our history. We will look at the politics, the generals, the battles, the industrial and economic transformations, and the ideals that made it what it was. The class will make liberal use of Ken Burns' award-winning PBS documentary series, as well as the 1993 film *Gettysburg*. Evaluation will consist mostly of quizzes based on class discussion, video material, and handout readings.

#### **Christian Latin**

Having covered the bulk of grammar in their Middle School Latin class, the students of this Latin elective will explore a variety of authentic Latin texts from the rich body of Christian Latin literature. Selections will include passages from the Latin Bible, St. Augustine, St. Benedict and St. Gregory the Great's *Life of St. Benedict*, medieval songs (both religious and secular), and St. Bernard. The students will be surprised to see just how much Latin they have already learned. The class will emphasize reading comprehension, though forms and syntax will be reviewed as necessary. Grades will be based on preparation for class, a class presentation, and occasional tests.

#### **Cold War**

If you listen closely to Billy Joel's song "We Didn't Start the Fire," the lyrics are filled with Cold War terminology that reflect a period of United States history, which began after the Second World War and ended

with the fall of communism in the Soviet Union in 1991. One might argue with Mr. Joel's words in the chorus where he claims, "We didn't start the fire, ...we didn't light it, but we tried to fight it." Is this true? Was the United States an innocent party simply defending democratic values amidst postwar global upheaval or a guilty party using (reoccurring) expansionist ideals through interventionism? Was there a true protagonist and villain in the Cold War narrative? The goal of this course is to gain an understanding of the Cold War – from all sides. Through lecture, primary source documentation, and film, this elective will help students formulate a scholarly assessment of what advantages and disadvantages the Cold War provided through historical analyses. The students will be evaluated through a series of short response papers to various aspects of the course as well as class participation.

### **Genealogy**

In this elective, students will learn current research methods aimed at tracing their family ancestry. Most of each class period will be dedicated to online research to grow the tree 'in length', backward through the decades and generations, and 'in width', by gathering information on 21st century relatives and siblings of direct-line relatives. Teaching topics will include basic genealogy techniques, organization of information, multiple research sites, the meanings and origins of names, census records, heraldry, and ways to tie into various genealogical organizations, e.g., the Sons of the American Revolution (SAR), General Society of Mayflower Descendants (GSMD), First Families of Virginia (FFV), and Pioneer Families of most English colonies and many American states. No textbook is required for this course. A three-ring binder with dividers will be needed for periodic handouts. Each student, however, will need to purchase a six-month subscription to **ancestry.com** in order to gain access to crucial U.S. colonial, state, and national sources. Students will be evaluated on research methodology, participation, properly completed family tree/group sheet forms, open-note quizzes, an organized binder at the end of the course, and a final report answering questions distributed on the first day of the elective.

### **History of Space Exploration**

55 years ago, Yuri Gagarin of Russia was preparing to become the first human being ever to leave the confines of Earth's atmosphere and go into "outer" space. What would he find when he got up there? Aliens? Deadly space-viruses? Would the traumatic experience of knowing he had left his home planet instantly deprive him of his sanity? These questions, which seem ridiculous to us today, show how much we have learned since 1961. Today, telescopes have explored faraway planets and galaxies, while dozens of probes have explored almost every corner of our solar system. Human beings have now launched into space hundreds of times, and on the International Space Station, have maintained a constant human presence in space for over 14 years! This course hopes to answer questions such as: What has man really achieved in space exploration? Why did he set out to explore space in the first place? Should we, as a nation, continue this epic effort? The class will feature excerpts from several books, video documentaries, and films. A student's grade will be determined based on several review quizzes, one in-class presentation on either a historical or scientific topic related to space exploration, and a final exam.

### **Latin: Vergil's Aeneid**

One of a sequence of electives designed to eventually prepare students for the AP Exam in Latin, this course covers those passages of Vergil's *Aeneid* that are on the new AP Latin test. Students will review grammar in the context of their Latin readings. Vocabulary will also be learned in context. Students should expect to spend 30-45 minutes preparing for each class. They will be graded on quizzes, class participation, and one longer project.

### **Latin: Latin for the Seasons**

In this Latin elective, we will read a sampling of medieval texts for the season – student drinking songs for the winter, songs for Lent and Holy Week (*Dies Irae*, *Stabat Mater*), the dialogue at the empty tomb of Jesus that became the basis for later Renaissance drama, and songs for spring and new love. The texts are short and self-

contained, and occasionally set to music. Grammar and vocabulary will be quickly reviewed in context. Grades will be based on class participation, presentations, and quests.

### **Leadership Development in Athletics**

Athletics/Sports play a huge role in our society and in this course we will explore how we might use these experiences for both current and future personal development. Good teams need good leaders to reach their goals. Great teams also *develop* strong leaders for the future. Society needs positive, effective leaders and Athletics/Sports is an excellent opportunity for leadership development. The goal of this course is to provide a glimpse into a proper understanding of leadership. It is hoped that as we examine the culture of leadership we can discover our own areas for growth, equip ourselves for future leadership development, and prepare to use our gifts to serve the world around us. We will look at four specific areas of leadership: Self-leadership, Teamwork and Connecting with Teammates, Leading Others and Changing Culture, and Navigating Transitions. We will explore these topics by first recognizing that “it’s an inside job before it’s an outside job.” Do you believe sports are more of a process than an event? Do you learn through both uploading and downloading? Do you believe it’s about service before it’s about success, that it’s more about relationships than about results? If so, this is the class for you. Class participation and a research element will be used to determine your grade for the semester.

### **Myth of the Wild West**

LBJ, Ronald Reagan, and George W. Bush all posed in photo ops in which they wore a cowboy hat and boots. They knew it sent a message about who they were and what they stood for. They could do this because the Wild West Myth is a shared heritage for all Americans. This elective will examine our cultural inheritance more closely by looking at different interpretations of the Wild West Myth as it is presented through documentaries, novels, and films. What is the vision of the good life or a just society in these portrayals? How historically accurate are depictions of Billy the Kid and Wyatt Earp? Students will research and give presentations over popular figures and events. Evaluations are based on participation and open note quizzes.

### **Revolutions**

The goal of this course is to understand the principles, actors, and events of the revolutions which shaped our modern world. The course will examine the classic examples of the American, French, and Russian Revolutions in addition to non-Western examples like the Iranian Revolution and the Arab Spring. These political changes will be contrasted with radical economic innovations like the Industrial Revolution. We will discuss the following kinds of questions: What are the differences between a revolution, civil war, and coup? Under what conditions is a revolution justified? Evaluations are primarily based upon participation in class and open note quizzes.

### **World War II**

Not in your lifetime has there been a military conflict that has involved the entire globe. The Second World War did just that and in its wake left approximately 55 million people dead while changing the international political, economic, and social landscape. This course will examine political ideology and military strategy in an effort to gain an understanding of how the war unfolded. We will use lecture (student led as well as instructor), movies, and class discussion to navigate through the European and Pacific theaters. Grading will be based upon question sets, a midterm, and a final.

## **Philosophy and Religion**

### **Augustine’s Confessions**

“I was in love with the idea of happiness, yet I feared it where it was, and fled away from it in my search for it.” In his *Confessions*, St. Augustine, a brilliant young man of the late fourth century, recounts the path by which he began to recognize in God the only true human happiness, a path rendered tortuous by all the external obstacles of world and society, and by the inner impediments of pride, lust, intellectual confusion, grief, and the whole weakness of the human heart. In this elective, we will study the entire text of Augustine’s *Confessions*. It is a most fascinating autobiography; but even more, this incisive meditation addresses philosophical and theological questions about: the problem of sin and evil, error and love; the workings of grace and freedom; the nature of language and memory; the possibility of prayer; the relation between time and eternity, Creator and creature; biblical interpretation, especially of the Genesis account of creation – all in all, what does it mean to be a human person in the light of Christ? The *Confessions* is an exquisitely beautiful work of Christian literature, stands at the foundation of most Catholic and Protestant theology and spirituality, and appeals to saints and sinners of every stripe. Students will be expected to read carefully the pages assigned for each class, to engage with the discussion topics assigned and those arising in class, and to write several short reflections.

### **C.S. Lewis**

C. S. Lewis was one of the most influential apologists for the Christian faith in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. His influence was accomplished through his works of both prose and fiction. In this elective we will explore the approach he took to the faith by looking at two works of prose – *Mere Christianity* and *The Abolition of Man* – as well as at two works of fiction – *The Screwtape Letters* and *The Great Divorce*. We will look at several of his important essays as well, and make all appropriate references to *The Chronicles of Narnia*. When and why would an author who wishes to explore expressly religious sentiments or theological truths choose fiction over non-fiction, metaphor and narrative over fact and rational argument? How are the two approaches complementary? These are questions we will explore over the course of the semester.

### **C.S. Lewis, the Problem of Pain, and the Short Story**

C. S. Lewis offers insight into many aspects of our Christian faith, and none more so than with the persistent reality of suffering. Why does it occur? What value does it have? How should we react to its presence in our lives? We will read two of Lewis’ short treatises, *The Problem of Pain* and *A Grief Observed*, which deal directly with the topic and look as well as at portions of his book *Miracles*. Then we will explore various kinds and effects of suffering—self-inflicted and innocent, personal and existential—by seeing how some of our best writers depict suffering, looking at a variety of literary depictions of suffering. The students will keep a journal throughout the semester and further explore several of the works which we will read.

### **Evidence for Christianity**

There are many people today who think that there is no evidence for the existence of God or for the truth of Christianity. In this course, we will challenge that idea by examining the great body of evidence that is out there, much of which is available for all to see. We will examine the evidence in stages, starting with the idea of a First Cause, then the idea of a personal creator, and then onto monotheism and Christianity. Finally, we will look at Pascal’s Wager as good advice for those who have looked at the evidence but are still on the fence. We will make use of classic texts as well as some of the latest videos in defense of the faith, including debates with atheists. Believers and skeptics are welcome, as long as you are seeking the truth and are willing to look at the evidence with an open mind. Grades will be based on short quizzes and class participation.

### **God in a High-Tech World**

Many people today think that belief in God is impossible in our modern world of science and high-technology because it appears science has explained everything that used to be explained by religion, and that technology has given us capabilities that would have seemed god-like to the ancients. This course addresses these challenges to faith and explores the wealth of evidence that is available today to support the claims of Christianity. If you are a person with strong faith, this course can equip you to answer difficult questions you may encounter. If you are skeptical or have doubts about your faith, this course is a place where you can seek

answers to your questions. The format of the course will be a mixture of lecture and group discussion covering some predetermined topics as well as questions from the students. Grades will be based on class discussion and a few argumentative essays.

### **Introduction to Philosophy**

The word *philosophy* means quite simply the *love of wisdom*, and as such philosophy is the quest for the highest truth attainable by human reason. The ancient Greek philosophers held that nothing could be nobler or more worthwhile than a life spent in pursuit of this wisdom. The course will offer the student an opportunity to begin this pursuit through the reading and discussion of various introductory philosophical texts. Evaluation will thus be based primarily on student participation in the class discussion of those texts.

### **The Just War Tradition**

Under what conditions is it legitimate to wage a war? Do modern technological weapons such as nuclear missiles invalidate the possibility of a just war? Is the doctrine of preventive force--striking before we're struck--just? These are a few of the questions we will be addressing in this course. The goal is to gain an understanding of the definitive principles that shape the Just War Tradition and to attain a basic familiarity with the debates concerning it. The semester will begin with a brief look at the history of Just War Theory and at a few authors whose writings either directly contributed to it or whose thought has provided us with fundamental alternatives. Students will read and discuss recent articles as well as watch and participate in debates themselves. Evaluations are based on participation and regular quizzes.

### **Metaphysics**

Metaphysics is a branch of philosophy that examines the nature of reality and ultimately existence itself. Why does this matter? Because this guides *all* our thoughts and actions. So, in this class we will examine our own thoughts and actions (that's so meta) to better understand why we do what we do. Concretely, we will look at metaphysical ideas concerning existence and their real world applications. This means we will consider things like Fortnite, Instagram, driving, arguments with mom, schoolwork, and in-class ideas, etc. Students will be evaluated on class participation and by quizzes.

### **Science and the Catholic Church**

For the budding historian, scientist, philosopher, or theologian this class will provide an opportunity to survey some of the most important issues and events that shape our modern understanding of the relationship between "science" and the Catholic Church. How does the Church understand the vocation of the scientist? What happened with Galileo? Does the Big Bang prove or disprove God? Are the claims of Christian faith endangered by the progress of scientific explanation and technology? Is there more to reality than matter in motion? What about evolution? What are some resources that help us deal with these questions? And what did Bl. Pope John Paul II have to say about all this? Grades will be based on class participation, short quizzes over the daily reading assignments and some short papers.

## **Literature and Writing**

### **Creative Writing**

The objective of this elective will be two-fold: first, to read through beautiful examples from some masters of poetic craft from various time periods in order to appreciate what they bring to us, and in some small way attempt to imitate their examples. Second, to write for each other, bringing our own poetic expressions to the group for appreciation and critique. In that sense it will become a workshop of sorts. The end goal will be to put together a small sampling of our best work—with perhaps a sampling as well of pieces of Great Masters

which we most admired. The goal of the elective is to foster personal creativity and to generate a greater love and appreciation for written expression. Ideally, each member of the class will contribute something he has written, something he has found (from an existing poet) that he wants to share, and, along the way, a poem or two that he wants to commit to memory.

### **Crime and Punishment**

Dostoevsky's first great novel is a fascinating study both of the mind of a criminal and of the nature of his punishment, which Dostoevsky reveals in all its legal, moral, and spiritual implications. Perhaps the most significant part of the novel lies in its treatment of the suffering which the protagonist (the criminal) both witnesses in others and undergoes himself. Dostoevsky's deep Christian faith and his comprehensive grasp of the Russian psyche make his treatment of that suffering quite powerful. We will also examine, among other things, his shorter work, *Notes from the Underground* and the Alfred Hitchcock film, *Rope*. The students will be evaluated through a series of short response papers to various aspects of the course.

### **G.K. Chesterton**

G.K. Chesterton (1874-1936) is one of the most famous Catholic converts (from Anglicanism in 1922). As an author and apologist, he is funny and profound, paradoxical and commonsensical, as well as one of the most stylistically impressive English writers. Reading his works is bound to make you a better reader, thinker, and writer. In this elective, we will explore some of his most famous works, such as his short stories from Father Brown (about a priestly Sherlock Holmes), his metaphysical murder mystery, *The Man Who Was Thursday*, and his rabble-rousing political thriller *The Napoleon of Notting Hill*. From his apologetics, we'll read either *Orthodoxy* or *The Everlasting Man*, and perhaps also one of his biographies of religious figures such as St. Francis of Assisi or of St. Thomas Aquinas. In short, I'm up for various combinations depending on the prior reading and interest of those who participate! Students will be expected to engage in fruitful discussion and prepare a few short-response papers regarding the various works read for the course.

### **Icelandic Saga**

According to British poet laureate Ted Hughes, "The Icelandic Sagas remain one of the great marvels of world literature, a great human achievement. We can see how much of our Western modern tradition of narrative realism begins with them. But we can also see that the subsequent seven centuries have produced no other work so timelessly up-to-date, nothing with such a supreme, undistorted sense of actuality, nothing so tempered and tested by such a formidable seriousness of life." In this course we will read the two greatest Icelandic Sagas: *Njal's Saga* and *Egil's Saga*. In addition we will read *Hrolf Kraki's Saga* both its original form and in a fantasy retelling by Poul Anderson. In this class you can expect tragic drama, grim humor, red ice, and a rich cultural experience. A great complement to the study of Greek and Roman classics.

### **Moby-Dick**

"Call me Ishmael." With these three small, deceptively rich words, we are invited to enter the epic world of Herman Melville's masterpiece, *Moby-Dick*. At once literature, historical record, philosophical inquiry, political criticism, and a cetological treatise, the complex novel remains today a powerful, enigmatic, challenging, and rewarding exploration of man's capacity for hope and endurance, the depths of madness to which one can sink, and the heights of love and friendship to which one can rise in the search for our purpose and design. This elective course will endeavor to grapple with this leviathan in its historical influences and impact, its thematic concerns, its poetry and narratorial uniqueness, and its deeply allegorical nature. Students will be assessed primarily on fruitful discussion of the literature, periodic reading quizzes, short written reflections and analyses, and one full-length essay which should reflect the fruits of the student's exploration of the novel.

### **Science Fiction**

We will look at Science Fiction through influential short stories, novels, television, and film. The course's purpose is to familiarize ourselves with Sci-Fi's canon and distinguish it from other genres like Fantasy.

Students will be expected to reflect on how these stories dramatize contemporary problems, suggest alternative political regimes, and impact the broader culture. They will engage critically with SF texts and identify the big questions being raised in them, such as: What are the moral dilemmas advancing technologies could pose? Is man's future one of unending progress? Should we redesign human nature? Evaluations are based on participation, presentations, and open note quizzes.

### **Strange Tales**

Heroes, villains, tricksters – friendly beasts and creepy monsters – demons that steal names, magic children discovered in bamboo shoots, turtles that transport you to underwater paradises, the man in the moon (Cain with his lantern or just a big rabbit?). The traditions of all cultures abound in strange and wonderful stories – fairy tales, folk tales, legends, etc. – that defy the mundane for sheer pleasure, reveling in mischief, surprise, horror, and joy to reveal the secret patterns of human life in this world. In this elective, we will study many types of strange tales from a variety of cultures, from classic fairy tales to ghost stories, from ancient legends to contemporary tales of the weird. We will also look to how certain tales are presented in art and film, and perhaps how we might create a few strange legends of our own. Students will present on stories and themes and will work on a detailed analysis of a major story.

### **The Supernatural and Gothic**

The Gothic Literature of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries established the essential tropes of both human and supernatural evil that later horror literature would draw upon. But it was the monsters and other supernatural evils that tapped most memorably into our psyches and our sense of curiosity about the world unseen. The stories we will read (or view) and discuss represent the intersection of the normal, rational, physical world with the supernatural, weird, and uncanny—and occasionally terrifying. One of the major works to be read in this course will be Bram Stoker's influential *Dracula*; however, the focus will be on establishing the tropes and truths of the supernatural in fiction and then compare these classic representations to the contemporary interpretations of the modern world through works like *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* and *Supernatural*. We'll explore the way in which the style has evolved and come to understand the essential tropes that make such works of literature affect us so personally and powerfully. Students will be expected to engage in fruitful discussion, and will be assessed by occasional quizzes and tests, and one full-length essay over an independent reading choice.

## **Cinema and Theater**

### **Biography in Film**

From Carl Theodor Dreyer to Martin Scorsese, great directors of the last 100 years have often turned to historical persons or events as inspiration for their films. Their works are often lauded by an enthusiastic fan base who look to them as authoritative, even though these movies are made for popular consumption and for profit via a medium principally used for entertainment. The result? Sometimes the more one watches about the past, the less he knows about actual history. What that can breed is an unintentionally misinformed public that is convinced that it knows more than it, in truth, does. Dialogical in nature, this course will require students to involve themselves deeply in conversation with each other and that which they engage on the silver screen. They will read about the historical matter involved in each film we study, write critical reviews of the movies we watch in-class, and research and prepare a final presentation (to be given at semester's end) on a bio-pic of their choice. Each of those activities will be assessed and student grades will be borne directly from such assessments. The primary aim in this course will be to pursue truth, beauty, and goodness; to distinguish fact from fiction in award winning cinema, to break students of the bad habit of viewing historically inspired film on a merely surface level, and to investigate and appreciate how filmmakers compose biographical works of art that change minds and win over hearts.

## **Film Making I**

Lights, Camera, Action! Learn the art of digital short film making in the Cistercian Digital Arts Lab. Students will learn to develop a story concept into a screenplay and then plan and shoot a short film of their own using the School's high definition Sony digital video cameras. Directing actors, lighting, and camera techniques will also be part of this course. Editing will be done using Adobe Premiere, professional level editing software. Special effects and DVD authoring are also part of the course. The short films will be screened at the ISAS Arts Festival next Spring, and possibly also entered into other high school film festivals.

## **Film Making II**

Filmmaking II is a continuation of the techniques taught in Filmmaking I (previous enrollment required) with additional emphasis on editing technique, lighting for film and advanced shooting techniques. Using the latest professional editing software on the digital video lab computers and the School's digital video cameras, each student will write, shoot, and edit his own short film and in the process learn to operate the cameras, direct actors, use lighting and effects to bring their own story to the big screen. The best films may be shown at the ISAS Arts Festival in the spring and at the end of the year in the School's theatre. This is a project-based course, grading will be based on steady progress toward project completion.

## **The Films of Alfred Hitchcock**

The late, great film critic Roger Ebert said it best: "I do not have the secret of Alfred Hitchcock and neither, I am convinced, does anyone else. He made movies that do not date, that fascinate and amuse, that everybody enjoys and that shout out in every frame that they are by Hitchcock. In the world of film he was known simply as The Master." This elective seeks (a) to familiarize the students with some basic concepts in filmmaking as they are evident in the films of Hitchcock, (b) to give students a chance to decide for themselves how much of the director's "stamp" is on each of his films, and/or how much of their quality or uniqueness is the result of the work of screenwriters, actors, composers, etc., (c) to identify certain themes, motifs, and aspects of the human condition that recurred memorably in Hitchcock's films, and finally (d) to look at the enduring legacy of Hitchcock in more recent films by other filmmakers. Assessments will include a class participation grade, a few quizzes, a few response essays, and a final, longer, synthetic essay.

## **The Films of Billy Wilder**

Billy Wilder, one of the great filmmakers of the Golden Age of Hollywood, was nominated for 21 Academy Awards and won six. He also was the first person to win Academy Awards as producer, director, and writer for the same film. In this elective, we will watch five of his films and discuss them. Topics for class discussions will include a comparison of classic versus modern filmmaking, the cultural context of Billy Wilder's films, the influence of Billy Wilder on the history of film, the contemporary relevance (or irrelevance) of his films, and the moral lessons we can learn from them. Students will be assessed by in-class participation and two short essays.

## **The Films of Christopher Nolan**

This elective course is designed as an introduction to the art and craft of the visionary filmmaker, Christopher Nolan. Students will be introduced to the medium of film from a technical perspective as a narrative text to be "read," as well as social criticism and cultural reflection. Then, through screenings, discussion, and individual reflection, students will learn to critically analyse the anatomy of Nolan's body of work according primarily to technique (including his arrangement of shots, angles, and camera movement as well as his use of unusual narration through editing), composition, and theme, and in particular the original style of this contemporary artist. Some of the films to be covered include *The Prestige*, *Inception*, and *Interstellar*. Students will be evaluated on the short analytical essays they write at home, and/or reflective in-class essays they will write after each screening.

## **History in Film**



Historiography, by definition, is “the study of the techniques of historical research and historical writing, the methods of major historians, etc.” This course will entertain such a study while engaging popular culture and the motion picture industry. Hollywood has both amused and entertained its audience with movies that retell the glories and woes of humanity’s past, and they’ve done it well enough to tempt many a moviegoer to replace textual historical study with a more visual form of inquiry. The chief aim of this course is to teach students how to assess the historical legitimacy of such cinematic coverage of significant events and movements of the past.

### **Improv Games**

Let your brain stretch in a different dimension. This elective is all about letting loose and remembering what it is like to play pretend. We will play a variety of different improv games to test the boundaries of our imagination (and make each other laugh). By the end of the course we should be familiar enough with the form to create our own improv show, and allowing the audience to join in our fun. Students will learn how to speak confidently on the spot, think outside the box, creative problem solve, and build teamwork beyond the classroom or athletic field. They will be graded on class participation, a willingness to play – both boldly and according to the rules – and on a final class improv show.

### **Stage Combat and Acting**

This course will keep the students on their feet as we explore various types of movement and stage combat. Using practice tools in a safe setting, students will learn intermediate hand-to-hand combat as well as quarterstaff. We will also explore the techniques of physical comedy, clowning, and storytelling through movement. Students will be asked to incorporate the combat they’ve learned into various assigned scenes.

### **Theatre Practicum I**

Learn and put into practice all elements of what it takes to put on a stage production – from acting exercises and behind-the-scenes magic, to stage management and marketing. Throughout this course we will learn different techniques to build a successful show. This class will assist in making the fall MS production a success. Students will learn elements of acting, producing, directing, design, construction, organization, budgeting, entrepreneurship, and promotion. They will be graded on execution of each new learned skill as well as completing their assigned task on the production team of the Fall show.

## **Music**

### **The American Musical**

If “All the world's a stage, And all the men and women merely players; [having] their exits and their entrances; And one man in his time plays many parts,” a theatrical history course would seem crucial to rounding out one’s understanding of how best he could play his role in it. This course will allow students to engage one of America’s grandest cultural expressions, The Musical. From Gene Kelly to Johnny Depp, players on our American stage have given performances to remember and (social) lessons we should never forget. Through viewing and listening to some of the best loved storylines and songs ever to hit Broadway, Hollywood, or television, students will be entertained by and ultimately educated about their own American culture and themselves operating within it. Evaluation will be based on a) student presentations on lyrics, tunes, and story lines from individual shows; b) class discussion of the poetic, musical, and socio-historical material available of the same.

### **History in Music**

Music is almost continually in dialogue with history. As an art form, it is shaped by the events of the distant and recent past, and in return it shapes our understanding of the past and humanity itself acting in it. This

course will have students reading up on specific events that gave rise to musical compositions like Dmitri Shostokovich's *Execution of Stepan Razin*, Peter Gabriel's *Biko*, and U2's *Bloody Sunday* in order to give presentations on the past and so engage each other in thoughtful conversation about the resultant art that continues to inspire and shape us.

### **Jazz**

We all know that the music we listen to forms and deforms our lives, styles, tastes, thoughts, and emotions, but rarely do we delve into the problem of what it really takes to understand music from the inside. In this course, we will take the time to form our ears and minds to hear Jazz, the most American and distinctively modern form of music, and yet still such a challenging sound to define because of its freedom, its many variations and interactions with other genres, and the inherent transience of the musical performance. The coursework will consist primarily of dedicated listening to major jazz artists, touring different kinds of jazz from hottest to coolest, oldest to newest. We will assemble a small arsenal of biographical studies, literary texts, visual art pieces, and notions from music theory to assist in figuring out what jazz is. Students should be eager and open-minded listeners, and will be asked to do a significant amount of independent music searching to present new pieces to the group, and complete some kind of project or paper on an artist, instrument, or song. There will also be periodic listening quizzes.

## **Speech/Communication**

### **Mock Trial**

Students will participate in two to three mock trials as a practical introduction to the trial process and advocacy. The course will include the rules of evidence and how to use them, proper opening statements, closing arguments, direct examinations, and cross-examinations. Oral advocacy will be a major portion of the course, but effective body language, voice, and personal awareness will also be included. An attorney will coach students during several class meetings, and a voice coach will work with each student at least once. Students will have the option to participate in the January 2013 Texas High School Mock Trial Competition sponsored by the Dallas Bar Association. Students will be evaluated on the quality of their effort to prepare the tasks of a mock trial in a timely manner.

### **The Art of Negotiation**

Using a combination of discussions of the book, "Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In," and in-class exercises, this elective will teach the basics of negotiation. Negotiations occur every day in a variety of situations. Understanding the types and methods of negotiating will prepare the class to handle these situations more effectively. The class will discuss different negotiating styles, strategies, and best techniques for preparing for negotiations (whether they be with friends, family, co-workers, or strangers). Students will be evaluated on class participation and growth over the course of the semester, as well as small assignments throughout the semester.

### **Introduction to Law**

This semester-long program will introduce Cistercian juniors to various aspects of the legal profession, legal ethics, and to potential careers within the legal industry. Over 15 notable Cistercian Alumni lawyers will take turns covering facets of the legal profession within their areas of expertise. Cistercian has produced a number of lawyers that have worked on landmark cases and transactions, thus, this is an opportunity to network with Cistercian attorneys while learning through their real life experiences. Areas of law that will be explored include: Contracts, Texas Civil Procedure, Criminal Law, Civil Litigation, Intellectual Property, Property, Probate, Mergers and Acquisitions, Private Equity, Appellate Law, Law School, Torts, Immigration, and more. Each instructor will spend a few class periods on their area, and class grades will be based on homework, brief

quizzes over each sub-area, and a final paper in which a student explores a specific area of law that was encountered in the course.

## **Visual and Studio Arts**

### **3D Modeling and Printing**

Would you like to learn how to turn your ideas into solid reality? If so, 3D Modeling and Printing might be the course for you. In this course, you will first learn how to create 3D models on the computer, starting with the Tinkercad and SketchUp web-based programs, and then moving up to the more advanced Blender program. You will also learn about how 3D printing works and how to operate the school's 3D printers. Finally, you will turn your best 3D creations into physical form using 3D printing. Your grade will be based on quizzes, class participation, and several projects.

### **Architecture: Folly by Design**

Folly - noun; 1: a foolish act or idea. 2: an often extravagant, picturesque building with no practical purpose erected to suit a fanciful taste. In this course, you will attempt to produce the latter while avoiding the former. The class will be modeled on a college-level architectural design studio that will introduce architectural history, design concepts, physical and digital drawing/modeling/rendering techniques, and presentation skills. Students will design, describe, and present an architectural folly project. Grades will be evaluated primarily on class participation and completion of assignments. The Midterm and final presentations will be graded qualitatively based on the students' graphic presentation, verbal presentation, and ability to respond to critique questions during the reviews.

### **Digital Marketing and Social Media**

Digital Marketing & Social Media is designed to introduce students to the ever-changing digital world, as well as to immerse students in real-world, hands-on experiences with live digital marketing campaigns, industry standard digital tools, resources, and more. Topics covered include an overview of Marketing principles (the 5 P's) and digital marketing strategy, digital marketing tools and tactics, social media platforms, use of social media for business, and best practices for personal social media usage. The course will feature 1) marketing theory, strategy and discussion of current trends, 2) hands-on study, creation, and analysis of digital marketing and content, and 3) a social media-for-business simulation where students will apply their learnings to a real-world scenario with hands-on work in a live simulation environment. Students will be measured on class participation, group projects, and presentations and individual work.

### **Digital Photography I**

Discover digital photography in the Cistercian Digital Arts Lab. Learn the how and why of photography with the newest digital camera technology. Students will learn to effectively use the controls of their digital SLR cameras including shutter speeds, f-stops, control of focus and exposure. Photocomposition, lighting and lenses are also covered. Students will use the "digital darkroom" with high-powered computers and Photoshop for digital image manipulation. Color and Black & White printing methods using the latest inkjet technology printers will be available. Students may use their own DSLR cameras or a limited number of the school's *Nikon* digital cameras.

### **Digital Photography II**

This course is a continuation of the skills & techniques learned in the Digital Photography I course with the emphasis on taking photographs for specific assignments. Advanced techniques in the use of digital cameras such as previsualization of the photograph, advanced metering, control of depth of field for effect, and control of motion using the shutter speeds will be presented. Additional instruction in advanced Photoshop

techniques, as well as color and Black & White printing will be part of this course. Students will use the latest versions of Photoshop and state of the art computers and inkjet printers. Mounting and presentation will be part of this course as well as entry into the annual “Retail as Art” Photography Scholarship competition. The course is project-based and graded on successful & timely completion of projects.

### **Advanced Digital Photo**

With the permission of the instructor, students who have already completed *both* courses in digital photo and who wish to further their studies may sign up for Advanced Digital Photo (portfolio development). This course will meet at the same time as Photo II.

### **Film Making I**

Lights, Camera, Action! Learn the art of digital short film making in the Cistercian Digital Arts Lab. Students will learn to develop a story concept into a screenplay and then plan and shoot a short film of their own using the School’s high definition Sony digital video cameras. Directing actors, lighting, and camera techniques will also be part of this course. Editing will be done using Adobe Premiere, professional level editing software. Special effects and DVD authoring are also part of the course. The short films will be screened at the ISAS Arts Festival next Spring, and possibly also entered into other high school film festivals.

### **Film Making II**

Filmmaking II is a continuation of the techniques taught in Filmmaking I (previous enrollment required) with additional emphasis on editing technique, lighting for film and advanced shooting techniques. Using the latest professional editing software on the digital video lab computers and the School’s digital video cameras, each student will write, shoot, and edit his own short film and in the process learn to operate the cameras, direct actors, use lighting and effects to bring their own story to the big screen. The best films may be shown at the ISAS Arts Festival in the spring and at the end of the year in the School’s theatre. This is a project-based course, grading will be based on steady progress toward project completion.

### **Graphics Programming**

In this course, students will learn how to create programs to produce and manipulate digital images. We will start with simple 2D shapes and move to animation, altering photographs, particles, 3D shapes, and visualizing data. Programs will be written using the Processing programming language ([processing.org](http://processing.org)), which is the Java programming language with some of the difficult parts hidden to make it easier for beginners. Therefore, students will be learning much of the Java language while learning computer graphics.

### **Introduction to Publications**

In order for publications, like *The Informer* (the school’s newspaper) and *Exodus* (the school’s yearbook), to reach their full potential, students need to develop a wide variety of skills, such as copy-writing, photo editing, layout design and caption creation. Intro to Publications will be a hands-on tutorial and practicum in those skill sets. Students will work with *Adobe Photoshop*, *InDesign* and *Bridge* to complete projects – such as newspaper stories and yearbook layouts. Some projects may be featured in the school’s publications. Assessments will be based on the completed projects.

### **Studio Art: Acrylics**

This class introduces students to the acrylic painting method. Instruction covers color theory, color mixing, wash and impasto techniques, compositional development, and critique. Grades are based on the average between 4-5 required canvases and classroom participation.

### **Studio Art: Encaustic Painting**

This class explores the age-old technique of encaustic painting. Dry pigment is mixed with molten beeswax to create highly textured surfaces on board panels. Students will learn fundamental approaches and applications directed toward personal concepts and designs.

## **Studio Art: Screen Printing**

Many are familiar with Andy Warhol's "Marilyn Diptych" and "Campbell's Soup Cans" but few know the process behind it. In this course, students will learn the specific yet wide-ranging art skill, involving both graphic design (Adobe InDesign and Photoshop) and manual technique. Using various canvas materials – wood, paper, fabric – this course will explore monochromatic and polychromatic screen printing. A portion of the class will focus on the craft of t-shirt design and printing. Evaluation will consist of peer critique, design originality and creativity, and print execution. Evaluation will consist of peer critique, design originality and creativity, and print execution of 3 submitted projects.