

# COURSE DESCRIPTION GUIDE

NOTRE DAME ACADEMY  
SAINT JULIE DIVISION  
7TH & 8TH GRADE



2023  
2024

## ST. JULIE DIVISION COURSE DESCRIPTIONS, 2023-2024

- NDA 7th and 8th graders will follow a curriculum that is fully integrated for grades 7-12, allowing our students to master basic skills before reaching ninth grade classes.
- NDA 7th and 8th graders will study six core subjects, each 80 minutes in length, which meet every other day. They will also have classes in the arts, technology/project-based learning, PE/wellness, and seminar.

- **Grading Scale:**

98 and above.....	A+
93 - 97.....	A
90 - 92.....	A-
87-89.....	B+
83 - 86.....	B
80 - 82.....	B-
77 - 79.....	C+
73 -76.....	C
70 - 72.....	C-
67 - 69.....	D+
63 - 66.....	D
60 - 62.....	D-
59 and below.....	F

### GRADE SEVEN COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

#### **Pre-Algebra (107)**

This course is designed to transition students from arithmetic to algebra by practicing and developing their previously learned mathematical skills, while moving from concrete mathematical applications to an abstract understanding of algebraic concepts. Topics will include integers, solving equations and inequalities, decimals and equations, operations with rational numbers, ratios, proportions and percents

#### **English Foundations in Literature and Learning (207)**

This course provides an introduction to the skills used in concise and effective writing, active reading, and clear communication. The foundations of sentence structure and paragraphing will shape the writing strategies, while the ability to process questions and effectively respond will also be nurtured. Grammar and vocabulary skills will be integrated into the curriculum.

#### **World Geography and Cultures (305)**

In this course, students will explore contemporary societies, places, and cultures of the world. Students will use the knowledge, skills, and understanding of the five themes of geography (location, place, region, movement, and human-environment interaction) paired with the basic core areas of culture, economics, history, governance and civics, to study the human and nonhuman features of Earth. Students will acquire, organize, and analyze geographic information utilizing maps, statistics, graphs, and illustrations. Along the way, they will explore what makes regions and people unique and what humanity shares in common.

### **World Language (406)**

Students will discover the pleasure of learning French and Spanish with our team of native teachers. This class is an exploratory course designed to provide an introduction to culture and basic language skills. Students will learn basic vocabulary and related grammatical structures needed to communicate at an introductory level. Emphasis will be placed on oral and written activities.

### **Integrated Science: Earth, Space, and Life Sciences (507)**

Students in grade 7 will study systems and cycles. This course will enable students to build on their knowledge of structures and functions, connections and relationships in systems, life science, health, human body systems, and the flow of matter and energy. Topics will include plate tectonics, weather systems, seasonal changes, tides, phases of the moon, interactions of humans and earth processes, ecosystem dynamics, and an introduction to space science and technology systems used by society. Students will be encouraged to apply concepts and skills across the disciplines since most systems and cycles are complex and interactive. Students will wrap up the year with their participation in a traditional science fair focusing on clear research and procedure designs as well as fact-based data collection and analysis. This course will create a foundation for exploring cause and effect relationships in more depth in grade 8.

### **Grade 7**

#### **Discovering Our Faith As Disciples of Jesus (607)**

This course centers on the person of Jesus: His life, ministry, and invitation to discipleship. Some major questions will be: “Who is God?” with a focus on the Creed; “How does God reveal Himself to us?” with a focus on our personal relationship with God, and the Trinity; and “Who is Jesus?” with a focus on the Jesus of the Gospels. Basics of Catholicism will be discussed such as: the Sacraments, 10 Commandments, traditional prayers, the lives of the saints, major celebrations of the Church Liturgical Year, as well as an introduction to St. Julie and the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur.

### **7th Grade Physical Education and Health (902)**

The 7th grade Physical Education and Health course develops physically educated individuals who have the knowledge, skills, and confidence to enjoy a lifetime of healthful physical activity. Through the introduction of the health and skill related components of fitness, students will apply this knowledge to an array of safe physical activities and team sports. Students will demonstrate responsible personal and social behavior in a physical activity setting, while understanding that physical activity provides opportunities for enjoyment, challenge, self-expression, and social interaction. Students will also learn and practice the necessary skills which enable them to make safe and healthy choices in a variety of situations. Priority topics will include self awareness and managing emotions; physical activity and healthy eating; and the benefits of a tobacco, drug, and alcohol-free lifestyle.

### **Creative Arts (907)**

Designed to introduce students to the visual and performing arts and to encourage students to experience these arts as participators, this course is team-taught by members of the various arts departments. Students are introduced to the masters of dance, painting, music, and drama while they themselves learn some basics in acting, dance and music performance, and explore pottery, printmaking, painting, drawing, and sculpture.

### **Grade 7 Seminar (982)**

Seminar is a partial credit course that assists students in achieving desired academic and social-emotional competencies and gaining the knowledge and skills for success in the academic, career, personal/social, and global perspective domains. In *7th Grade Seminar*, students work to learn essential skills and strategies for navigating the transition to middle school and explore topics such as: goal setting, growth mindset, study skills (organization, planning, active listening, and note-taking), learning style, communication skills, conflict-resolution, healthy friendships, digital safety, self-care and wellness, identifying and managing feelings, personality exploration, and career awareness.

### **Technology/Project Based Learning (979)**

This course is designed to introduce students to a variety of software applications for personal use and high school preparation. It will include basic applications of all essential functions of word processing, spreadsheets, and presentation software. Other topics include an introduction to computer programming, digital literacy, and digital safety. Students will focus on the mastery use of Google programs and applications built within G-Suite. These applications are integrated into the classroom and additional applications will be provided as needed. The course will be project-based.

## **GRADE EIGHT COURSE DESCRIPTIONS**

### **Math**

#### **Pre-Algebra 8 (110)**

This course is designed to transition students from topics in Pre-Algebra to Algebra 1 by practicing and developing their previously learned mathematical skills, while moving from concrete mathematical applications to an abstract understanding of algebraic concepts. Topics will include: linear functions, graphing, powers, nonlinear functions, real numbers, right triangles, and geometry concepts.

or

#### **Algebra 1/ 8 H (109)**

The Algebra 1 course covers the following topics: Simplify and/or evaluate algebraic expressions, solve one-variable equations and inequalities, graph 2 variable linear equations, solve systems of equations by substitution and elimination, properties of exponents, factor quadratic polynomials, word problems. Special emphasis is on the use of technology. A TI-84 graphing calculator is required

### **English Foundations in Literature and Language (208)**

This course will reinforce the literary topics and foundations begun in grade 7. A continued focus on grammar, vocabulary, and writing strategies will be emphasized with writing assignments taking on more variety and depth. The students' ability to respond to concepts and develop ideas will be cultivated through writing tasks as well as verbal communication. There will be an expansion on the skill sets needed for grade nine's genre study

**Foundations of U.S. History and Civics (308)**

This course introduces students to U.S. history from the arrival of Europeans to Reconstruction. During the course, students will examine the roots of American democracy, the foundations of the U.S. government, and the role of individual citizenship. In addition to political history, topics include society and culture, and economic changes. Students will learn to use maps and graphs, analyze data, interpret primary sources, and develop critical thinking skills. Attention is given to reading comprehension, taking notes in class, study skills, and using a variety of resources. Students will demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of civics through an individual civic action project.

**French 1 Honors (412)**

French 1 is an introductory course for students who have had little or no French or whose language skills need strengthening before they advance to French 2. In this class, basic grammatical structures, vocabulary, verb forms, and idiomatic expressions are introduced. Students develop basic communication skills in spoken and written French through the use of interactive, communicative activities and through authentic materials appropriate for this level. Students are introduced to the varied cultures of French-speaking countries through readings and class discussions.

**Spanish 1 Honors (414)**

Spanish 1 is an introductory course for students who have had little or no Spanish or whose language skills need strengthening before they advance to Spanish 2. In this class, basic grammatical structures, vocabulary, verb forms, and idiomatic expressions are introduced. Students develop basic communication skills in spoken and written Spanish through the use of interactive, communicative activities and through authentic materials appropriate for this level. Students are introduced to the varied cultures of Spanish-speaking countries through readings and class discussions.

**Integrated Science: Physical Science (508)**

This course will allow students to use more abstract thinking skills to explain the causes of complex phenomena and systems. Using the foundation built in grade 7, students in grade 8 will gain an understanding of the cause and effect of key natural phenomena and designed processes. This will enable students to explain patterns and make predictions about future events. The first semester the focus will include the interaction of atoms and molecules to explain matter and to include Periodic Table, Bohr Model, metallic properties, elements of living systems, states of matter, identification of physical & chemical changes. The second semester of the year will be devoted to an introduction to physics to include displacement, velocity, acceleration (including gravity), Newton's First Laws, and forces. Students will wrap up the year with their participation in an invention and engineering fair that will wrap in an introduction to the basics of the engineering design process including design drawings or process flow diagrams. Developing the ability to analyze phenomena for evidence of causes and processes that often cannot be seen, and developing the skills to conceptualize and describe those, will be significant goals and outcomes.

## **Grade 8**

### **Discovering Our Faith As Members of the Church (617)**

This course centers on the Living Church. Some major questions will be “How do we nourish our faith?” with a focus on making good choices and honoring the sacredness of God’s creation; “Who are our ancestors in faith and how does our Church heritage give us hope in a changing and diverse world?” with a focus on the beginnings of the Church and how we keep hope and faith in a world that continues to change; and “How does Catholicism reflect universality?” with a focus on living our mission as members of the Body of Christ. Basics of Catholicism will be discussed, such as: the 10 Commandments, the sacraments, the Works of Mercy, traditional prayers, lives of the saints, major celebrations of the Church Liturgical Year, as well as the life of St. Julie and the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur.

### **8th Grade Physical Education and Wellness (903)**

The 8th grade Physical Education and Wellness Course reinforces the importance of maintaining a physically active lifestyle to achieve and maintain a health enhancing level of fitness. This course fosters responsible behavior in a physical activity setting while teaching the fundamentals of various individual and team related activities as well as incorporating health and fitness activities. Throughout this course, students will develop a greater ability to make informed healthy choices that positively affect the health, safety, and well-being of themselves and others. Students will study health concepts and determine personal values that support healthy behaviors. Priority topic areas include: promoting personal health and wellness, interpersonal relationships and conflict resolution, stress management and self-esteem.

### **Creative Arts (908)**

Designed to introduce students to the visual and performing arts and to encourage students to experience these arts as participators, this course is team-taught by members of the various arts departments. Students are introduced to the masters of dance, painting, music, and drama while they themselves learn some basics in acting, dance and music performance, and explore pottery, printmaking, painting, drawing, and sculpture.

### **Grade 8 Seminar (983)**

Seminar is a partial credit course that assists students in achieving desired academic and social-emotional competencies and gaining the knowledge and skills for success in the academic, career, personal/social, and global perspective domains. In *8th Grade Seminar*, students work to strive to build healthy relationships, gain a sense of autonomy, and begin planning for the future. This course focuses on topics such as motivation and "grit", academic skills (time management, test-taking skills, and study strategies), communication skills, peer pressure and decision making, digital citizenship, coping with stress, healthy relationships, personality development, career and college exploration, diversity and identity, and preparing for high school.

### **Technology/Project Based Learning (980)**

This course is a continuation of Technology PBL (979) and is designed to further introduce students to a variety of software applications for personal use and high school preparation. It will include a more in-depth look at the basics of computer science and programming. Students will work with a variety of applications across multiple platforms to enhance their level of understanding. Students will be introduced to the Engineering and Design Process as it relates

to STEM and problem-solving. All programs and applications will be provided to the students and integrated into the classroom. Other topics include but are not limited to Robotics, 3-D printing, and design. The course will be project-based and will include a summative project in the form of a digital portfolio.