

Merit College Preparatory Academy



7th & 8th Grade
Course Descriptions
2019 – 2020

This course description booklet can help you plan your classes for the coming year. In order for you to fully understand the expectations of each class, please read each description carefully.

Parents, teachers, and counselors can help you plan next year's program of study. Select the courses you wish to take, as well as the courses you need to take for your grade level.

NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

It is the policy of Merit College Preparatory Academy not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, or disabilities in its programs, services, activities, admissions, access, treatment or employment practices as required by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975.

Civil rights compliance inquiries related to Merit College Preparatory Academy may be directed to Jesse Meeks, Director, 1440 W. Center Street, Springville, Utah, 84663, 801-491-7600.

English Courses

English 7

This course meets the standards for 7th grade Common Core English. The class will cover reading strategies, writing techniques, and study skills. The curriculum rotates with one year's focus on research and technical writing and the other on plot construction and theme analysis. Projects throughout the year will help students in acquiring the Speaking and Listening components of the core.

(Full Year Course -1.0 Credit) **Grade 7**

English 8

This course meets the standards for 8th grade Common Core English. The class will cover reading strategies, writing techniques, and study skills. The curriculum rotates with one year's focus on research and technical writing and the other on plot construction and theme analysis. Projects throughout the year will help students in acquiring the Speaking and Listening components of the core.

(Full Year Course -1.0 Credit) **Grade 8**

Creative Writing

English Elective

Students in this class will be introduced to two main forms of Creative Writing - the personal essay and the short story. Students will have weekly short writing assignments and reading assignments to become better students of how the professionals do it. This class isn't for the faint of heart - we write every day! - but for any student looking to expand their writing skills, they will find this class to be very rewarding and worthwhile. You will leave with a portfolio of writing that you can be proud of.

(Semester Course – 0.5 Credit) **Grades 7-8**

Math Courses

Merit Academy implements traditional and non-traditional mathematics teaching methods. Students will learn to receive information from workbooks/notes/apps while doing projects & homework designed personally by teachers. Students who consistently work hard in class should have a reasonable amount of daily homework. Students will be expected to study their notes and homework in order to understand how the mathematical concepts relate to “real” life and how these concepts build upon one another to further their understanding of the study of mathematics. Student mastery of course content is essential; therefore, teachers and students will work together (homework, testing, study groups, projects, tutoring, etc...) throughout the year to ensure every student has success in mathematics at Merit.

Mathematics Grade 7

In Grade 7, instructional time should focus on four critical areas: (1) developing understanding of and applying proportional relationships; (2) developing understanding of operations with rational numbers and working with expressions and linear equations; (3) solving problems involving scale drawings and informal geometric constructions, and working with two- and three-dimensional shapes to solve problems involving area, surface area, and volume; and (4) drawing inferences about populations based on samples

Summary: Ratios and Proportional Relationships, the Number System, Expressions and Equations, Geometry, Statistics and Probability
(Full Year Course -1.0 Credit) **Grade 7**

Mathematics Grade 8

In Grade 8, instructional time should focus on three critical areas: (1) formulating and reasoning about expressions and equations, including modeling an association in bivariate data with a linear equation, and solving linear equations and systems of linear equations; (2) grasping the concept of a function and using functions to describe quantitative relationships; (3) analyzing two- and three-dimensional space and figures using distance, angle, similarity, and congruence, and understanding and applying the Pythagorean Theorem.

Summary: The Number System, Expressions and Equations, Functions, Geometry, Statistics and Probability
(Full Year Course -1.0 Credit) **Grade 8**

Science Courses

7th Grade Science

Come experience the science of change. We'll study chemical and physical changes, changes in force, motion, and energy. We'll also learn about changes in the earth's crust, climate, and ecosystems.

(Full Year Course -1.0 Credit) **Grade 7**

8th Grade Science

During this class we will be focusing on how energy and matter experience change. The areas of science to be studied are physics, biology, chemistry and geology. In each area of science about 1 term will be spent investigating specific aspects of these sciences as per the Utah State Core Curriculum.

(Full Year Course -1.0 Credit) **Grade 8**

Astronomy

Science Elective

Have you ever wondered what those dots in the sky really are? You may know them as stars, but what are they really!? Is there more out there than what we know? Are you curious about the unknown beyond Earth? What is the future of mankind? Are Star Wars and Star Trek based on truths about space? If you have ever asked any of these questions, or you are just interested in space, then come take astronomy. We will delve into these questions and more as I guide you through the universe.

(Semester Course – 0.50 Credit) **Grades 7-8**

Marine Science

Science Elective

Learn about ocean and freshwater environments, all the cool and wacky critters that live in the water, and the environmental challenges facing them.

(Semester Course – 0.50 Credit) **Grades 7-8**

Social Studies Courses

7th Grade Utah Studies/Geography

Utah is a state diverse in landscape and people. This course is designed to help students understand the state of Utah at a deeper level by reviewing Utah's early history and particularly emphasizing Utah from statehood to the present. Students will understand the interaction between Utah's geography and its inhabitants, as well as the formative contributions of Native American Indians, explorers, and Utah pioneers. The course will also investigate relationships between government and the people of Utah, the many opportunities people have to make a living in Utah, the diverse nature of Utah's people and cultures, and the impact of contemporary events on the land and people of Utah. The Utah Studies core is designed to meet the needs of a semester-length course. Full-year Utah Studies courses may expand the scope and detail of this course to meet specific needs. (Full Year Course -1.0 Credit) **Grade 7**

8th Grade US Studies

This will be a unique course that covers events in United States history from the Age of Exploration through the Civil War as well as the major events in Utah history. As major events unfold in the United States students will also see how they tie into Utah history (i.e. the Great Awakening, the Westward movement and the Civil War). U.S. studies will emphasize the Colonial Era, the Revolutionary War and the U.S. Constitution as well as focus on the growth and changes of the nation and the conflicts that led to the Civil War. Utah studies will include a look at the Native American tribes of Utah, the arrival of pioneers and the struggle for statehood. If possible, we will take a field trip to the museum at the College of Eastern Utah to see the artifacts of Utah's prehistory. (Full Year Course -1.0 Credit) **Grade 8**

Fine Arts Courses

Beginning Ballroom Dance

Ballroom 1 is a beginning level dance class that will cover the Fox Trot, Cha-cha, Country Swing Waltz, line dances, and the Swing. Students will have opportunities to create dances of their own and perform at the end of semester concert. Come join the fun!

(Semester Course - 0.5 Credit) **Grades 7-12**

Dance I

Dance I is a beginning level dance class that will cover many styles of dance from contemporary, hip hop, and African, to jazz and ballet. Students will have opportunities to work in groups and create their own work, and work together as a class. Each semester includes performance opportunities at the school

(Full Year Course -1.0 Credit) **Grades 7-12**

Dance II

Prerequisites – Dance I

Dance II is an intermediate level dance course. Students will build on skills learned in Dance I, with a stronger emphasis on technique, and time space and energy.

Many different styles of dance will be learned including contemporary, hip hop, ballet, jazz, and cultural dance. There will be opportunities for students to perform throughout the year including sporting events and an end of year concert.

(Full Year Course -1.0 Credit) **Grades 8-12**

Hip Hop

Hip Hop class will expose students to the history of the dance genre, along with its various styles. We will be focusing on the understanding of the basic elements of dance- time, space, and energy through this dance medium. There will be opportunities to perform at the end of the semester concert, and other school activities.

(Semester Course - 0.5 Credit) **Grades 7-12**

Theater Foundations I

This class discovers techniques for playwriting, puppetry, characterization, improvisation, using voices and bodies effectively to tell a story on stage. This class will help students feel comfortable speaking in public, reading and writing play texts, and collaborating. The student will be required to attend a professional play during each semester. They will also discover the wonderful influence theater can have on the rest of their world.

(Semester Course - 0.5 Credit) **Grades 7- 9**

Musical Performance

Pre-Requisite: Audition

This class rehearses and performs a play during the 1st semester and a musical production during the second semester. Theater Company membership requires singing, acting and dancing skills. There will be after-school and occasional Saturday rehearsals required. This class is for the students who have auditioned and been cast in the play or musical during that semester.

(Semester Course - 0.5 Credit) **Grades 7-12**

Theater Performance

Pre-Requisite: Audition

The Focus of Theater Performance is to gain more experience and become a versatile performing artist. Students will be performing a drama/comedy play. The class also involves Duo-Acting, One Act Plays, challenging scene work, reading texts, monologues, practicing selected material. The student will be required to attend a professional play during each semester. They will also discover more about the wonderful influence theater can have on the rest of their world.

(Semester Course - 0.5 Credit) **Grades 7-12**

Art Foundations I

This is the required Junior High School Visual Arts Core course. It is designed to provide an overview of Visual Arts while studying a broad variety of art tools and materials. With an emphasis on studio production, this course is designed to develop higher-level thinking, art-related technology skills, art criticism, art history, and aesthetics.

(Full Year Course -1.0 Credit) **Grades 7-8**

Ceramics I

This course is for the Junior High School Visual Arts Core Curriculum. Ceramics develops basic skills in the creation of 3D forms and pottery from clays. With an emphasis on studio production, this course is designed to develop higher-level thinking, art-related technology skills, art criticism, art history, and aesthetics.

(Semester Course - 0.5 Credit) **Grades 7-8**

3D Design

3-D Design provides an overview and introduction to fine crafts, their media, and the cultures they represent, including skills such as wood burning, basket weaving, jewelry making, and leather stamping. With an emphasis on studio production, this course is designed to develop higher-level thinking, art-related technology skills, art criticism, art history, and aesthetics.

(Semester Course - 0.5 Credit) **Grades 7-12**

Advanced Orchestra

In Advanced Orchestra class, skilled string players participate in Merit Academy's Best in State award-winning ensemble, Symphonic Strings. This course provides opportunities to foster and refine musical expression through instrumental performance, analytical/evaluative skills, and aesthetic judgment. Study includes the care and cultivation of a beautiful tone, the ability to read music with fluency, the polishing of performance skills, team spirit, and responsible rehearsal habits. Students will have opportunities to experience the spontaneity of improvisation and the creative process of composition. Students will hone listening skills and increase their ability to analyze and critique music and music performances. Attention will also be given to relating their music experiences to the time and culture of the pieces they study, as well as to contemporary society. Placement in Advanced Orchestra is by audition.

(Full Year Course – 1.0 Credit) **Grades 7-12**

Intermediate Orchestra

In Intermediate Orchestra class, experienced student string players develop and refine their skills in the Merit Academy Concert Strings. This course provides opportunities for students to develop their musical potential and aesthetic understanding through learning to play orchestral string instruments. Study includes the care and cultivation of a beautiful tone, the ability to read music with increasing fluency, the building of technical skills, team spirit, and responsible rehearsal habits. Students will have opportunities to experience the spontaneity of improvisation and the creative process of composition. Students will heighten listening skills and increase their ability to analyze and evaluate music and music performances. Attention will also be given to relating their music experiences to the time and culture of the pieces they study, as well as to contemporary society. Placement in Intermediate Orchestra is by audition.

(Full Year Course – 1.0 Credit) **Grades 7-12**

Beginning Orchestra

In Beginning Orchestra class, we begin our journey toward string instrument mastery in the Merit Academy String Orchestra. This course provides opportunities for students to develop their musical potential and aesthetic understanding through learning to play orchestral string instruments. Study includes the care and cultivation of a beautiful tone, the ability to read music, the building of technical skills, team spirit, and responsible rehearsal habits. Students will have opportunities to experience the spontaneity of improvisation and the creative process of composition. Students will strengthen listening skills and their ability to analyze and evaluate music and music performances. Attention will also be given to relating their music experiences to the time and culture of the pieces they study, as well as to contemporary society. Enrollment in Beginning Orchestra is open to all students, and students registered for this class will be given an instrument assignment (violin, viola, cello, or bass). They will need to rent or purchase a quality instrument based on their assignment before classes begin.

(Full Year Course – 1.0 Credit) **Grades 7-12**

Band I

In Band 1, we begin our journey toward instrument mastery in the Merit Academy Wind Band. This course provides opportunities for students to develop their musical potential and aesthetic understanding through learning to play a woodwind, brass, or percussion instrument. Study includes the care and cultivation of a beautiful tone, the ability to read music, the building of technical skills, team spirit, and responsible rehearsal habits. Students will have opportunities to experience the spontaneity of improvisation and the creative process of composing. Students will strengthen listening skills and their ability to analyze and evaluate music and music performances. Attention will also be given to relating their music experiences to the time and culture of the pieces they study, as well as to contemporary society. Enrollment in Band I is open to all students, and students registered for this class will be given an instrument assignment (flute, clarinet, saxophone, trumpet, trombone, or percussion). They will need to rent or purchase a quality instrument based on their assignment before classes begin.

(Full Year Course – 1.0 Credit) **Grades 7-12**

Band II

In Band II class, experienced student band musicians develop and refine their skills in the Merit Academy Concert Band. This course further develops and refines core concepts and fundamentals of classic band literature introduced in Band I, and introduces the basics of jazz musicianship. Study includes the development of genre-appropriate style, the care and cultivation of a beautiful tone, the ability to read music with increasing fluency, the building of technical skills, team spirit, and responsible rehearsal habits. Students will have opportunities to experience the spontaneity of improvisation and the creative process of composition. They will heighten listening skills and increase their ability to analyze and evaluate music and music performances. Attention will also be given to relating their music experiences to the time and culture of the pieces they study, as well as to contemporary society. Placement in Band II is by audition.

(Full Year Course – 1.0 Credit) **Grades 7-12**

Advanced Guitar and Ukulele

Building on the foundational skills developed in the Beginning class, this class provides dedicated musicians with a place to refine their skills, develop their abilities, and explore their creative potential. We will have the opportunity to create experiences in songwriting, recording, filming, music literacy, and ensemble playing.

(Semester Course – 0.50 Credit) **Grades 7-12**

Beginning Guitar

In this class, we'll strive for excellence as we play music in a wide variety of genres. We will have experiences in songwriting, ensemble playing, singing as we play (just like the pros do) and listening to recordings of the great musicians. We'll play melodies and chords to hits by stars like the Beatles, the Beach Boys, Elvis, and The Rolling Stones, as well as traditional folk songs and classical themes. Beginning Guitar is great for beginners AND for those who already play the instrument and want to take their music reading ability to the next level. It's also great for singers who want to develop their musicianship by learning to play an instrument.

(Semester Course – 0.50 Credit) **Grades 7-12**

Beginning Ukulele

In this class, we'll strive for excellence as we play music in a wide variety of genres. We will have experiences in songwriting, ensemble playing, singing as we play (just like the pros do) and listening to recordings of the great musicians. We'll play melodies and chords to hits by stars like the Beatles, Elvis, and Kermit the Frog, as well as traditional folk songs and classical themes. Beginning Ukulele is great for beginners AND for those who already play the instrument and want to take their music reading ability to the next level. It's also great for singers who want to develop their musicianship by learning to play an instrument.

(Semester Course – 0.50 Credit) **Grades 7-12**

Jazz Band

Jazz Band is the advanced band course at Merit Academy. Students enrolling in this course should have at least 1 year experience on their instrument, have participated in Jazz Band last year, or get special approval from Mr. Buckley and Mr. Myler.

Students in Jazz Band will learn jazz harmony and theory, including scales and modes, instrument technique and jazz articulation, and basic piano skills including chord voicings. Students will actively listen to jazz and do ear training to improve connection between mind and instrument. All of this will be applied in performance, both through reading charts and improvising solos.

(Full Year Course – 1.0 Credit) **Grades 7-12**

Health and P.E. Courses

7th Grade Health

Health education provides opportunities for students to develop knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for practicing lifelong, health-enhancing behaviors. The Health I curriculum focuses on nutrition, physical fitness, mental health, relationship skills, substance abuse, and human reproduction. Students will learn that they are responsible for their personal well-being and that building a solid foundation of health literacy and decision-making skills can contribute to a variety of healthy choices for self and others that will be of value throughout life.

(Semester Course - 0.5 Credit) **Grade 7**

7th and 8th Grade P.E.

In Physical Education, students acquire the knowledge and skills for movement that provide the foundation for enjoyment, continued social development through physical activity, and access to a physically-active lifestyle. The student exhibits a physically-active lifestyle and understands the relationship between physical activity and health throughout the lifespan. Seventh grade students apply similar concepts from one sport or movement setting to another. Students can observe another individual's performance and notice key elements for success. At this grade level, students participate in physical activity both in and out of school while maintaining a healthy level of fitness as their bodies grow and change. Their knowledge of safety and the ability to manage their own behavior is reinforced. Instruction is directed more toward encouraging the incorporation of physical activity into a daily routine and less toward fundamental skill development.

(Semester Course - 0.5 Credit) **Grades 7- 8**

Other Electives

Ameritus Service Knights

This class is centered around the joy of service. Come have fun with us while we make a positive difference by serving in our homes, neighborhoods, school, community and the world! Possible focuses are: CERT (preparing for a crisis), school and community service projects, and humanitarian aid. We log our activities and put together a service resume at the end of the semester that will come in handy for future applications and resumes.

(Semester Course – 0.5 Credit) **Grades 7-12**

Speech and Debate

Speech and Debate with Mr. Wright is a fun and challenging class in which students will stretch themselves, face their fears, think deeply on important issues, learn to persuasively speak their opinions, and use their skills to compete in various competitions and events throughout the semester.

Our world has no shortage of problems. Thankfully we live in a country that has always looked to its own people to determine the answers. We the People really do get to decide what our country will be. And that decision is made in the American free market of ideas. Those who can think deeply and speak persuasively are the ones who guide the discussion in our market of ideas. Students who take this class will be better prepared for higher education, business, and life in general, but most importantly, they will be the next generation of decision makers for our society.

(Semester Course – 0.5 Credit) **Grades 7-12**

Engineering Technology

During your school career, you have learned mathematics, science, English, social studies, and various other subjects, but what can you do with this knowledge? With engineering technology, you will utilize the skills that have developed in previous classes to design, create, and solve problems that you are hired to solve. You will learn about safety, different materials, explore the impact of technological systems, processes, materials, and tools used to facilitate solutions to problems. Work with your team to solve these problems and build skills that will help you out of high school whether you choose to pursue a career or continue with your education in college. This class will count as a CTE credit and it is intended for 9-12. It is a semester long class. Come and explore the world of engineering and develop skills that will help you outside of school.
(Semester Course – 0.50 Credit) **Grades 7-12**

Game Theory

This course will introduce you to the exciting world of Game Theory and Design! Hopefully, if you're in this class, you enjoy games already. Games can be very fun, exciting, and an enjoyable pastime. There are some willing to pay 10s if not 100s of dollars for some games! While not everyone likes the same type of games, most people do find them enjoyable.

This class aims to not only explore games and gaming, but to help you towards creating a game of your own! We will be covering the basics of games, their purposes, types, etc., and explore them thoroughly. The second half of the class will focus on you collaborating with some of your classmates in creating several games of your own! If you effectively apply what you learn in the class, perhaps you can create the next popular game sold in stores everywhere!
(Semester Course – 0.50 Credit) **Grades 7-12**

Audio Engineering and Introduction to Singer/Songwriter

Learn how to produce music to be "radio ready" by using techniques in tracking, mic placement, signal flow, mixing and mastering that goes on in major Hollywood studios. If interested, take your singing to a whole new level by developing and training the ear and learning vocal techniques as you record your favorite songs. SINGING NOT REQUIRED to take the class.
(Semester Course – 0.50 Credit) **Grades 7-12**

Video Production and TV Broadcasting

Perform in front of the camera or work behind-the-scenes!.Create T.V. quality programs, promotional videos, commercials and documentaries. Learn hosting, writing, camera operating, editing and lighting for HDTV.
(Semester Course – 0.50 Credit) **Grades 7-12**

Creating Youtube and Facebook Videos

Create interesting content to be used on a YOUTUBE channel or FACEBOOK. Explore marketing geared towards several social media platforms.
(Semester Course – 0.50 Credit) **Grades 7-12**

Music Videos and Production

Produce music videos by performing as a band, vocal artist or instrumentalist. Develop skills in audio and visual productions including camera-work, audio engineering, storyboarding, setting, location and performance.
(Semester Course – 0.50 Credit) **Grades 7-12**

Sociology

Sociology is the study of social life, social change, and the social causes and consequences of human behavior. Life is social whenever we interact with others. In this class we will study social life, examining why and how humans interact. We will also study and practice social skills in this class. This will be a fun elective social studies course, where students will be actively involved in multiple activities while engaging in social interaction with communicative skills!

(Semester Course – 0.50 Credit) **Grades 7-8**

Photoshop

This course is designed to provide students with the basic knowledge and skills related to the graphic design industry. It is intended to serve as a starting point for several pathways, focusing in photoshop. Assignments will cover the following areas: creative design & layout, typography, color, related software, and computer and professional skills.

(Semester Course - 0.50 Credit) **Grades 8-12**

Career and Technical Education

College and Career Awareness Course

7th GRADE ONLY (REQUIRED COURSE)

College and Career Awareness is a required course for seventh grade students. Through this class, students participate in activity-centered lessons to utilize technology, develop beginning skills, and explore careers by expanding awareness. Provides information regarding future classes and training related to each student's career field of interest in the following areas:

Family and Consumer Science, Health Science, Information Technology, Business and Marketing, Agriculture, and Technology and Engineering, and Skilled and Technical Science.

(Full Year Course -1.0 Credit) **Grade 7**