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Course Descriptions Academic Year 2023-2024

Pacem’s primary courses are intended for students ages 10 – 18. Classes for older students cover material at a more sophisticated level and require more homework to be completed outside of class. Classes are intended for students of the age range indicated. Students outside the given age range may take a class with instructor permission. Please contact us if you have questions about which classes are most appropriate for your child. Please refer to the weekly class schedule for class times.

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Language Arts, Literature, and Writing

Teachers will be in touch throughout the year about acquiring books for literature class. Because we want to give families as many purchase options as possible to keep costs down (used books, libraries, e-books, etc.) we have chosen not to charge a book fee and buy books as a school. We can help if the cost of books poses an economic hardship.

Discoveries: Literature and Us

(level 1/ages 10-13) (1 credit)

Kiana LaDeau

Students in this class will explore a variety of literary genres including fiction, nonfiction, and poetry. Students will read some stories together and will discuss literature components like character traits, character motivations, and story messages. They'll also make independent reading selections and create responses to these. While each response to reading could have artistic and creative components, students also will practice academic writing skills like note-taking, summarizing, and evaluating, and they'll begin to build analytical writing skills. Students will design, write, revise, and polish all substantial projects. They'll select 2 polished pieces to include in their Pacem Writing Portfolio. In addition to academic writing students will have ample opportunity to explore creative fiction and non-fiction. This may include stories, poetry, or even a newspaper. Throughout the class students will use their reading and writing to think more deeply about their place in the world.

Each year, content and projects differ, depending on students' needs, so students may take this class multiple years. Please be advised that this class may have reading homework.

Journeys

(level 2/ages 12-14) (1 credit)

Laura McCaffrey

Literature: Who are you? Where are you going? In this class, students will explore the idea of "coming of age" and the physical and psychological journeys that both characters and real adolescents take as they grow up. Students will collaboratively select literature to read and discuss.

Discussion and Writing: Students will work on close reading analysis, as well as presentation and discussion skills. They also will have the opportunity to explore who they are, what interests them, and their own unique journeys over the course of the year. Students will keep a Journey Journal comprised of short informal pieces, as well as write an academic literature response essay, a short story or poem, an expository essay, and a reflective essay on the student's journey this year. We may try to create some kind of class literary journal. As a part of learning to become more effective writers, students will receive feedback on substantial writing pieces. Students enrolled full-time at Pacem will select 2 pieces to include in their Pacem Writing Portfolio.

Each year, content and projects differ, depending on students' needs, so students may take this class multiple years. Please be advised that this class will have reading and writing homework.

Introduction to US and Indigenous American Literature: Who Are We?

(level 3/ ages 14-16) (1 credit)

Laura McCaffrey

Literature: In this class, we'll explore who we are, and how we make sense of our "Americanness" in our literature, including the identity of indigenous writers and their relationships to the United States. For a number of genres, we'll look at literature from a variety of eras, and we'll also explore how contemporary literature comments on or reflects enduring themes. Students will make some literature selections, particularly of contemporary literature.

Discussion and Writing: Discussions will focus on the forms and structures of texts, as well as figurative and symbolic aspects. Students will also draw connections between chosen texts and other literature, their own lives, and world events. Students will regularly write shorter reflective and analytical responses to readings. They'll also craft at least one speech, one short story, one poem, and one literary analysis essay. By the end of the year, students will develop a project that presents their answer to the question "Who Are We?" This project will include a creative writing component. With guidance, they will use the drafting process to develop and complete all major projects. Students enrolled full-time at Pacem will select 2 pieces to include in their Pacem Portfolio.

Please be advised that this class will have reading and writing homework.

Peace and Conflict Literature

(level 4/ ages 15-18) (1 credit)

Laura McCaffrey

Overarching focus: This class will explore Peace and Conflict in literature, and an essential part of this focus will be the relationship between the individual and society, as well as the relationship between insiders (or 'we') and outsiders (or 'the Other'/'they').

Literature: Students will start with ancient conceptions of conflict and peace by reading excerpts of ancient texts like the *Odyssey* and *The Republic of Plato*. They'll explore heroic ideals of warfare with texts such as *Beowulf*. They'll then study psychological conflict with a Shakespearean play like *Hamlet*. They'll compare and contrast these with alternative visions of peace and conflict from a variety of contemporary texts. They'll study late 19th and early 20th century utopian and dystopian images of peace and conflict with texts such as Octavia Butler's *Parable of the Sower* and George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. They'll finish the year with independent explorations of peace and conflict literature in the 20th or 21st century. Each student will choose an era, region, genre, or author to study independently. As an alternative, we may focus on Solarpunk or genres that present positive solutions to our culture's current conflicts.

Discussion and Writing: The focus of discussions will be sophisticated aspects of texts such as authors' choices; central themes; multiple meanings, symbols, and sub-texts; overall structures and aesthetic impacts. Students will develop and write 3 to 4 shorter (2-5 page) fiction and/or nonfiction pieces. They may also write poems. Each student's selection of writing pieces will relate to long-term educational goals. During the second semester, students will write a 5-8 page essay that explores peace and conflict in the 20th or 21st century and focuses on an era,

region, genre, or author. They may instead focus on literature that presents positive futures and design a project that reflects on this literature. In addition, they'll write a 2-3 page personal reflection about their topic. Students will end the year by designing and teaching a 45-minute class on their topic. Students enrolled in the full-time program will select at least 2 pieces for their Pacem Portfolio.

Please be advised that this class will have reading and writing homework.

Study Skills

(level 1-2/ages 10-14) (.25 credit)

Pacem Staff

At Pacem, we ask all our students to take a leading role in shaping their academic experience. This course is intended to help middle school students organize their studies and learn to navigate and succeed in the shifting academic and social climate of middle school. The class will address four specific competencies: inter and intra-personal skills, academic organization skills, writing skills, and basic math skills. In addition, students will be able to get help with specific classes that they are taking. This class is required for all full-time level 1-2 students who are free at the time it is offered.

Math

Teachers will be in touch throughout the year about acquiring texts for math tutorials. Because we want to give families as many purchase options as possible to keep costs down we have chosen not to charge a book fee and buy books as a school. We can help if the cost of books poses an economic hardship.

Real World Math and Beyond

(level 1-2/ages 10-14) (1 credit)

Kiana LaDeau

This class addresses all topics typically taught in the middle school math curriculum in the context of real-world and hands-on activities designed to build and practice fundamental math concepts and skills in a relevant, interesting, and cohesive way. Activities are planned so that all students can learn at their current levels while working towards mastery of fundamental skills and concepts. Students explore, practice, and apply concepts and procedures through investigations, games, problem solving tasks, and group projects. Students develop and apply skills in problem solving, reasoning, and mathematical communication. Themes and projects vary from year to year so that students can continue to take this class until they are ready for beginning algebra. Themes may include the following: architecture and geometry, math of the Universe, statistics, mapmaking, games of strategy and chance, and banking and finance. In addition to group projects, students will work on basic math skills at their own pace using either a written or computer-based curriculum. This class does involve regular homework. Our expectation is that students entering this class have a solid foundation in basic computation and are familiar with multi-digit addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division. The content of this course is very flexible and will be tailored to the needs of individual students.

Math Tutorial

(level 2-4/ages 12-18) (1 credit)

Ryan Johns/Paul Wallich

Pacem believes it is essential for students to have the time to work at their own pace in order to reach their full creative and intellectual potential. This belief is emphasized in Pacem's Math Tutorial, which caters to the individualized study of mathematics. In this class, students set and work toward individual goals. In such a small classroom, our one-on-one math discussions and active use of the whiteboard to work through challenging problems often engages other students and exposes all the students to a wide variety of math levels, from fractions to calculus. In addition, students who are at similar levels will occasionally work together on longer term projects and group challenges that focus on creative problem-solving and mathematical reasoning.

The instructors will be in touch with parents (and will meet with students) at the beginning of the year to outline expectations and discuss curriculum. Depending on student interest and skill level we have several curricula that we have worked with. These include Big Ideas Math, Art of Problem Solving, Singapore Math, and others. Students will be expected to complete homework in addition to working during class time. In addition to having a textbook, students may use online math practice sites such as IXL or Khan Academy. Please note that in order to make good progress in their math skills, students are expected to complete regular homework.

In general, we recommend Math Tutorial for students who are ready for pre-algebra and beyond. There are two sections of this class. The choice of which section to enroll in is determined by the schedule of the other classes a student is taking. In the 2nd Block section, Ryan Johns will generally be teaching students in pre-algebra and beginning algebra. Paul Wallich will generally be teaching students in Algebra 1 and beyond. The division of the sections will be at the discretion of the teachers and finalized at the beginning of the year.

Culture, History, and Peace Studies (CHPS)

CHPS classes weave social science content and a variety of academic skills together while examining key questions about how human beings live together, locally and globally, today and in history.

The Ancients

(level 1-2/ages 10-14) (1 credit)

Rebecca Yahm

Take a journey thousands of years into the past to explore the mysteries of ancient history. We will begin by learning about early humans and how historians and archaeologists learn about the ancient past. We'll then look at the impact of major developments such as agriculture and written language. We will take an in-depth look at several ancient cultures from around the world, which will be chosen in part based on student interest. Through a range of

different experiences, we'll explore aspects of these cultures including daily life, mythology, customs, religion and spirituality, science and mathematics, and the arts, and attempt to bring these cultures to life. In the process we'll ask some larger questions about cultural universals, the beliefs of ancient people, and major historical changes. This class will include hands-on activities as well as literature, discussion, oral presentations, and writing.

Big History

(level 2-3/ages 12-15) (1 credit)

Rebecca Yahm

Journey through the entire span of human history. Beginning with the earliest humans, we will explore different scales of time and space to tell the story of how humans have behaved, thought, and interacted across the ages. We'll look at major turning points in history when big changes led to increasing complexity and examine the web of interconnected events that led to where we are today. What makes humans unique? What do we know about our past? What don't we know? What issues and problems have recurred over time? What big themes can help us wrap our brains around the big sweep of time? And how can all of this help shape our ideas of what the future may hold? We will learn about the work of historians as we investigate historical mysteries and look for specific evidence to back up historical claims. Throughout, we'll make connections and comparisons as we discuss big questions and look for patterns to help us understand how human societies have changed over time. Reading, discussion, writing, and oral presentations will all be included. This class is intended for students at the late middle school and early high school level.

World History and Perspectives 1

(level 3-4/ages 14-18) (1 credit)

Rebecca Yahm

This class is part of a two-year course on world history, culture, religion, politics, perspectives, and ideas. This year, we will explore ancient cultures and societies worldwide. Students will research, analyze, discuss, and reflect on global historical themes and questions from early humans to the Middle Ages. Topics will include the agricultural revolution, the development of cities, written language, changing economic and political organization, and aspects of ancient cultures such as social organization, religion, and the arts. We will practice skills for weighing evidence about historical claims, making comparisons, and interpreting primary and secondary sources. Discussions will include cultural universals, issues and problems that have recurred over time, the consequences of big changes that led to increasing complexity, the growth and collapse of civilizations, and other connections and patterns. Reading, discussion, writing, and oral presentations will all be included.

Science

Science courses at Pacem are lab and activity based courses focusing on inquiry, investigation, and research. All of our science courses cover, in an age-appropriate manner, the scientific method, observation, data analysis, scientific writing, and research. Environmental sustainability is a thread woven in throughout the curriculum, as is knowledge and understanding of the local environment.

Life on Earth and Me

(level 1/ages 10-13) (1 credit)

Ryan Johns

What did the earth look like in its earliest moments? How has it changed since? Did bird feathers really come from fish scales? In this class students will take a journey through earth's history closely examining climate, continental drift, and the evolution of plants and animals. At different times, students will be archeologists, meteorologists, botanists, and zoologists. The fall semester of this class will be an in-depth look at the connection between geology and evolution as students explain how and why things have changed over time. Students may create maps of continental drift, observe plants and animals from different periods of time, create a tree of life, and examine some of the different theories about how life came to be.

In the spring, students will continue their explorations of life on earth with a look into our own bodies and how they work. We will answer questions like "How do my heart and lungs work?" "What are typical changes in my body during adolescence?" and "How does my cellular structure differ from a plant or single celled creature?" At times we will thoughtfully discuss the social and personal changes happening in the lives and minds during the adolescent years and what that means for each of us individually. Along the way, we'll practice the skills of observation, data analysis, drawing inferences from evidence, non-fiction reading and writing, and discussion.

Earth Wind Fire and Water

(level 2/ages 12-14) (1 credit)

Ryan Johns

Students will explore how life on earth continues to change throughout geologic time due to the interplay between its dynamic five systems: geosphere, pedosphere, atmosphere, biosphere, and hydrosphere. Through this framework students will investigate patterns in *earth's* processes involving geology and soil, *air's* role in weather, erosion, and nutrient recycling, *fire's* combustive wonder and yet adherence to basic laws of physics, and *water's* unifying cycle affecting all life. A significant focus of this class will also be on natural Vermont history, geology, weather patterns, etc.

Using the scientific inquiry process and following the elements through the seasons (*earth* in fall, *air* into winter, *fire* in winter, *water* in spring) students will practice crafting a solid testable question, a viable hypothesis, honing deep observation skills, gathering qualitative and quantitative data, analyzing their findings, and creating conclusions based on their process

which often leads to more questions. We will use group and individual projects, science circles, formal and informal experiments, field trips, group games, student presentations, and other various resources to aid us in the process of deepening our understanding of these concepts. We will explore the land and woods around Pacem as our own personal laboratory.

Biology: The Living World

(level 3/ages 14-16) (1 credit)

Lexi Shear

Our planet is a living world filled with life-forms of almost unimaginable diversity. What is life made of? How does it work? How did it get here? We will answer these universal questions as we study biology across scales. We will start our journey with an investigation of the microscopic elements that make up cells and a study of modern biotechnology techniques. Next, we will consider how cells work together to create complex organisms. In that context, we will turn our attention to the anatomy and physiology of the variety of organisms on this planet, with a special focus on the human body.

Throughout the course, we will consider how biology informs the interaction between humans and their environment. This will be a laboratory, activity, and field-based course in biology intended for all high school students. Throughout the class, students will be asked to use the scientific method to answer biological questions. Other learning activities will include reading, discussions, lectures, field study, and research. Biology is a vast subject, and we will determine, as a class, which topics we should focus on, depending on student interest. Students should expect to complete regular reading and writing homework assignments.

Environmental Science

(level 4/ages 15-18) (1 credit)

Lexi Shear

On any given day we can hear a host of news clips about environmental concerns, but what really are the facts behind these stories, and how can we realistically mitigate them? In this challenging, upper high school level, multi-disciplinary science course, we will use physical and biological science to help us identify and analyze the pressing environmental issues that humanity faces today. Using readings, discussions, scientific data, lab experiments, field trips, and experiences in our community we will seek to understand the root causes and possible solutions for a variety of environmental problems.

We will start the year with an in-depth study of the science of climate change. After that, topics will be chosen according to student interest and may include human population growth; land, water, and air pollution; marine environmental issues; habitat destruction and conservation; environmental health; alternative power generation; and other topics of particular interest to students. Throughout the course, we will pay particular attention to how these issues impact of us individually as residents of Vermont. If there is interest, we may do an in-depth conservation analysis of a local property in the spring. Students should expect to complete regular reading and writing homework assignments.

Robotics

(level 1-3/ages 10-16) (1 credit)

Paul Wallich

The focus of this course will be on robotic arms and actuators of various kinds. Students will learn the basics of how to work with those arms by direct remote control of joints and grippers and by programming. They'll also learn about some of the engineering issues involved in making arms work reliably and accurately. Some knowledge of programming may be useful, but it is by no means essential.

Students will also work together to build and modify robotic installations to carry out simple tasks such as picking objects up and moving them from one place to another. As the class continues, students will be able to refine their robots to act in more sophisticated ways.

Computer Science Tutorial: Programming

(level 2-4/ages 12-18) (.5-1 credit)

Paul Wallich

The goal of this course is to aid students in learning to write useful chunks of code, in particular programming for the web. Web programming requires thinking both about what a program does and what it looks like, and sometimes involves coordinating programs written in multiple programming languages.

Depending on individual students' interests, they will be able to learn Python (with an eye to using libraries that let them easily build Python-based web applications), javascript (for interactions within a web page), and HTML and CSS (for the presentation and styling of their pages). This course will be offered based on student interest at a time that is mutually agreed upon between the students and the teacher.

Interdisciplinary Student-Directed Projects

Student-directed project work is at the heart of Pacem's curriculum. It reflects our strong belief in emergent learning—giving students time to focus on a topic of study that develops out of their own interests and passions, while providing teacher guidance and an intellectually inspiring atmosphere. The project process stretches students' ability to use inquiry and research, organize and present information, write, make interdisciplinary connections, channel their creativity, and see an idea through from concept to completion. It encourages students to be invested in their own learning and guides them towards ownership and responsibility for the process. It provides a meaningful context for learning and practicing research skills, writing, and other forms of communication and allows each student to build on existing strengths to learn new skills and information. Students learn about the subject they have chosen to explore, about the process of research and project work, and often about the media they choose to use to present their project.

Student-Directed Project: From Inspiration to Presentation

(level 1-2/ages 10-14) (1 credit)

Rebecca Yahm

Imagine the learning potential of studying a topic of great personal interest with the guidance and support to follow your questions and realize your vision! This is a powerful and compelling way to learn and practice new research and communication skills at the middle school level. Students choose a project of personal interest each semester and set their own project goals. At this level, a small group project with more teacher guidance is an option for those who want or need more direction. These projects can span all curricular areas. The teacher helps to guide students in a rich, interdisciplinary, in-depth exploration of their chosen topics, including suggesting related fields of study to explore and helping find and use available resources including experts, field study, and other field trips. Through individual conferences, mini-lessons, and group discussions, students receive support and instruction as needed in organization, research, and writing skills (including goal-setting, brainstorming and refining ideas, evaluating sources, note taking and organization, Internet research, bibliographies, time management, display ideas, and editing).

Each student creates a final display or portfolio of work, which is shown at a culminating Presentation Celebration. Past creations have been as diverse as the following: a song and music video about youth voice, a model of a black hole, a scrapbook of paintings of places in Italy, a treehouse, a recycled fashion exhibit, a stop-motion animation movie about Galileo, a 3-D map of Middle Earth, and an active maple sugaring operation. These displays reflect the individual talents, creativity, self-expression, and learning styles of the students as they share their learning with the community.

Student-Directed Project: From Inspiration to Presentation

(level 3-4/ages 14-18) (1 credit)

Rebecca Yahm

Imagine the learning potential of studying a topic of great personal interest with guidance and support to follow your questions and realize your vision! This is a powerful and compelling

way to learn and practice the research and communication skills that are essential to lifelong learning, higher education, and many work environments. Students choose a project of personal interest each semester or for the whole school year and set their own project goals. These projects span all curricular areas. The teacher helps to guide students in a rich, interdisciplinary, in-depth exploration of their chosen topics, including suggesting related fields of study to explore and helping find and use available resources including experts, field study, and other field trips. Through individual conferences, mini-lessons, and group discussions, students receive support and instruction as needed in organization, research, and writing skills (including goal-setting, brainstorming and refining ideas, evaluating sources, note taking and organization, Internet research, bibliographies and citations, time management, display ideas, and editing). Many projects at the high school level include research as well as nonfiction writing.

Each student creates a final display or portfolio of work, which is shown at a culminating Presentation Celebration. Past creations have been as diverse as the following: a Pacem theater group, a fiction story set in Japan, a slideshow about prejudice, hand-sewn costumes, animated and live-action short films, a robot, a model of a sustainable homestead, and a computer built from parts. These displays reflect the individual talents, creativity, self-expression, and learning styles of the students as they share their learning with the community.

Community Classroom

(level 2-4/ages 12-18) (1 credit)

Pacem Faculty

Community Classroom provides a powerful opportunity for our students to learn real-world skills outside the walls of the school building and to understand the relevance of their education to the broader community through service projects, service learning opportunities, internships, and large-scale community projects. It provides a meaningful way for them to explore and pursue areas of passionate interest, even when the subject may not be well suited to classroom learning.

Students can do individual or small group projects. They will begin by identifying needs within the greater community and their own personal interests. From this list, they will develop a discrete community service project that they will tackle over the course of the year or the semester. Working with community partners and Pacem staff, students will identify and develop possible solutions to the need, and then they will put their plan into action!

Older students might choose an opportunity to intern independently with an area business or professional mentor to explore possible career interests or create a long-term volunteer relationship with a nonprofit.

Past community classroom projects have included volunteering at a local soup kitchen and creating a radio piece about the people there; volunteering at a dog rescue, educating people about the problem of abandoned animals, and collecting supplies for local animal shelters; and volunteering at a local preschool

Capstone Project

(level 4/ages 16-18) (1 credit)

Rebecca Yahm

Imagine the learning potential of creating a major piece of work with guidance and support to follow your questions and realize your vision! The Capstone Project is an opportunity for our oldest students to bring together many of the skills they have developed over their high school years in the study of something personally inspiring, and to show the Pacem community what they can do. It is required for students in their final year of high school who wish to receive a Pacem diploma and is an option for students the previous year as well. This is a more in-depth and challenging project experience in which students pursue a passionate interest with guidance from a mentor, chosen by the student if possible. They set their own goals and progress towards them very independently, meeting with their mentor once or twice a month as needed.

The Capstone Project is expected to include at least one major substantial, well-developed, in-depth piece of work, which can take a variety of forms. The length and scope are determined by student and advisor based on the student's interests, needs, and goals (students doing a Capstone Project before their final year of high school may choose to do two shorter main pieces instead). Students complete other components in addition to the major work. In total, the Capstone Project must include nonfiction writing, research, learning from an expert in the field (if possible), at least two means of communication in addition to writing, a teaching component, and presentations to the Pacem community or other appropriate audience, including at least one oral presentation. For example, one student studied urban sustainability and sustainable design, and his project included the following: designing and building a bioshelter and using it to raise food, writing a research paper to accompany the structure, taking a course on permaculture at Yestermorrow, teaching workshops at Pacem about computer assisted design, and presentations to the Pacem community.

Note that although this is on the schedule for a particular block of time, meetings with the advisor may be arranged outside of this time block as needed. It is expected significant amounts of work will be done outside the scheduled class time.

Fine and Performing Art

Studio art classes at Pacem give students a solid foundation of technique and design principles while still allowing for personal self-expression. Students also are exposed to both historic and contemporary artists as inspiration for their own work, and connections are made to topics of study in literature and CHPS classes where possible. Performing arts are taught in the context of Thursday Workshops. In addition to a variety of topics based on student interest, we will produce a full-length play in the spring semester.

Studio Art

(level 1-4/ages 10-18) (1 credit)

Bonnie Hooper

All our art studio classes use the elements and principles of design as the foundation for creating and discussing art. Elements include line, texture, value, color, and shape. Principles of design include contrast, rhythm, balance, scale, and emphasis. Students are exposed to a wide variety of artists both historical and contemporary. With this inspiration, they create their own vision that illustrates their understanding of the concepts presented.

Topics in art will be determined by the interests and past experiences of the students. Painting, drawing, sculpture, and world art, are all possible areas of exploration. All assignments will be modified so that advanced students will be challenged, and beginners will be given instruction in basic art skills. A wide range of artists will be used for inspiration.

Please note that the choice of section for this class will be determined by the other courses a student is taking.

Foreign Language

At Pacem, we believe that speaking a foreign language is an important part of understanding other cultures, peoples, and parts of the world, as well as a skill that students may need in their future life and work. This understanding, in turn is critical for fostering global peace and understanding which is central to our mission. French and Spanish are the languages students most often wish to learn, however, tutorials in other languages, including Latin or Japanese, may be possible as well.

Middle School Spanish

(level 1-2/ages 10-14) (1 credit)

Planting Hope Staff

Spanish is the third most commonly spoken language in the world today. Learn this important language through an immersion process. Class time will include games, dialogs, music, creative writing, cultural studies, and performances as well as grammatical skills to create a solid foundation and reinforce what is learned. There will be some homework in order to continue practicing between classes. This course is appropriate for beginner and intermediate level students.

Foreign Language – Mixed Level (French and Spanish)

(level 2-4/ages 12-18) (1 credit)

Nikki Matheson (French) and Planting Hope Staff (Spanish)

In order to accommodate learners at a wide variety of different levels, Foreign Languages at Pacem are taught on a tutorial model. Students at the same level will receive instruction together and also spend time working independently. Some classes may use online resources and instruction to supplement in-person instruction. All students will engage in conversation with each other and their teacher to gain fluency, and complete in longer term reading, writing, and cultural projects. Projects will be determined by student and teacher interest. Homework in addition to class time will be expected to practice vocabulary, read, and gain fluency. This course may be taken by beginner, intermediate, or advanced language students.

Latin Independent Study

(level 3-4/ages 14-18) (.5-1 credit)

Richard Littauer

Students with an interest in studying Latin can pursue this with our online Latin teacher. Using the textbook *Ecce Romani*, student will learn the basics of Latin grammar at their own pace. This will be an online course at a time that is mutually agreed upon between the student and the instructor.

Independent Study

(level 1-4/ages 10-18) (.5 -1 credit)

Pacem Faculty

In any subject area, students may work with a faculty advisor to design an independent study to substitute for a regular Pacem class. The purpose of an independent study is to allow students the flexibility to design their own curricula with faculty mentors. Pacem faculty may also assist the student in finding outside expert mentors when appropriate. Independent studies must include similar concepts and skills and be of the same quality and complexity as the classes they are replacing. Independent studies are not available if a similar course is currently being taught. At the beginning of the year, students will define goals for their studies. Throughout the year the student and their mentor will meet weekly, to plan their work for the week and assess the student's progress.

If there is no Pacem faculty member available with the expertise to advise an independent study, a student may find an independent outside tutor. Pacem is only able to pay for one hour a week at a rate comparable to the Pacem faculty hourly rate. Any fees above that rate will be the responsibility of the family. This option is intended primarily for full-time students.

College Advising

Pacem Faculty

Depending on demand, a variety of offerings to assist in the college admissions process will be available to our high-school aged students. These may include workshops such as choosing an appropriate college, applying for financial aid, essay writing, homeschool transcript and portfolio documentation, and interviewing skills. In the past we have also employed a college consultant.

Thursday Programming

Thursday mornings at Pacem are devoted to Student Directed Projects. For students not interested in that, this is a good time to explore internship opportunities, community service projects, or other compatible full-day programs. Faculty guide students in making the best use of their time. The possibilities are endless!

Thursday afternoons

On Thursday afternoons, Pacem hosts a series of 1 – 8 week long workshops. In these workshops, we will take advantage of local organizations and experts. Students may register for the entire series of workshops, or for individual offerings. Interested students are invited to play a significant role in choosing workshop topics, organizing them, and even leading them. Past workshop topics have included mountain biking, archery, model rocketry, fencing, American Sign Language, improvisational acting, Shakespeare reading and performance, digital photography, board game design, and more. In the spring, Thursday workshops will focus on the production of a full-length play. If there is sufficient interest, we may offer short-term health-oriented workshops in this time as well.

Extracurricular Activities and Clubs

Pacem offers a variety of extracurricular activities which vary by season. Offerings are determined by student interest and are generally student-led. In the past, these have included the following: game club, dungeons and dragons, live action role-playing, a cappella singing, cross country skiing, ultimate Frisbee, running, theater, and more.

Fall Outdoor Adventure Days

All students are invited to join us for several days before the start of school (Wednesday August 30th through Friday September 1st). We will spend some time in the woods and fields of Vermont getting to know each other and building the foundation of our community for the coming year. Our days will be filled with team building activities, hikes, camping and companionship. We will have time alone to contemplate our goals for the coming year, and time as a group learning to work cooperatively and appreciating what each of us has to offer the group. Please plan to come for the entire time if possible. All students who are taking more than one class at Pacem are strongly encouraged to attend.

Homeschool Advising Package

With our homeschool advising package, Pacem's homeschool expert, Rebecca Yahm, will provide you with support for your homeschool curriculum, planning, and teaching throughout the year. The first advising meeting will take place in the summer to get help developing educational goals for the year, planning curriculum, finding resources, and/or completing state paperwork. In the middle of the year, you will have an opportunity to check in and address any concerns or issues you might be facing, since mid-year questions and new directions are common. At the end of the year, you will meet for a homeschool assessment, which fulfills the state of Vermont Home Study year-end assessment requirement and is also an opportunity to review and appreciate your child's progress and accomplishments during the year. Meetings in addition to the ones described here can be scheduled for additional cost.

Health Seminar and Trip Days

For one to two days in April, we will devote ourselves to understanding, appreciating, and promoting healthy lifestyles. During this time, Pacem will host a series of workshops led by students, faculty, parents, and local experts. Specific topics will be developed by students and faculty. More information will be available in April. If there is student and faculty interest, we may use this time for school trips, as well.

Mountain and Service Retreat

Just as we began the year outside, so we will end it. After classes end in June, we will physically challenge ourselves on two mountain hikes and enjoy the beauty of early summer in Vermont. On one other day we will serve one or two organizations in our community. If students are up for the challenge our mountain hikes might include an overnight camping trip. Any camping trip will incur a nominal cost to cover food and camp-site fees. Parents are asked to either volunteer to chaperone or pay to cover staff costs for these days.

The emphasis of these days will be to reflect on the past year and appreciate the ways in which we have all grown. We will contemplate how we can help each other and the world around us, learn about and appreciate our natural world, and find our peaceful center.

Bring your knowledge or field guides of the natural world with you and share!

Please note: Classes with insufficient enrollment are subject to cancellation. Families will be notified as soon as possible about class cancellations. Deposits for canceled classes will be returned.