

# Elective Course Descriptions (2019-2020)

## SVUSD Virtual Academy

### General Electives

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE <sup>(G)</sup> (2 semesters)**

Environmental science is a rapidly expanding field. This two-semester course offers lessons that cover many aspects of the field: ecology, the biosphere, land, forests and soil, water, energy and resources, and societies and policy. Through unique activities and material, high school students connect scientific theory and concepts to current, real-world dilemmas, providing them with opportunities for mastery in each of the segments throughout the semester.

#### **PSYCHOLOGY <sup>(G)</sup> (2 semesters)**

Students analyze human growth, learning, personality, and behavior from the perspective of major theories within psychology, including the biological, psychosocial, and cognitive perspectives. From a psychological point of view, students investigate the nature of being human as they build a comprehensive understanding of traditional psychological concepts and contemporary perspectives in the field. Course components include an introduction to the history, perspectives, and research of psychology; an understanding of topics such as the biological aspects of psychology, learning, and cognitive development; the stages of human development; aspects of personality and intelligence; the classification and treatment of psychological disorders; and psychological aspects of social interactions; aspects of personality and intelligence; the classification and treatment of psychological disorders; and psychological aspects of social interactions.

#### **INTRODUCTION TO COMMUNICATIONS AND SPEECH <sup>(G)</sup> (1 semester)**

Beginning with an introduction that builds student understanding of the elements, principles, and characteristics of human communication, this course offers fascinating insight into verbal and nonverbal messages and cultural and gender differences in the areas of listening and responding. High school students enrolled in this one-semester course will be guided through engaging lectures and interactive activities, exploring themes of self-awareness and perception in communication. The course concludes with units on informative and persuasive speeches.

#### **ONLINE LEARNING AND DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP (1 semester)**

Introduction to online learning, including how to work independently, stay safe, and develop effective study habits in virtual learning environments. Featuring direct-instruction videos, interactive tasks, authentic projects, and rigorous assessments, the course prepares students for high school by providing in-depth instruction and practice in important study skills such as time management, effective note-taking, test preparation, and collaborating effectively online. By the end of the course, students will understand what it takes to be successful online learners and responsible digital citizens.

#### **PERSONAL FINANCE (1 semester)**

This introductory finance course teaches what it takes to understand the world of finance and make informed decisions about managing finances. Students learn more about economics and become more confident in setting and researching financial goals as they develop the core skills needed to be successful. In this one-semester course, students learn how to open bank accounts, invest money, apply for loans, apply for insurance, explore careers, manage business finances, make decisions about major purchases, and more. Students will be inspired by stories from finance professionals and individuals who have reached their financial goals.

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### **SOCIOLOGY <sup>(G)</sup> (1 semester)**

Providing insight into the human dynamics of our diverse society, this is an engaging, one-semester course that delves into the fundamental concepts of sociology. This interactive course, designed for high school students, covers cultural diversity and conformity, basic structures of society, individuals and socialization, stages of human development as they relate to sociology, deviance from social norms, social stratification, racial and ethnic interactions, gender roles, family structure, the economic and political aspects of sociology, the sociology of public institutions, and collective human behavior, both historically and in modern times.

### **WORLD REGIONAL GEOGRAPHY <sup>(G)</sup> (1 semester)**

This semester-long course introduces students to the physical, cultural, and political geography of the various regions of the world. It is intended to meet the curriculum goals set forth by the History– Social Science Framework for California Public Schools. Comprehensive and organized by region, this course helps students understand the Earth’s physical and human diversity. Students analyze population and settlement patterns and evaluate the ways that human activities modify the physical environment as they gain a rich understanding of global cultures and the historical factors that have shaped the world around them.

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## **Career Technical Education (CTE) Electives**

### **CAREER PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT (1 semester)**

Introducing high school students to the working world, this course provides the knowledge and insight necessary to compete in today’s challenging job market. This relevant and timely course helps students investigate careers as they apply to personal interests and abilities, develop the skills and job search documents needed to enter the workforce, explore the rights of workers and traits of effective employees, and address the importance of professionalism and responsibility as careers change and evolve. This one-semester course includes lessons in which students create a self-assessment profile, a cover letter, and a résumé that can be used in their educational or career portfolio.

### **INTRODUCTION TO BUSINESS <sup>(G)</sup> (2 semesters)**

In this two-semester introductory course, students learn the principles of business using real-world examples—learning what it takes to plan and launch a product or service in today’s fast-paced business environment. This course covers an introduction to economics, costs and profit, and different business types. Students are introduced to techniques for managing money, personally and as a business, and taxes and credit; the basics of financing a business; how a business relates to society both locally and globally; how to identify a business opportunity; and techniques for planning, executing, and marketing a business to respond to that opportunity.

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### Visual and Performing Arts (VAPA) Electives

#### **VISUAL ARTS <sup>(F)</sup> (2 semesters)**

This yearlong course introduces high school students to the nature of art—including the nature and cultural purposes of art; 2D and 3D art appreciation prehistoric and ancient art; art in ancient civilizations, middle ages, Renaissance, 18th and 19th centuries; modern art. Students are introduced to these artistic through direct instruction, interactive tasks, practice assignments, and artistic projects. This course is intended to provide students with a strong base of core knowledge of art through history.

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### Foreign Language

#### **SPANISH 1 <sup>(E)</sup> (2 semesters)**

Students begin their introduction to high school Spanish with fundamental building blocks in four key areas of foreign language study: listening comprehension, speaking, reading, and writing. Each unit consists of an ongoing adventure story, a new vocabulary theme and grammar concept, numerous interactive games reinforcing vocabulary and grammar, reading and listening comprehension activities, speaking and writing activities, and multimedia cultural presentations covering major Spanish-speaking areas in Europe and the Americas.

#### **SPANISH 2 <sup>(E)</sup> (2 semesters)**

High school students continue their introduction to Spanish with fundamental building blocks in four key areas of foreign language study: listening comprehension, speaking, reading, and writing. Each unit consists of an ongoing adventure story, a new vocabulary theme and grammar concept, numerous interactive games reinforcing vocabulary and grammar, reading and listening comprehension activities, speaking and writing activities, and cultural presentations covering major Spanish-speaking areas in Europe and the Americas.

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(A), (B), (C), (D), (E), (F), (G) University of California Minimum Entrance Requirements

(E) Language other than English: 2 years required, 3 years recommended (of the same language).	(F) Visual and Performing Arts: 1 year required.	(G) Electives: 1 year required from the approved elective courses or one additional course beyond what is required from the courses listed A-F.
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