



NORTHWOOD HIGH SCHOOL

The Forensics Core Program

FORCE APPLICATION: **DUPLICATE FRIDAY APRIL 14, 2023**

The Forensics Core Program General Overview:

The Forensics Core Program is a distinct, year-long cross-curricular program that sets out to investigate criminal behavior through scientific, psychological, and philosophical lenses. This inquiry-based program will consist of three courses: Forensic Science (Science), Forensic Psychology (Social Science), and Critical Theory and Literature (English) and will immerse students in a transdisciplinary experience devoted to developing a well-rounded understanding of human behavior, promoting a hands-on approach toward researching and testing theories, and understanding different legal contexts. Students will be expected to present a capstone project each semester that will combine all three courses into a comprehensive inquiry-based project. This program will introduce students to a variety of possible majors or careers related to the criminal justice system. The courses in this program will follow the Embedded Honors philosophy. Students will need to be able to demonstrate they have extended their learning in order to achieve the Honors distinction.

Prerequisites:

Juniors and Seniors only with teacher recommendation and completion of program application.

Co-requisites:

Students must be concurrently enrolled (take all at same time) in Forensic Science, Forensic Psychology, and Critical Theory and Literature.

Forensic Science Course Description (Mickey Dickson): mickeydickson@iusd.org

Forensic Science is the application of science to the law. It has become a comprehensive subject incorporating Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Entomology, Earth Science, Anatomy and Physiology as well as other aspects of Science. Major topics include processing a crime scene, collecting and preserving evidence, identifying types of physical evidence, organic and inorganic analysis of evidence, hair, fibers, and paint, toxicology, arson and explosion investigations, serology, DNA, fingerprints, firearms, and document analysis. The main focus of this course will be to emphasize the evidential value of crime scene and related evidence and the services of what has become known as the crime laboratory. This course combines basic theory and real laboratory experiments, creating an experiment-based situation for the better understanding of the students. The experiments used reinforce previously-learned scientific principles rooted in Biology, Chemistry, and Physics.

Forensic Psychology Course Description (Sandy Banks): sandybanks@iusd.org

Forensic Psychology is the application of Science and the profession of Psychology to questions and issues relating to law and the criminal and civil justice systems. This honors-level course applies psychological theories, principles, and research to issues of concern within the criminal justice system. By examining case studies, trials, laws, and psychological research, students will gain knowledge into psychological aspects of criminal activity, as well as a basic understanding of the role that psychology plays throughout the legal process in both criminal and civil cases. This course is concerned with the prevention, detection, and reduction of crime. Throughout the course, students will acquire knowledge and practice in the application of psychological and forensic methods to understand criminal behavior in order to prepare students for possible careers in forensic psychology or the criminal justice system.

Critical Theory and Literature Description (Christina Banagas-Englerdt): christinaenglerdt@iusd.org

In the frame of the Forensics Core Program, Critical Theory and Literature seeks to examine violations of the law through the lens of philosophy and cultural/literary studies. A major aim of the course is to gain a fuller sense of the various case studies in Forensic Science and Forensic Psychology, both to their specific historical contexts and also to broader, more theoretical questions about the nature of “good” and “evil.” Readings will range from major schools of critical theory (e.g. Classical Greek; Marxist; psychoanalytic; New Historical; feminist; deconstructive; postcolonial) to poetry (e.g. Shakespeare; Milton) and literary/historical fiction (e.g. Albert Camus; John Steinbeck; Thomas Harris; David Foster Wallace).