



St. Mary's Academy

Junior High Curriculum Handbook

Junior High Academic Program

St. Mary's Academy offers an intellectually challenging program of studies for average and above average students. The program is designed to prepare them for post-secondary education and to foster life-long learning. Courses are based on the curriculum approved by Manitoba Education and Training with emphasis on university entrance courses. In addition to the provincial curriculum, all SMA students are required to complete the SMA religious studies program.

Students in all grade levels must complete one grade before advancing to the next at St. Mary's Academy.

Homework is an important component of learning. To be effective, homework should be done daily and review of material should be undertaken regularly. Students in Grades 7 and 8 are expected to do a minimum of 1 – 1 ½ hours of homework and review daily. **Students who have missed school are responsible for homework and assignments.**

GRADE 7 COURSES

English Language Arts
Mathematics
Science
Social Studies
French OR Advanced French
Dramatic Arts
Religious Studies
Physical Education/Health
Home Economic
*LICT
Roots of Empathy
* see page 6

GRADE 8 COURSES

English Language Arts
Mathematics
Science
Social Studies
French OR Advanced French
Visual Arts
Religious Studies
Physical Education/Health
Home Economics
*LICT
* see page 6

ASSESSMENT

There are 2 major assessment periods during the school year.

A mid-year assessment is completed in each core subject area, worth 10% of the final grade. June exams are written by all students and are worth 15% of the final grade.

All students are expected to write their mid-year assessments and June exams on the dates scheduled.

Junior High Curriculum

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS 7/8

There are two main components to the Grade 7 and 8 English Language Arts courses. The first component is the focus on writing. Students are given the opportunity to express themselves in many different written forms, including both expository and creative writing pieces. The editing of their own texts is assisted by a formal study of grammar including the parts of speech and the construction of both simple and compound sentences.

In addition to writing, the students are exposed to many types of literature which are explored from an aesthetic point of view. Through the study of short stories, several novels and a variety of poetry, students are guided in extending their own experiences and understanding of the world around them.

Students are also provided with learning strategies that facilitate independent learning, the inquiry process, and tools and skills that assist them in effectively managing, organizing and evaluating information in both independent and cooperative learning contexts. Finally, the use of technology enhances the learning process and provides the opportunity to create and communicate ideas and information.

MATHEMATICS

Through the core areas and topics covered in this course, students learn to value mathematics, reason and communicate mathematically and become confident in their problem solving abilities.

Mathematics 7

Core Areas: Patterns and Relations, Statistics and Probability, Shape and Space, and Number.

Topics: Problem Solving, Algebra, Data Management, Geometry, Measurement, Number Concepts, Number Operations and Fraction Addition and Subtraction.

Mathematics 8

Core Areas: Patterns and Relations, Statistics and Probability, Shape and Space, and Number.

Topics: Problem Solving, Fractions, Ratios, Proportions, Algebra, Data Management, Geometry, Measurement, Number Concepts, and Number Operations. Estimation and calculator skills are employed throughout the year.

SCIENCE

The Science Department has organized all science courses to engage students in laboratory activities, class activities and projects that examine the fundamental processes and skills of science.

Science 7

This course develops and encourages an inquiry based approach to the world, and mastery of basic laboratory skills. The scientific method of investigation is employed throughout the program.

Topics: The Environment and Interactions within Ecosystems, The Particle Theory of Matter, The Composition of the Earth's Crust, and The Forces in Structural Strength and Stability.

Science 8

This course covers the three major science disciplines of physics, chemistry, and biology with special interest and awareness dedicated to the environment. Students practice the scientific method through hands-on experiments and assignments.

Topics: Cells and Body Systems; Fantastic Fluids; Light and Optical Instruments; and Water Systems on Earth.

SOCIAL STUDIES

Courses in the Social Studies Department focus on history and geography. In each course, current political, economic and social issues are interwoven so that students can make connections from past events to present situations and be prepared to fully participate in all aspects of citizenship.

Social Studies 7

This course focuses on the relationships and interdependence of the physical and social environments of our earth. Students are challenged to view the world as an interdependent whole in which they are to share the responsibility for improvement and stewardship. A major project is completed in June.

Topics: How lifestyles are developed through interaction with the physical environment and others; basic map skills; and the study of different countries, cultures, and economic backgrounds.

Social Studies 8

This course is designed to help students explore the ways people lived within certain societies of the past and to realize that life today is closely related to developments which have occurred through the ages. A major project is completed in June.

Topics: How people meet their survival needs; how people interact with their physical environment and other people; how people run their affairs; how people

satisfy their non-material needs; and how people explain and interpret the world around them.

FRENCH

Knowledge of and fluency in a second language contributes to an understanding of diverse cultures. In accordance with the requirements of Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth, all students must be enrolled in a French course. Students can choose to enrol in the Advanced French course at their level if they meet course requirements.

French 7

This course is a dynamic system that develops the four language skills of listening, reading, speaking, and writing. The receptive skills of listening and reading are given special attention because they are important skills for the acquisition of speaking and writing.

The program used is *Tout Ados* which includes student text, worksheets and audio/video materials. Students are introduced to new vocabulary through exciting reading and listening activities and are then challenged to expand their communicative competence through written and oral work.

Advanced French 7

This course is designed to accommodate students who have been in a French Immersion or Français program. The program is divided into two parts: language development and literature study. Grammar concepts, exercises and composition are included in language study. Readings, discussions, book reports and projects are typical literature activities.

French 8

This course is a continuation of the dynamic program begun in Grade 7. Students continue to gradually increase their communicative competence. They are further challenged with the rules of grammar and language. Students continue with the *Tout Ados* textbook, worksheets and audio/visual program.

Advanced French 8

This course is divided into two parts: literature and grammar. The literature component consists of descriptive passages, prose (including legends and stories), songs and poems. The grammar study focuses on nouns, adjectives, verbs, adverbs and prepositions.

ARTS

This department is organized into the visual and dramatic arts. The learning outcomes are intended to provide students with an understanding and appreciation of the arts. Through participation in the courses provided in this department, students develop skills whereby the arts become a lifelong source of personal enjoyment.

Dramatic Arts 7

The focus of this course is to help students become comfortable with the dramatic arts and performing for an audience. It consists of warm-up games, drama activities, improv, and studying the elements of onstage and backstage theatre. Students will learn to work as a team and in a small group to create a variety of characters, commercials and scenes throughout the year.

Visual Arts 8

This course encourages students to develop their skills through a number of projects. A variety of media and techniques will be explored, such as calligraphy, clay tiles, pencil experiments and the development of colour theory through the use of coloured pencils and chalk pastels.

RELIGIOUS STUDIES

The religious education program is a key component of both the religious culture and the academic curriculum at SMA. Courses in this department are designed to provide students with a basic knowledge and understanding of the Catholic/Christian faith and the opportunity to live out their faith through community service and participation in a wide variety of faith based experiences. The gathering of knowledge, development of skills and participation in a variety of experiences enable all students to be women of faith, prepared to live the faith and act with justice.

Religion 7

Requirement: Minimum 10 hours of Service Experience

The study of the first part of the “Credo” is the major focus of this course. Students are introduced to the basic structure of the Bible and focus on the preparation for the Messiah in the Old Testament. In the second term, students focus on the life of Jesus.

Religion 8

Requirement: Minimum 10 hours of Service Experience

The study of the last part of the Creed, “I believe in the Holy Spirit ...” is the major focus of this course. It helps students to understand and encourages them to live the Apostles’ Creed both personally and within the context of the Christian Community, and to be caught up in the love of the trinity: God, Father Son and Holy Spirit.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION/HEALTH EDUCATION 7/8

Courses in the Physical Education department are designed to help students participate in and develop a purposeful, physically active lifestyle, which will enable them to experience a more enjoyable quality of life, today and tomorrow.

Through a combination of gymnasium and classroom instruction, this course endeavours to accomplish the following general learning outcomes:

Movement – The development of skills and movement through a variety of learning experiences and learning environments.

Fitness Management – The development and follow through of a personal fitness plan.

Safety – The development of safe and responsible decision making in order to manage risks and prevent injuries in daily living.

Personal and Social Management – The development of self-understanding and strategies necessary to build positive relationships with others.

Healthy Lifestyle Practices – The development of informed decision making in personal health, active living, nutritional practices, substance use and abuse and Human sexuality.

HOME ECONOMICS

The study of Home Economics is designed to help students acquire skills for improving the quality of life for the individual, the family, the community and society as a whole. With this focus, students have an opportunity to work both in groups and independently to develop the skills and confidence to function in our ever changing and complex world. This course is divided into two distinct areas: Clothing and Textiles and Foods and Nutrition. Students spend half of a year in each discipline, which has both theoretical and practical components.

Home Economics 7

Clothing and Textiles Topics: The care and safe use of equipment in the Clothing Lab; Planning and preparation of a textile project using both machine and hand sewing techniques; The properties of natural fibres; and Identification methods of fabric construction.

Foods and Nutrition Topics: Safe preparation of Foods; How to use Canada's Food Guide to meet nutrient requirements; The structure and nutrient composition of the egg; The role of dairy products in bone development and the differences between types of milk; The role of grains in the diet; How a microwave works.

Home Economics 8

Clothing and Textiles Topics: The selection and use of a commercial sewing pattern; Wardrobe planning; The study of synthetic fibres, fabric blends and fabric finishes; and Clothing and textile care.

Foods and Nutrition Topics: The function of ingredients in baked products, specifically the differences in leavening agents; The energy nutrients and the factors affecting energy balance; The role of vitamins and minerals in the body; and Preventing food borne illnesses.

Literacy with ICT (LwICT)

SMA is committed to preparing students with the necessary technology skills to enter the 21st century workforce that will require individuals to be critical and creative thinkers, to be able to manage information data and communicate clearly their ideas to others, as well as being able to make responsible and ethical decisions regarding technology.

Literacy with Information, Communication and Technology (LwICT) is designed to infuse computer skills across all curriculum areas. At SMA each year subject teachers meet and design a project and or assignment for students that will integrate specific learning outcomes and computer technical skills. Students will complete the project or assignment using technology to research their topic and at the same time being introduced to new computer skills or programs that will assist the student in successful completion of their project or assignment. LwICT will be reported on the June report card.

Roots of Empathy (Grade 8)

The Roots of Empathy (ROE) program is an evidence-based classroom program that has shown dramatic effect in raising children's social and emotional competence, reducing levels of aggression and increasing prosocial behaviour. In several studies the evidence has shown that ROE classroom instruction makes a significant difference in facilitating social and emotional development in children as well as studies have shown that there is a positive link between increased social and emotional understanding and higher literacy scores, along with evidence to show that students are better able to express their emotions (think before they speak).

Students in Grade 8 are taught by a trained ROE instructor with the assistance and participation of a family with a baby 2 – 4 months old and the homeroom teacher. The program is taught over the course of the school year which consists of 9 themes. There is no exam for this course but there are class assignments and projects.