

PACE Humanities 9-10

The focus of the high school gifted program is the PACE Humanities class, which meets daily. Humanities combines honors English I with AP World History over two years focusing on these disciplines and the connections between world art, music, and literature. Students experience frequent divergent instruction; extension of prior learning; advanced critical thinking skills; problem-solving; creative interpretation and expression; advanced oral, written and visual presentation skills; self-directed study; and advanced research and expository writing skills.

How is the Humanities experience organized?

- Team-taught by language arts and social studies content experts who are also trained in the special needs of gifted students
- Two-year course allows for continued synergy between peers and instructors
- Core focus of curriculum is an organic study of the development of the arts – literature, art, architecture, philosophy, drama, music, dance, opera, etc.
- Language arts and social studies is integrated chronologically and thematically
- A safe supportive environment is fostered for exploring personal beliefs, creativity, study skills, interpersonal skills, and self-expression for a special-needs population
- Experience seeks to create a lifelong appreciation of the aesthetic side of life
- A common goal of the exploration of history and art is multi-cultural literacy in all the major traditions
- One central feature of the course is cultural perspectives and point of views, a skill needed more and more in a global, interconnected world
- Responsive teaching is at the heart of the program as students come from all backgrounds, readiness, and gifted levels

How is Humanities different from traditional honors, AP, or IB offerings?

- Mix of 9th and 10th grade students in course allows for mentoring relationships not found in traditional one year courses
- Humanities reduces overlap that sometimes occurs in single discipline courses housed in different departments
- Two-year versus one-year structure of other courses allows for the following:
 - Questioning/discovery format versus heavy content lecture
 - Better articulation between grade levels
 - Practice developing skills (writing, reading, studying, presentation, speaking)
 - Creativity and academic exploration driven by student choice
 - More in-depth coverage of material
 - Continuity allows teachers to better monitor and encourage growth
 - Time to react to the needs of the class rather than have the class bend to the needs of the curriculum
- Humanities focuses on connections between subjects (art, philosophy, literature, music, history, architecture) empowering students to build understanding in a different manner
- Teachers are trained specialists not just in content knowledge, but in the unique needs of the gifted
- Humanities provides social and intellectual interaction with identified G/T peers
- Application of creativity, not just exploration of content

Why should a student decide to stay in PACE in secondary?

- PACE celebrates the unique and fosters self-expression in a safe environment
- PACE provides opportunities for academic leadership among intellectual peers
- PACE emphasizes the inter-personal and presentation skills needed for college and career
- PACE seeks to bolster learning through extra-curricular experiences
- PACE creates a sense of family where relationships continue from earlier PACE experiences
- PACE students encourage each other to excel; they challenge each other to perform to their abilities.
- PACE is safe for twice-exceptional students while still challenging appropriately in a trusting community of learners
- PACE sense of community fostered inside the school-day continues in extra-curricular pursuits
- PACE prepares students for many of the challenges they will have in the future – true 21st century learning
- PACE emphasizes flexibility in curriculum, delivery, organization, and overall mentality.