American Studies Program Fall 2016: Tier A Courses

American History: The Pacific Northwest and Japan

The course will serve as an introduction to the economic, political, and cultural relationships between the Pacific Northwest (generally Oregon and Washington, but also including some discussion of Alaska, British Columbia, and Idaho) and Japan. Lectures and readings will cover the history of interactions between Japan and the Northwest from the period of initial contact up until the present.

American Society: Introduction to Theater

Live theater is an important part of cultural expression all over the world. This course provides a general introduction to theater in the Western tradition, including basic vocabulary, play analysis, elements of production, and theater architecture. Students will learn about American society by reading and watching two prominent American plays focusing on the theme of family. We will also compare American theater with the traditional Japanese forms of Kabuki and Noh. Students will read and discuss plays, watch videos in class, and make a field trip to a local performance.

American Studies: American Justice

The goal of this course is to study American culture and society through an analysis of traditional and contemporary American values, social institutions, and means of expression.

During the fall semester, the course will engage students in a cultural detective hunt as they decipher the American justice system in a wide variety of contexts. Students will study in detail, the American classic novel, *To Kill A Mockingbird* by Harper Lee (in both text and movie form), and will be asked to carefully examine the many themes in the text such as coming of age, racial prejudice, class prejudice, childhood and fear of the unknown. Students are also asked to solve the mystery story that runs through the novel. In addition, students will have the opportunity to understand the criminal justice system through a unit on American trial procedure as well as an observation of a jury trial in Salem.

International Politics: Current Issues

This course is designed to introduce students to 21st Century global issues. We will focus on the following issues: the US Presidential Election; ISIS and the Middle East; the European Migration Crisis; Human Trafficking/Modern Slavery. We will focus on the issues or events themselves and also how the United States plays a role in those
problems. Through this examination, we will better understand how specific American policies have shaped the 21st Century.