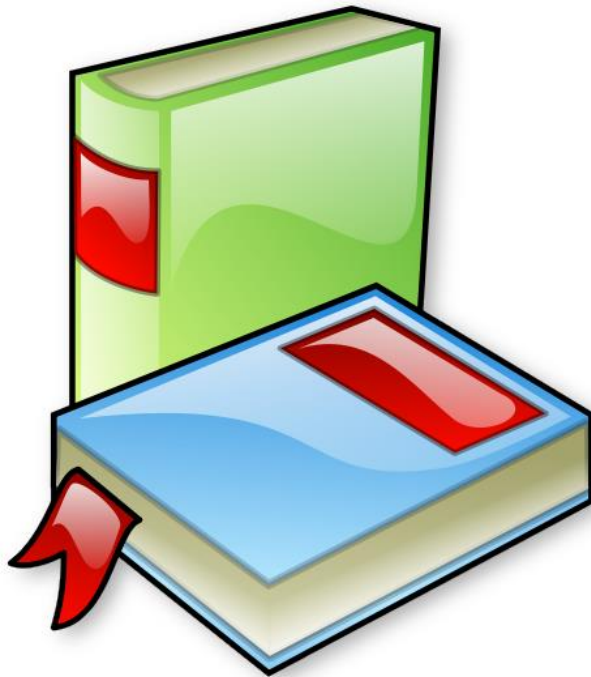




MOUNT VERNON HIGH SCHOOL

**2023-2024**

**J-TERM  
COURSE GUIDE**



Promoting Excellence in Academics, Arts, and Athletics  
Fostering Growth and Confidence as Learners and People

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# INTRODUCTION

The staff at Mount Vernon High School has developed this Course Guide to provide information about the courses offered during J-Term. This guide will help students and their parents / guardians become better acquainted with the content of specific courses and will aid students in the course selection process.

NOTE: Students must successfully participate every academic school year in J-Term. Students missing days for illness, personal reasons, etc., are still expected to participate in J-Term. Successful participation will be left to the discretion of instructors and MVHS administration. Credit will be assigned based on the mastery of essential learnings in the J-Term course and determined by the instructors.

A J-Term course is equivalent to all of the courses offered during a traditional semester. Missing one day for illness or personal reasons during J-Term is equivalent to missing seven class periods during a semester long course. We value your attendance during J-Term.

## COURSES

- **FRESHMAN EXPERIENCE - .5 credit**

### **J-TERM COURSE**

#### **REQUIRED IN GRADE 9**

**Mr. Karkosh, Mr. Timm, Mrs. VanDraska, Mr. Weber, Mr. Whitman, Mrs. Wilkinson and Mr. Wilkinson**

The Freshman Experience is designed to be an intensive study to help students become self-aware, build confidence, and prepare for life as a high school student. Students will take a deeper dive into some important health topics covered in their 8th Block Course. The freshman will also gain an understanding of the 4 Foundations of Mustang Nation: 1- Just Be Here, Get Involved, 2- Excellence in the Arena, 3- Service Above Self, & 4- Champions in Life. Everyone will get to experience some unique physical activities in the greater Cedar Rapids/Iowa City area as well as serve their community.

- **COLLABORATIVE EXPRESSION (ZINE MAKING) - .5 credit**

### **J-TERM COURSE**

**Mrs. Ahrens and Mrs. Tenley**

Love creating art? Love composing words? Have something to say? Creatively combine your writing with images, and put together your own 'Zine! A 'zine (derived from the word magazine) is a small self-published booklet of original or found texts and images, reproduced using a copy machine. In addition to creative time in the art room, you'll also go on multiple trips to museums and galleries to explore the works of other artists and writers.

- **DIGGING INTO FINANCE - .5 credit**

- **J-TERM COURSE**

- **Mr. Namanny and Mr. Roberts**

- This course will give students the opportunity to learn about different types of investments such as: Roth IRAs, IRAs, Cryptocurrency, debt leveraging, traditional stock/options, taxes, taking out loans, etc. Students will explore these ideas through the use of simulated investment situations, group projects, speakers and docuseries. As young adults, these topics are vital for financial stability for any life situation. The tools learned in this class will give students a beginning understanding and foundation for real life investing after high school.

- **TEAMING UP TO CREATE DIGITAL MEDIA – .5 credit**

- **J-TERM COURSE**

- **Mrs. Gage and Mr. Kelly**

- Create amazing podcasts, videos, and social media posts to be showcased online. Topic ideas generated by you! Past students have won national and statewide awards for their work in this class! No experience is required, but it is welcomed. Students will learn all the skills necessary to create digital media and share it online through <https://themustangmoon.com> and its social media accounts.

- **EUROPE TRIP - .5 credit**

- **J-TERM COURSE**

- **Mrs. Massey and Mrs. Willems**

- *(Registration for the J-Term Europe trip is closed.)*

- **EXERCISE SCIENCE/SCIENCE OF SPORT - .5 credit**

- **J-TERM COURSE**

- **(NOT repeatable)**

- **Mrs. Allen and Mr. Schwiebert**

- Through classroom engagement and hands-on experience students will become familiar with the concepts relevant to sports medicine. Students will learn about common sports injuries and possible treatments. Students will develop a personal wellness plan to balance both athletic and emotional health.

- Topics to be covered during this course:

- Anatomical terminology
    - Anatomy of major joints / Injuries to these joints
    - First Aid procedures and treatment for common injuries
    - Utilize proper blood pressure and heart rate monitoring techniques
    - Aerobic and Anaerobic exercise
    - Use of both static and dynamic stretching
    - Learn how to assess body composition, flexibility, cardiovascular fitness, muscle strength and endurance
    - Utilize various relaxation techniques to promote healing and performance

- Multiple guest speakers and a trip to a local Exercise science lab will be included.

- **FARM TO TABLE - .5 credit**

- **J-TERM COURSE**

- **Mr. Kuker and Mrs. Lynner**

- The Farm to Table experience provides students with an opportunity to learn where food comes from, various farming and production methods, and the opportunity to explore foods in the labs. In the morning session students will tour local farms, food manufacturing facilities, and Kirkwood Community College's agricultural facilities. In the afternoon students will prepare recipes related to yeast breads, dairy, beef and pork and other farm to table topics. Students may need to bring money along for lunch on a few field trips.

- IMMIGRATION EXPERIENCE - .5 credit**  
**J-TERM COURSE**  
**Mrs. Carstensen and Mrs. Nichols**  
 Experience life through the eyes of Latino populations across the Midwest. Let your senses guide your learning as you see, hear, and taste your way through the music, food, and cultural activities that take place during the days leading up to the festival of the Three Kings, one of the most important days of the year in Latino communities. During day trips and overnight outings, you'll get a feel for the world that lies just outside of Mount Vernon.
- INTERNSHIPS – .5 credit**  
**J-TERM COURSE**  
**Mr. Murray, Mrs. Viter-Pitlik and Mr. Voigt**  
*(Course is for Juniors and Seniors only. Registration for the J-Term Internship course is closed.)*  
 Mount Vernon High School specifically designed a time during the 8 days of J-Term for students to pursue an internship. An internship is an opportunity for a student to observe and gain hands-on experience with one or more employees at a business, non-profit organization, or government agency. This experience will help students gain first hand perspective of the skills and tasks needed to be successful in a business. The experience will also help students learn how to best apply their personal interests after high school. Other notes for this course: There is an application process for this course in the fall and all internship placements will be confirmed prior to Winter Break. Students will provide their own transportation and meals - students may request a sack lunch through the school.
- PLANTS, POISONS AND PUZZLES - .5 credit**  
**J-TERM COURSE**  
**Mrs. Appley and Mrs. Teague**  
**(NOT repeatable)**  
 Looking for some magic to spice up your J-term? If you enjoy fantasy, science, or games this class is for you! In Plants, Poisons, and Puzzles you will enroll in magic school, create your own fantasy character, and get a personalized education in botany, pharmacology, or cryptography classes. You will then use those skills to earn points, level up your characters, solve mysteries and puzzles, and go on adventures in class and out.
- REINDEER GAMES - .5 credit**  
**J-TERM COURSE**  
**Mr. Pedersen and Mr. Thede**  
*(Registration for J-Term Reindeer Games is closed.)*  
 Reindeer Games is a course designed to break up the winter blues and allow students to explore both indoor and outdoor activities during the winter. Students will demonstrate how to interact and teach students from all backgrounds by developing lesson plans for outdoor activities. Age appropriate and developmental teaching standards will be taught and utilized to meet the demands of all learners. Students will be exposed to ice skating, broomball, ice fishing, snowshoeing, Nordic (cross country) skiing, tubing, and a trip to Colorado skiing/snowboarding for 3 days.
- STITCHING TOGETHER - .5 credit**  
**J-TERM COURSE**  
**Mrs. Sabers and Mrs. Strobe**  
 Get ready to unleash your creativity in this exciting and immersive J-Term course that celebrates the timeless art of fiber crafts. "Stitching Together" offers an opportunity to explore the world of knitting, crocheting, cross-stitch, and other fiber arts. This course is for all levels of learning, experienced to novice. We will be taking trips to local shops to learn about different offerings in our community, as well as learning about how to knit, crochet, cross stitch, and more.

- **THEATRE AFTER HIGH SCHOOL - .5 credit**  
**J-TERM COURSE**  
**(NOT repeatable)**

**Mr. Stephens and Mr. Wilkins**

This course will explore six key areas:

- theatrical terminology, etiquette, and safety
- appreciation of theatre as an art form
- careers in theatre
- community, college, and professional theatrical spaces
- research on the history and impact of specific Broadway titles
- alumni guest speakers

We will also attend a professional touring production.

During the class, students will view and compare excerpts from film versions of Broadway shows.

*The Mount Vernon Community School District will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, age, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status (for programs), socioeconomic status (for programs), disability, religion, and creed. Students, parents, employees and others doing business with or performing services with the district who feel that they have experienced discrimination are encouraged to contact Matt Thede, Equity Coordinator, Mount Vernon Community High School, 731 Palisades Road SW, Mount Vernon, IA 52314, telephone: [319-895-8843](tel:319-895-8843) x4005, where our district has a grievance procedure for processing complaints of discrimination. Inquiries may also be directed in writing to the Director of Civil Rights – Region VII, US Department of Education,; 310 W. Wisconsin Ave.; Suite 800; Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53203-2292 (phone: 414-291-1111) or to the Iowa Department of Education; Grimes State Office Building; Des Moines, Iowa, 50319-0146 (phone: 515-281-5294)*