

MARET | UPPER SCHOOL CURRICULUM VISUAL ART

Requirements: *½ credit in 9th grade plus 1 additional credit in an advanced art or performing arts course in grades 10-12.*

Chair: *Cynthia Hutnyan*

The upper school art program broadens students' understanding of visual art and their ability to think creatively. It promotes concentrated study in specific art disciplines. Students are encouraged to express themselves in their preferred medium and to take on challenges that extend the breadth and depth of their artistic talent. Instructors respect the students' unique visions while directing, evaluating, and encouraging their work. The Washington metropolitan area's rich cultural resources supplement studio work at all levels. Museum and gallery visits help students understand the historical, technical, and aesthetic aspects of artistic expression.

Ninth graders are required to take a half-credit art core course. Choices include Drawing and Painting, Woodworking, Clay, Mixed Media, Sculpture, and Photography. The objective is to examine concepts and techniques in each area. With this foundation, students are adequately prepared and informed to select wisely a specialized advanced course. Students in the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grades may select advanced courses that offer in-depth study in Drawing and Painting, Sculpture, Woodworking, Photography, Clay, Sculpture, Computer Graphics, and Mixed Media. At this level, students will be able to explore the structural, formal, and creative challenges of a discipline while pursuing their expressive potential.

INTRODUCTORY LEVEL COURSES

(½ credit)

Clay Core

Clay Core is a survey course that examines various uses of clay as an art medium. Through a series of projects, students are introduced to the fundamentals of working with clay while exploring both functional and sculptural approaches. Projects encompass a variety of techniques including coil, slab, press molds, modeling, and the potter's wheel. The emphasis is on developing a strong sense of design and craftsmanship and a personal direction in clay.

Drawing and Painting Core

This introduction to the basic techniques of drawing and painting includes various media used by artists, such as acrylic, oils, pastels, and watercolor. Through a series of assignments, students are given the opportunity to work from life, still life, landscape, and abstraction. The fundamentals of drawing from direct observation are an important part of this course.

Mixed Media Core

Students examine a broad range of techniques and materials, which include both two- and three-dimensional approaches. They are introduced to simple construction methods, utilizing materials such as wood, foam, wire, celluclay, plaster, and found objects while exploring various two-dimensional methods including painting, drawing, printing, transfer, and collage. Projects address technical and conceptual concerns through exploration, experimentation, and discovery. The emphasis is on the development and expression of a personal artistic vision.

Photography Core

This course introduces students to photography as an art and a craft. The instructor emphasizes the mastery of camera controls and basic darkroom techniques.

Students study lighting and composition and investigate the areas of portraiture, landscape, and still life. A series of assignments helps students express their ideas with imagination and clarity. A 35mm camera with manual controls is required for this course.

Sculpture Core

In this course, students have the opportunity to express themselves and their ideas through sculpture. The course provides students with an overview of the materials and techniques commonly associated with sculpture. Through a series of projects, students explore various materials, which may include plaster, clay, wood, and stone, while learning such techniques as carving, modeling, casting, and fabrication.

Woodworking Core

(Not offered 2015–2016)

Woodworking core is a comprehensive survey of the various uses of wood as an art form. Through their projects, students explore the properties and possibilities of wood. They learn the proper use of tools, how to design for wood, and the fundamentals of selecting, joining, shaping, and finishing.

ADVANCED COURSES

(1 credit)

Advanced Clay

(Not offered 2015–2016)

This course offers an in-depth study of the technical and conceptual aspects of working with clay. Through a series of projects, fundamental skills are developed while exploring both functional and sculptural approaches to form. In these projects, students are introduced to a range of clays, glazes, and finishing techniques, using plaster molds, coil, slab, modeling, extruded, and potters' wheel methods of clay construction. Students are encouraged to develop a personal direction in clay. Emphasis is on developing a strong sense of design and craftsmanship and an understanding and appreciation of the expressive potential of clay as an art medium.

Advanced Computer Graphics

This art course examines different methods of creating artwork using the computer. Basic principles of art and design such as composition and use of text are emphasized, as well as fundamental concepts relating to color, optics, and resolution for printing. While working on a series of assignments, students use a variety of software including Photoshop, Illustrator, Flash, and InDesign. Original images for projects are derived from drawn graphics, scanned objects, and digital photos. Students produce both print and online portfolios of their year's work.

Advanced Drawing and Painting

This course offers the study of materials and concepts of painting to further the awareness of space, image, and color. While drawing remains the basic organizer of thought, feelings, and composition, a range of materials are explored as well as representational and non-representational subject matters. Landscape, still life, the figure, and color are sources of visual material for creative personal research. Class critiques enable students to develop the analytical ability to evaluate their work. Several visits to galleries are planned throughout the year.

Advanced Mixed Media

Students are exposed to the expressive possibilities of a variety of media and approaches that include resists, textural techniques, printmaking, encaustic, and three dimensional assemblage. Several classes are also devoted to observational drawings from the figure, still life objects, and the real world using a multi-media approach. At all times, students are encouraged to explore and experiment with combinations of materials using these drawings and other given projects as a springboard for their creative ideas. In addition, students maintain a sketchbook that serves as a source of their innovations. Class critiques will be ongoing throughout the year and combined with individual instruction and critiques.

Advanced Photography

Advanced Photography gives students the opportunity to explore the making of black and white images. Both the art and craft of the photographic process are taught. Achieving a mastery of basic camera and darkroom techniques allows students to express their ideas with greater visual clarity, impact, and imagination. Students take responsibility for fulfilling specific assignments and for developing and presenting their own projects. Areas to be covered include natural light portraits, landscape, and photo essays. Composition and design are discussed. Through the use of books and visits to galleries and museums, students are exposed to the work of past and present master photographers. Students are encouraged to work toward the development of a personal style and vision. A 35mm camera with manual controls is required for this course.

Advanced Sculpture

Students explore translating ideas into a three-dimensional format, using traditional sculpture techniques such as carving, fabrication, mold-making, and casting. The materials in this course may include stone, wood, plaster, clay, and cement. Students also explore the work of various artists. They are then encouraged to combine this experience with their personal interests to form an idea or area of investigation that has personal relevance. In addition, this course emphasizes developing a strong sense of design and craftsmanship.

Advanced Woodworking

(Not offered 2015–2016)

Advanced Woodworking provides the opportunity for students to study and develop woodworking skills based on traditional and modern woodworking techniques. Projects are designed to challenge and develop each student's creativity and technical ability. Students learn plan development, the proper use of tools, wood-finishing techniques, and decision-making in the selection and use of wood. Open to all skill levels.

Advanced Art Seminar

The Advanced Art Seminar class is designed for the art student who has completed at least two classes in their given art discipline and who is ready to explore a more rigorous and demanding curriculum. Through an increased focus on ideas and the group dynamic of the seminar format, students generate a conceptually coherent body of studio work exemplifying personal inquiry and self-reflection. They will also be expected to develop a fluent, art-based vocabulary and to participate regularly during group critiques and discussions.

Advanced Art Courses—Levels I, II, III

After completing one year of an advanced-level art course, students have the opportunity for additional years of study. Within the framework of the advanced class, students can build on their experience in subsequent years through progressively more individualized attention and increasingly rigorous expectations. Students pursuing a third year in their chosen medium are expected to produce a coherent body of artwork demonstrating personal expression, quality of ideas, conceptual ability, and technical mastery.