



Mount Carmel Academy Social Studies Department

The Mission of the Social Studies Department is to produce students who will be able to think critically in the modern world. The department encourages its students to be productive citizens, who respect various cultures, and who can apply their knowledge of history, politics, and economics to their everyday lives.

Required Courses: World Geography, Western Civilizations, American History, Civics, and Economics

Elective Courses: Psychology, Sociology, Contemporary Issues, and Law Studies

Co-Curricular Activities: Close-Up, Women in the Spotlight Forum, National World War II Museum

*All required courses are offered at the honors and regulars level. Advanced Placement credit can be earned in Western Civilizations, American History, Civics, and Psychology.

Our department is made up of teachers whose experience provides us with over 160 years in Social Studies education. Each individual member of the department brings his or her own real-life assets to the classroom on a daily basis. Members of the department are devoted to the principles of real-life learning as evidenced by frequent discussion of current events and their relevance not only to our past but to our future. Furthermore, we encourage our students to apply Christian values as they study the choices made by people in the past and as they prepare to make decisions about their societal role in the future. Through our required courses, students receive a thorough background in Social Studies content and skills-based knowledge from the ninth through twelfth grade. This knowledge is further supplemented by our elective course offerings, which develop students' academic and life skills. As a whole, the department strives to teach tolerance, encourage critical thinking, promote useful problem-solving skills, and relate the importance of historical perspective for future voters and active participants in society.

In the classroom, students are exposed to a variety of strategies that encourage critical thinking. Each class begins with a prayer, and continues with a thematically and data-driven approach to the Social Studies standards. Our teachers present content through cross-curricular vocabulary, document analysis, simulations, role playing, group activities, and demonstration-based learning. To further engage students, our department incorporates computer/ web-based presentation programs, interactive practices, and kinesthetic activities to foster student growth and individual participation. Through debate and discussion, students analyze and apply these Social Studies skills to the world of today.

As members of the Social Studies Department, we feel it is our duty to help all students achieve their academic potential. While many of our students excel when asked to perform on traditional assessments, we also believe it is important for all students to be able to demonstrate their abilities in other ways. Students are able to meet various technology content standards and benchmarks by using their Macbook Airs to gather, analyze, and synthesize information. Teachers expect students to supplement their knowledge by using software programs and web-based resources to complete research and projects. This allows us to incorporate both traditional and non-traditional methods to assess student learning. A few examples of student-centered activities and assessments are listed below:

- World Geography students focus on reading comprehension skills in addition to broadening their minds to the world's geographic features.
- Western Civilizations students also build their reading comprehension skills by completing a literature analysis project geared towards incorporating primary and secondary sources into the history curriculum.
- American History students create visual representations combining synthesis and comprehension to emphasize events of the twentieth century.
- Civics and Economics students apply concepts learned in previous years, and synthesize this information to create fully aware citizens who can make informed decisions and judge the world around them. By drafting resumes and cover letters, as well as by researching female entrepreneurs, our students further their ability to navigate the challenges they will encounter in their twenty-first century careers.

In such rapidly changing times, students will be entering a complex world. In order for them to positively contribute to society, they must possess knowledge about the past, be aware of their duties and responsibilities as citizens, and have an awareness of the plight of many others in the world who are not as fortunate. Our Social Studies Department strives to prepare students for such a future.