



MOUNT VERNON HIGH SCHOOL

2024-2025

J-TERM COURSE GUIDE

Digging into Finance
Internships
Digital Media
Farm to Table
Disney Leadership
J-Term 2025
Mindfulness
SciFi
Data Quest
Spanish/Latin America Trip
Exercise Science/Science of Sport
Freshman Experience
Baseball & Jazz

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. Brand, Mr. Karkosh, Mr. Pedersen, Mrs. VanDraska, Mr. Whitman, Mrs. Wilkinson, Mr. Wilkinson, Mr. Thede

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 Health 1 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.

- **BASEBALL & JAZZ – .5 credit**

J-TERM COURSE

(NOT repeatable)

Mr. Timm, Mr. Weber and Mr. Wilkins

Mr. Timm, Mr. Weber and Mr. Wilkins will be offering a new and exciting J-Term experience in 2025 that will take you on a historical journey through baseball and jazz. This class will explore the unique connection between Baseball and Jazz Music and its profound effect on 20th century America. It will include individual exploration of important events and individuals of both disciplines. Guest speakers and day trips will also be a part of this class.

- **DATA QUEST– .5 credit**
J-TERM COURSE
(NOT repeatable)
Mrs. Hamm and Mrs. Teague
 Have you ever wondered what the big deal is with data? Come learn more about what data is, how we create it every day, and how organizations use our data to provide more effective services and sell us more stuff. This course will look at data creation, collection, analysis, and visualization based on the everyday activities and issues you as students choose to explore. Data science is a growing career field, so we will also talk to people who use data every day in a variety of jobs.
- **DIGITAL MEDIA – .5 credit**
J-TERM COURSE
(NOT repeatable)
Mrs. Gage and Mr. Shea
 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.
- **DIGGING INTO FINANCE – .5 credit**
J-TERM COURSE
(NOT repeatable)
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.
- **DISNEY LEADERSHIP TRIP – .5 credit**
J-TERM COURSE
Mrs. Sabers and Mr. Stephens
(Registration for the J-Term Disney Leadership trip is closed.)
 This course is a combination of classroom learning and a trip to Walt Disney World in Florida. In the Disney Imagination Campus' leadership development program, students will get a unique opportunity to realize their potential by interacting with Disney leaders, engaging in leadership activities, and experiencing fun, hands-on learning. The leadership workshops are an extraordinary way for students to learn effective communication, critical thinking, and the art of innovation. We'll explore the Disney Way, which includes the belief that everyone can be a leader. Plus, we'll learn about the importance of Disney's 5 Keys of Excellence—principles that guide Disney Cast Members in everything they do. Students will experience the real-world application of these principles by encountering problem-solving scenarios—and will discover their own personal leadership style.

- **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

(NOT repeatable)

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.

- **INTERNSHIP – .5 credit**

J-TERM COURSE

Mr. Brandt, 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 9 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.

- **MINDFULNESS – .5 credit**

J-TERM COURSE

(NOT repeatable)

Mrs. Tenley and Mrs. Willems

In *Mindfulness*, students will develop the strategies to skillfully work with thoughts, emotions, and sensations, while developing their capacity to enhance mind-body awareness of present-moment experiences. Students will learn the principles of mindfulness, apply these principles to daily life, and develop their own practices. The course will help students to enhance their wellness dimensions: physical, emotional, intellectual, environmental, social and spiritual. Students will engage in meditation, yoga, literature, journaling and podcasts in order to grow their self-awareness and mindfulness practice.

- **SCI-FI – .5 credit**

J-TERM COURSE

(NOT repeatable)

Mrs. Ahrens and Mrs. Appley

What other worlds are out there? The SciFi genre has the ability to capture our imaginations. Let's take a hopeful look at the future through the lens of SciFi films, shorts, and stories. In this course students will learn about the different genres and storytelling, engage in role-playing, generate maps, and create movie props. You will be asked to be creative within constraints and engage in problem-solving and gaming. Students will demonstrate their ability to collaborate while working in teams to create a SciFi short film or escape room.

- **SPANISH/LATIN AMERICA TRIP – .5 credit**

J-TERM COURSE

Mrs. Carstensen and Mrs. Nichols

(Registration for the J-Term Spanish/Latin America trip is closed.)

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)