

SOUTH ORANGETOWN CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
Curriculum Council
February 4, 2009

Minutes

Attending: Lynn Gorey, Michele Fenster, Elizabeth Howell, Ed Bolan, Elayne Armaniaco, Marisa Premus, Michelle Jones, Deena (Bollinger) Kramarczyk, William Lee, Ph.D., YuBong Ko, Rosemary Pitruzzella, Nora Polansky, Helen Nelson, Juliet Gevargis, Sheila Silverman, Brian Newburger, Christine Brew-Mitchell, Mary Chaudoir

Guests: Elise Rosenberg, Dana Stangel-Plowe, Nancy Pang, Marla Aaron, Cindy Pardo, Barbara Noyes

Agenda: *High School Honors Committee Recommendations for the 09 – 10 School Year*

Ed Bolan gave an overview of the process. An Honors Committee was formed at TZHS to explore how the existing High School program was meeting the needs of the top students. There was an Honors Committee with representatives from different departments. The departments involved in the process were the Social Studies, Science, English departments, along with administrators, guidance, and special education.

The recommendations presented are:

- I. Add an Advanced Studies in Biological Science class to the grade 9 offering (detailed proposal attached).
- II. English 9 Honors (detailed proposal attached).
- III. Social Studies 9 Honors (detailed proposal attached).

Ed Bolan stated that these courses would probably not have an FTE impact. There will be curriculum writing and resources needed.

Curriculum Council recommendations:

1. The members of the Council support these proposals.
2. The Council would like the High School to consider:
 - a. Collaborating with the Middle School teachers on the entrance criteria for these courses.
 - b. Consider modeling the criteria on the proposed Science model. The Council understands that the criteria will be specific to each course, but believes that criteria should be clear, easy to understand, multi-dimensional, and should have some flexibility built into the process.

Ed Bolan will come back to the Council on June 10th to give a status report on enrollment, an update on the criteria for these courses, and the application of the criteria. He will also report on the assessment plan for these new programs.

Questions were raised about Chemistry Honors. Ed Bolan stated that at this time the High School is not recommending an Honors class. The Science Department is working on including topics into the current Chemistry curriculum that would help prepare students for the SAT II in Chemistry.

Next Meeting:

1. At this time, we do not have any agenda items for the April 22, 2009 meeting. *Please let me know if there are any items that the Council members are interesting in having on this agenda. If there are no items, we will cancel this meeting. We will let you know.*
2. June 10, 2009 – Final Meeting:
Proposed agenda items:
 - i. Update on High School course enrollment
 - ii. Update on Honors criteria, enrollment and assessment plan.
 - iii. Math Tri-State visit report.
 - iv. Update on Math Leadership Team goals and objectives.
 - v. ELA Leadership Team goals and objectives.
3. Other?

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Attachments

Advanced Studies in the Biological Sciences

Description:

The course is designed for students, who have a passion for science and show scientific literacy, are self-motivated, diligent, and willing to commit to independent study in and outside of the classroom. Students should show an aptitude for science and may have an interest in a health related field. Students should expect to be held accountable for a variety of advanced readings, analysis of complex ideas, and different types of assessments. Excellent time-management, organizational, and study skills are vital to student success in the course. The living environment curriculum will be taught at an accelerated pace so that additional concepts such as bio-medical concepts, anatomy and physiology, and SAT II preparation can be taught. Students are still expected to successfully complete 1200 minutes of laboratory experience and sit for the Living Environment Regents exam as well as any additional laboratories, reports, and exams necessary for the additional subject matter that an advanced studies course would produce.

The following are the expectations for students enrolling in this class:

- You have a strong work ethic and are an independent reader and note taker.
- You are a creative thinker and come up with original ideas to solve problems.
- You find satisfaction in independently finding solutions to problems rather than accepting other people's answers.
- You have a strong intuitive sense of the subject matter (i.e. graphing, measuring).
- You show above average math skills in 8th grade honors math.
- You show above average reading, writing and oral skills.

Criteria for acceptance into the Advanced Studies in Biology class are based on the applicants getting a score of 50 out of 60 possible points using the rubric below.

Categories	2 pts	4 pts	6 pts	8 pts	10 pts
E.S. Semester Average	75-79	80-84	85-89	90-94	95-100
E.S. Midterm Score	75-79	820-84	85-89	90-94	95-100
Math 8 H Semester Average	75-79	80-84	85-89	90-94	95-100
7 th grade ELA scores		1	2	3	4
Application with writing sample as scored by 9 th grade teachers	Below 7	7	8	9	10
8 th Grade Teacher Recommendations	Low motivation	Somewhat motivated	Hard worker	Self motivated	Superior motivation

ENGLISH 9 HONORS

Description:

This course is designed to engage the motivated, already successful student in extensive and independent work in reading, interpreting, and writing about literature that addresses the human condition. Students will be expected to conduct mature, in-depth exploration and analysis of literature through writing, class discussion, Socratic seminar, and debate. Directed research and problem solving throughout this course will be used to guide students through their learning process.

The following assumptions are made about students who take this course:

- *You love reading and welcome the opportunity to read challenging literature that contains difficult and sometimes confusing ideas.*
- *You realize that often you must reread and spend considerable time in thought in order to make all the pieces come together.*
- *You understand that frequently literary issues are not comfortably concrete. The fun often lies in the abstractions and the levels of meaning.*
- *You know that close reading skills develop through informed and honest effort and discussion; in other words, you understand that your comments must be grounded in the text itself.*
- *You realize your active participation is essential to this process.*

Admission to 9 Honors English:

1. Eighth grade midterm grade (second quarter) – “A”
2. Eighth grade ELA score – 4
3. Recommendation of eighth grade English teacher concerning writing, motivation, intellectual curiosity, enthusiasm, responsibility and attendance
4. Ability to write a well-organized essay
 - A. illustrating analytic/critical thinking skills rather than regurgitating information
 - B. relatively free of mechanical errors
 - C. demonstrating strong vocabulary
5. Review of student writing to compare current abilities with model(s) provided by ninth grade teachers

Global History and Geography 9 Honors

This course is the first year of a two-year sequence course culminating in either the Global History Regents Exam *or* the AP World History Exam *and* Global History Regents Exam. The determination regarding second year placement is based on accomplishment and work ethic throughout the ninth grade year.

The historical content of the course will include a study of the follow eras:

The Foundations period (10,000 BCE-500 CE)

The Post-Classical Age (600-1450)

The Global Age (1450-1750)

While the course highlights select factual knowledge, the emphasis of the class revolves around a highly analytical approach to the study of history. Lesson design and instruction highlights the nature of historical change across time, as well as thematic comparisons among societies. Historical periodization, themes, and skills become the critical components to help promote student learning.

Given the analytical nature of the course, students must come with certain prerequisites upon which to build. Specifically, students must be self-directed learners, who have the propensity and desire to read and write extensively. Individual accountability and motivation, along with a curiosity about the subject matter and a willingness to partake in whole class and small group discussion are all necessary components for success.

Requirements:

- 7th Grade Standard test scores
- 8th grade ELA average of a 90% better
- 8th grade Social Studies average of 90% or better
- Student application to include
 - Teacher recommendation form
 - Student letter outlining goals, strengths, and areas to focus improvement
 - Writing Sample