



**INTERNATIONAL
CHRISTIAN
SCHOOL**

Social Science Department

Department Chair: **Kurt Gutschick**



"Parable of the Illusory City". Artistic rendering, 1958 – 63. Princeton University Art Museum.

Rendering of wall painting in Mogao Cave, strategically located at the convergence of the ancient northern and southern trade routes on the edge of the Taklamakan desert in northwestern China, a gateway and nexus for trade between China and Central Asia.

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Introduction to Social Science

Welcome to the Social Science Department at ICS. This Subject Handbook is designed to provide an overview of the Social Science Department's policies, procedures, and curriculum. It serves as a guide for teachers, students, and parents to ensure a cohesive and effective learning environment.

Department Vision and Mission

Vision

To grow students who are proactive discoverers of the world and who can analyse how decisions and actions interact with culture and the environment. To inspire students to apply analytical and historical thinking skills so that they can develop conclusions, use evidence to support claims, respond to historical and contemporary issues from a Biblical worldview, and communicate effectively in cross-cultural contexts.

Mission

To prepare students to be rational, informed, and proactive members of a diverse yet interdependent global society.

Secondary Department Faculty by Course

Middle School Courses	Grade	Teacher
Grade 6 Social Science	6	Aileen Ng/Jordan Holmes
Grade 7 Social Science	7	Aileen Ng/Jordan Holmes
Grade 8 Social Science	8	Aileen Ng/Jordan Holmes

High School Courses	Grade	Teacher
European Studies	9	Kurt Gutschick/ Ashley Nation/Ryan Vogel
Asian Studies	10	Ryan Vogel/ Melodee White
AP World History	10 - 12	Melodee White
AP US History	10 - 12	[Offered every other year] Scott Poole
AP European History	10 - 12	[Offered every other year]
AP Microeconomics	11 - 12	Kurt Gutschick
AP Macroeconomics	11 - 12	Kurt Gutschick
AP Comparative Government & Politics	11 - 12	N/A
AP Business & Personal Finance	11 - 12	Kurt Gutschick
Introduction to Anthropology	11 - 12	N/A
Introduction to Sociology	11 - 12	Melodee White
Introduction to Human Rights	11 - 12	Melodee White
AP Seminar	11 - 12	Ashley Nation

ICS Teaching & Learning Philosophy

ICS Standards

ICS has a standards-based approach to education. This means we have clear and objective targets (standards) for learning in every subject, at every grade level. In the liberal arts (Math, Science and the Humanities) we emphasise the importance of knowledge, which is the basis for much of what we call 'skills'. In the creative arts (Music, Art and Drama) we emphasise the quality of both technique and interpretation. In Physical Education and Health we develop standards of physical capacity and skill.

Assessing learning of these standards is achieved by the use of proficiency rubrics, which clearly delineate a continuum from 'below standard' to 'approaching standard' to 'meeting standard' to 'exceeding standard'. Both formative and summative assessments are appropriate to the subject-specific standards.

Theology is the "Queen of the Sciences", and so the Bible has the pre-eminent place in our curriculum, training students in a Biblical worldview and understanding of the 'whole counsel of God'.

ICS Teaching & Learning Principles

- The Bible is our final authority in all matters of faith and conduct
- We use evidence-based practice founded on good cognitive science
- Optimal learning is knowledge-based and teacher-directed
- The teaching cycle: explicit instruction, modelling, practice, feedback
- The essence of a liberal arts education is deep reading, thinking, writing and discussion, in pursuit of goodness, truth and beauty, through Socratic dialogue
- We prioritise the known benefits of physical reading and handwriting
- We prepare students to operate effectively in a dual-modal society: departmental handbooks outline where digital technology is effective in enhancing learning, and our curriculum policy details education in digital literacy
- ICS partners with parents in mitigating the harms associated with screen-based childhood and learning, including our policies on homework and device-use

ICS Assessment

Formative assessment refers to a variety of methods teachers use to gather evidence about the effectiveness of their teaching and of students' academic progress over time. Formative feedback to students aims to help students understand where they are at with their learning, where it is they should be aiming for, and how to take next steps towards mastery of particular learning.

Summative assessments are assessments used to evaluate students' proficiency against ICS Standards in a particular unit, semester, or course. These assessments 'count' towards final grades on which ICS reports in Semester One and Semester Two.

Social Science Curriculum

The Social Sciences curriculum at ICS is dedicated to exploring the complex, interconnected story of humanity—past, present, and future. We guide students in becoming informed citizens who can critically analyze human behavior, societal structures, global economics, and historical forces. Our purpose is to provide a high-quality education that builds essential foundations for understanding the world through historical analysis, rigorous research, and a profound sense of civic duty.

Our learning is backward-designed from the Advanced Placement (AP) framework, ensuring a coherent and challenging path for every student. This rigorous preparation intentionally leads toward success in a wide range of AP Social Science courses, including: History (e.g., AP World History, AP US History), Government and Politics (e.g., AP Comparative Government and Politics), Economics (AP Macroeconomics and AP Microeconomics), and Psychology.

In addition to these core disciplines, we offer specialized High School elective courses, such as Anthropology and Sociology, allowing students to explore the depth of human culture and social interaction. Through the Social Sciences, ICS equips students with the critical insight needed not only to understand the world but to actively and responsibly shape the world around them.

Middle School Courses	Grade	High School Courses	Grade
Grade 6 Social Science	6	European Studies	9
Grade 7 Social Science	7	Asian Studies	10
Grade 8 Social Science	8	AP World History	10 - 12
		AP US History	10 - 12
		AP European History ¹	10 - 12
		AP Microeconomics	11 - 12
		AP Macroeconomics	11 - 12
		AP Comparative Government & Politics	11 - 12
		AP Business & Personal Finance	11 - 12
		Introduction to Anthropology	11 - 12
		Introduction to Sociology	11 - 12
		Introduction to Human Rights	11 - 12
		AP Seminar	11 - 12

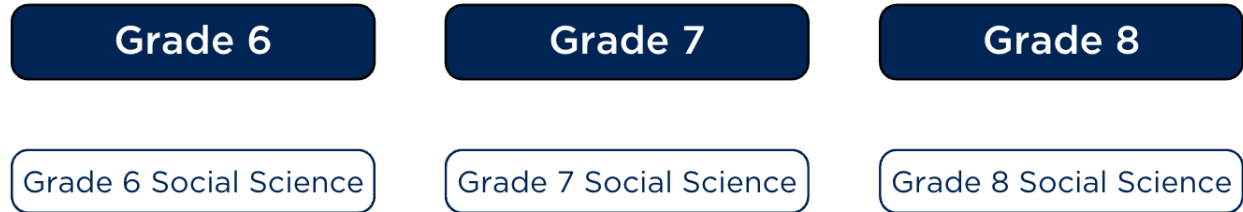
Note: For more information about each course in the Social Science Curriculum, please read the following:

- [MIDDLE SCHOOL COURSE GUIDE 2026/27](#)

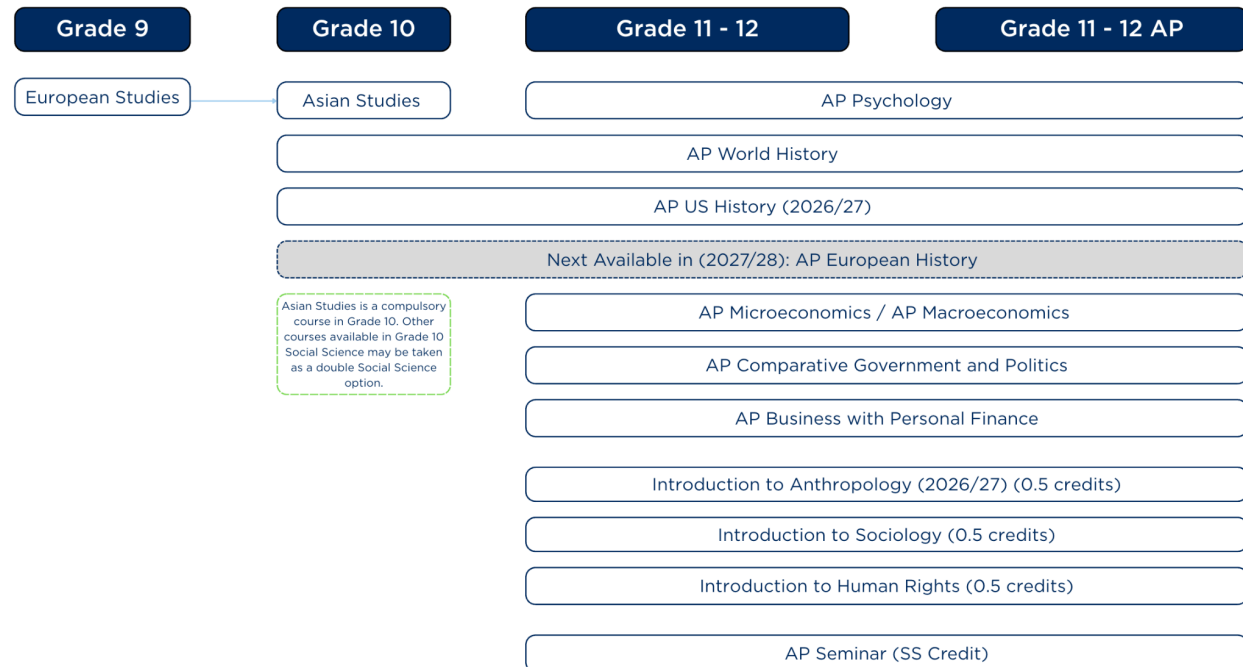
¹ Offered every other year

Social Science Course Pathways Grades 6 - 12

Middle School Course Pathways



High School Course Pathways



School & Social Science Department Policies

General Classroom Practice

Hard-copy course textbooks are maintained in classrooms.

Students maintain Social Science notebooks which must be brought to every lesson.

Teachers are responsible for communicating Unit Rubrics at the beginning of every unit to students and parents; teachers will provide formative feedback on every formative assessment relevant to the Unit Rubric.