

# **PARKMONT SCHOOL**

ACADEMIC COURSES  
and  
SCHOOL PROGRAMS  
2005-2006



# **PARKMONT SCHOOL** **COURSE CATALOG 2005-2006**

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## **PARKMONT SCHOOL History**

Parkmont was founded in 1971, as a cooperative Middle School by a parent group in McLean, Virginia. The parents were acquainted with the work of progressive educator Maria Montessori and they consulted extensively with John Bremer, founder of the Parkway School in Philadelphia and a proponent of experience-based learning. Parkmont has always emphasized educating the individual in the context of a close-knit community and the program has strong roots in both the progressive and experiential educational traditions.

Parkmont moved to Washington in 1977 to take better advantage of the educational opportunities available in the city. Parkmont started an Upper School program in the fall of 1991 that serves students in the 10th through 12th grades. In the spring of 1991 Parkmont joined forces with the Somerset School and moved to its permanent home at 4842 16th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C.

The school currently enrolls 65 students and has a full-time and part-time staff of more than 15. The Middle and Upper School programs have different schedules and staffs and it is still assumed that some students who enter in the early grades will matriculate to larger high schools in the area as they have in the past.

Parkmont's primary goal is to help adolescents develop the skills, motivation, and self-discipline necessary for success in school and in life. It respects the roles that they must play in their own development and in the larger society.

Enrollment is limited to guarantee that each student receives sufficient individual support and has the opportunity to participate significantly in all aspects of the program. Parkmont students reflect a rich diversity of learning styles, talents, and cultural backgrounds, indicative of the heterogeneous population of the metropolitan area. Students are selected on the basis of their ability and willingness to contribute to and benefit from the programs of the school. For each of the past ten years, more than 50% of our enrollment has been students of color.

The academic programs include a core curriculum that allows the students to choose from a wide range of course selections. Basic skills are acquired in activity-oriented classes that include projects and field trips to stimulate an adolescent's interest. Every student is permitted to proceed responsibly at his or her own pace with the support and guidance essential to the development of self-awareness and respect for others.

Parkmont faculty members are active role models, chosen not only for their subject mastery and enthusiasm, but for their empathy with this age group. Their teaching role is reinforced by families who are committed to supporting the school and its values. Adult-student relationships remain the constant in a program that allows other elements to be flexible.

Although the school's facilities and staff have changed since 1971, its mission has remained constant. Parkmont's commitment to excellence is shared by its trustees,

faculty, parents, students and alumni. Their continuing dedication to Parkmont's mission assures its success in the future.

## **STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY**

How do we help adolescents develop the confidence and skills they need to move ahead energetically with their lives?

At Parkmont we create a community where they ally themselves with creative adults whose driving concern is their success and well-being. We provide them with substantial experience in the world beyond school that invites them to see more clearly the possibilities ahead. And we challenge them with an academic program that fuses adolescent interests with traditional disciplines and respects the variety of their talents and motivations.

They get ready to chart their own course; we make sure they're prepared for the journey.

## **STATEMENT OF NON-DISCRIMINATION**

Parkmont admits students of any race, color, national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in administration of our educational policies, admission policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.

# **PARKMONT SCHOOL Daily Schedule**

## **MIDDLE SCHOOL**

## **UPPER SCHOOL**

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### **Monday**

8:30-9:30 English  
9:30-9:45 Announcements  
9:45-12:00 Main Lesson  
12:00-12:45 Lunch  
12:45-1:45 Math  
1:45-2:15 Advisory  
2:15-3:30 PM Class

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### **Monday**

8:30-9:30 Math  
9:30-9:45 Announcements  
9:45-12:00 Main Lesson  
12:00-12:45 Lunch  
12:45-1:45 Reading Seminar  
1:45-2:15 Advisory  
2:15-3:30 PM Class

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### **Tuesday**

8:30-9:30 English  
9:30-10:00 School Meeting  
10:00-12:00 Main Lesson  
12:00-12:45 Lunch  
12:45-1:45 Math  
1:45-2:15 School Meeting  
2:15-3:30 PM Class

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### **Tuesday**

8:30-9:30 Math  
9:30-10:00 School Meeting  
10:00-12:00 Main Lesson  
12:00-12:45 Lunch  
12:45-1:45 Reading Seminar  
1:45-2:15 Advisory  
2:15-3:30 PM Class

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### **Wednesday**

8:30-9:30 English  
9:30-9:45 Announcements  
9:45-12:00 Main Lesson  
12:00-12:45 Lunch  
12:45-1:45 Math  
1:45-3:30 Study Hall/Advisory

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### **Wednesday**

8:30-9:30 Math  
9:30-9:45 Announcements  
9:45-12:00 Main Lesson  
1:00-4:00 Internship

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### **Thursday**

8:30-9:30 English  
9:30-9:45 Announcements  
9:45-12:00 Main Lesson  
12:00-12:45 Lunch  
12:45-1:45 Math  
1:45-2:15 Advisory  
2:15-3:30 PM Class

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### **Thursday**

8:30-9:30 Math  
9:30-9:45 Announcements  
9:45-12:00 Main Lesson  
12:00-12:45 Lunch  
12:45-1:45 Reading Seminar  
1:45-2:15 Advisory  
2:15-3:30 PM Class

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### **Friday**

8:30-9:30 English  
9:30-9:45 Announcements  
9:45-12:00 Main Lesson  
12:00-12:45 Lunch  
12:45-1:45 Math  
1:45-2:00 Advisory/Study Hall

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### **Friday**

8:30-9:30 Math  
9:30-9:45 Announcements  
9:45-12:00 Main Lesson  
1:00-4:00 Internship

## **UPPER SCHOOL Program Description**

In the fall of 1991, Parkmont started an Upper School program for students in the 10<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grades. The program now includes the 9<sup>th</sup> grade and serves approximately 40 students, most of whom will go on to college following graduation. Parkmont has a history of successfully working with students with diverse learning styles and needs. The Upper School program is designed to be challenging, flexible, and supportive. The Upper School Program consists of the following components:

### **Math**

Morning math seminars meet daily throughout the year. Students work in small groups or individually in courses that range from pre-Algebra to Calculus and include consumer math and computer instruction.

### **Reading Seminar**

In Reading Seminar students are expected to do a substantial amount of reading and discussion of literature of various types during the year. Course objectives are to have students do more sustained reading, with increased comprehension and enjoyment of what they read, while writing critical papers and journal entries. One full credit of English may be earned. Some classes focus on specific subjects (science, history), allowing students to earn \_ credit in English and \_ credit in another subject area. Classes meet for one hour, three times a week throughout the year.

### **Main Lesson Intensive Courses**

These courses meet for 10 hours a week for seven weeks. They include offerings in all the major disciplines. This structure allows students the opportunity to study a particular subject area in-depth and allows the teacher to utilize a wide variety of learning activities. Parkmont courses emphasize hands-on learning and students are likely to find that Washington, D.C. is their laboratory for learning. Students receive \_ credit for each Main Lesson class they pass. Their selection of courses reflects their own interests and their individual needs for meeting the graduation requirements.

### **Afternoon Classes**

Courses are offered in Tennis, Basketball, Soccer, Softball, Art, Photography, Yearbook, Running, Computer Skills, Study Skills, SAT Prep, and Petition Writing. These classes meet at the end of the day on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday.

### **Evaluations & Grades**

Students and their families receive written evaluations in their courses every seven weeks. Some classes are evaluated on a pass-fail basis. In 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades, students must earn a C- or higher to pass a class. Additionally, seniors must pass every class they take senior year in order to graduate. Interim reports are sent, mid-session, to students who are in danger of not passing, or to those who are showing exceptional progress.

### **Internships**

Semester or year-long internships meet on Wednesday and Friday afternoons after lunch when students work and study in a variety of settings around the city. All students meet with the Internship Coordinator to select an activity they are interested in and which will

provide a significant learning opportunity for them as they get ready for further study and work after high school. Students do internships in child development centers, law offices, small businesses, hospitals, radio stations, the National Zoo and Smithsonian, and with carpenters, artists, and other craftspeople in the area.

**Advisory**

Students meet with their advisors in small groups three times a week, and in an all-school meeting once a week, to consider personal issues and community concerns. In addition, the school provides college and vocational counseling for all of its students.

## UPPER SCHOOL Graduation Requirements

Parkmont graduation requirements have two components: academic requirements that fulfill the District of Columbia graduation requirements and specific Parkmont requirements that include internships and a senior petition.

### **A. District of Columbia Requirements**

**Requirements for Grades 9-12:** These District of Columbia graduation requirements must be met in order to graduate from Parkmont. Remember this when choosing your courses. If you are not sure what you need to take, talk to your advisor.

English	4 Credits	World Geography	_ Credit
Math	3 Credits	World History	1 Credit
Science	3 Credits	Foreign Language	2 Credits
American History	1 Credit	Physical Education	1 _ Credits
DC History	_ Credit	Fine Arts	1 Credit
American Govt.	_ Credit	Electives	5 _ Credits
<b>Total: 23</b>	<b>_ Credits</b>		

### **B. Parkmont Requirements**

All Upper School students are required to participate in the internship program, which grants one non-academic credit for one year-long or two semester-long internships during each academic year. In addition, all seniors must complete a petition (an extensive paper describing their educational history and future plans), and must earn a C- or higher in every course that year.

**Internship Requirements (Grades 9-12):** Students must earn 1 credit per year for Internship. These may be used to meet the Electives requirements or, in certain cases, may be used to meet specific subject area requirements listed above.

**Senior Petition (Grade 12):** In the senior year, Parkmont students must petition the faculty to graduate by preparing a 20-25 page personal essay. The graduation petition gives each student the opportunity to reflect on the progress and self-awareness each has gained from closely working with the staff, and to consider future goals and plans.

**Participation in Graduation Activities (Grade 12):** All seniors are required to take part in both senior night and the graduation ceremony.

### **At Parkmont, credits are earned as follows:**

Each Main Lesson	_ Credit
Full Year of Math	1 Credit
Reading Seminar	1 Credit
Full Year of PM Class	1 Credit
Full Year of Internship	1 Credit
One Year Total	6 _ Credits

Credit may also be given for classes taken outside of Parkmont (with approval of the faculty). Such classes could include summer school and junior college courses, art classes, physical education/sports, and health/CPR courses.

# **UPPER SCHOOL Internship Program**

Coordinator: Nijole Gedutis

FULL YEAR REQUIREMENT

The Internship Program for Upper School students evolved out of the strength of thirteen years of experience in operating a program in our Middle School. We are proud to offer high school students the opportunity to experience the world of work first hand. For these 14- to 18-year-olds, the program is a crucial element of preparation, whether their path after Parkmont leads them to college or directly into a vocation. We also believe that the Internship Program strengthens our ties with Washington's diverse metropolitan community, and opens the eyes of the community to the potential of motivated and directed high school students.

The program is designed to provide a significant learning opportunity for each student. Through interviews and discussions with each student, the faculty and staff help the student decide the kind of skills he or she would like to learn and the type of environment best suited for that learning. Students become better informed about career opportunities and about what courses to take to advance their college or vocational goals.

Students are evaluated on periodic checklists by the on-site supervisors, by information received through phone calls, site visits, and by bi-weekly student evaluations. In this way, students have the opportunity to review newly acquired skills and comment on the experience in general.

Students are required to spend either 90 or 180 hours at an internship. They are released from school each Wednesday and Friday at 12:00 to work at internships for 3 hours each day. Students may not be paid for these six internship hours per week. All Upper School students must participate in the Internship Program.

Two students can work together to design a community service project for internship credit. Students may also use internship time to study at another site or to work on an independent study project, pending faculty approval. Before graduation, students must complete at least one community service internship.

The importance of the Internship Program reflects Parkmont's emphasis on experiential learning and has helped foster positive mentor relationships in the community. Past internship placements include:

Addison Ripley Gallery

American Red Cross

Animal Hut

Arena Stage

BET Enterprises

Black Student Fund

Bread for the City

Cable News TV Channel 21

Caruso's Flower Shop

Cathedral Greenhouse

Chevy Chase Home

Children's Hospital

Columbia Lighthouse for the Blind

Commander Salamander

Congressman Charles Rangel

The Dance Place

D.C. Arts Center

D.C. Jewish Community Ctr.

D.C. Rape Crisis Center

Diversity Magazine

Financial Mgmt & Reporting

Folger Theatre

Food and Friends

Gala Theater

Govinda Gallery

Graves Auto and Appliance

Greenberg and Bederman

Greenpeace

Harriet Tubman Elem. School

Howard University Childlife

Inner Ear Recording Studio

Insect Room at Smithsonian

Knollwood Nursing Home

L'Academie de Cuisine

Literacy Volunteers of Am.

Lucy Barnsley Elem. School

Martha's Table

Mt. Zion Church

National Aquarium

National Children's Museum

Natural Medicine

Neurology Dept. at WRAIR

The Owl School

Paisley Place Photography

Pet Pantry

Planet Chocolate City

Potomac Horse Center

Providence Hosp. Emergency Room

Rock Creek Nature Center

Ronald McDonald House

Ross Veterinary Hospital

St. Elizabeth's Hospital

Southeast Library

Studio Theatre

**The Artist Agency  
The Tropical Lagoon  
Therapeutic Riding Center  
Unity Center of Truth  
Walter Reed Dermatology  
Washington Humane Society  
Williams & Connelly  
Zaccheus Free Clinic  
Zero Population Growth**

## UPPER SCHOOL MAIN LESSON Courses 2005-2006

<b>Sessi on</b>	<b>Science</b>	<b>English</b>	<b>Social Studies</b>	<b>Foreign Languag e</b>
<b>1</b>	Chemistry <i>Ngawang</i>	Shakespeare <i>Kim</i>	World Geography <i>Ron</i>	Spanish 1A <i>Michelle</i>
<b>2</b>	Genetics and Evolution <i>Trefor</i>	Research Writing <i>Kim</i>	Black and White in America <i>Rich</i>	Spanish 1B <i>Michelle</i>
<b>3</b>	Electricity and Magnetism <i>Ngawang</i>  Anatomy and Physiology <i>Trefor</i>	Poetry <i>Kim</i>	Latin American History <i>Michelle</i>  Foreign Policy <i>Ron</i>	
<b>4</b>	Health <i>Gina</i>  Mechanics <i>Trefor</i>	Language of Film <i>Kim</i>	US Government <i>Ron</i>	Spanish 2A <i>Michelle</i>
<b>5</b>	Ecology <i>Trefor</i>  _____ Science and Technology <i>Ngawang</i>	Contemporary Theater <i>Kim</i>	DC History <i>Rich</i>	Spanish 2B <i>Michelle</i>

# **UPPER SCHOOL Main Lesson Course Descriptions**

## ***Science and Math***

### ***Chemistry***

Ngawang Pasang

SESSION 1

Chemistry is the study of chemicals. Everything around us is made of chemicals—the earth, the sky, buildings, cars, food, even yourself. By studying what things are made of and how they react with other materials, chemists can better understand the world around us. They can use this knowledge to develop new, useful substances such as medicines, plastics, cosmetics, and much more. In this class we will learn about atoms and molecules, bonding, states of matter, chemical reactions, compounds, energy changes, acids and bases, and elements. Hands-on labs, field trips, computer research, discussions, quizzes and tests will be given throughout the session.

### ***Genetics and Evolution***

Trefor Evans

SESSION 2

Many scientists now believe that many forms of cancer will be preventable in the near future through the use and manipulation of our very own genetic code. Nearly every day in any major publication you can find reports of new genetic advances that may allow us to live longer, better understand our own personalities, or help to shed light on the questions of human evolution. How well do you understand what this explosion in knowledge may mean for you? In this course, you will learn about the theory of evolution and the basics of modern genetics through reading, experimentation, and research. We will pay special attention to the ethical questions that arise with scientific advances.

### ***Anatomy and Physiology***

Trefor Evans

SESSION 3

Eating and digestion... We often do it three times each day without considering how it actually works. This critical activity requires the use of muscles, enzymes, nervous system coordination, and several specialized organs of the digestive system. In this class we will learn about movement, digestion, respiration, circulation, reproduction, and disease. The learning activities of the class will include dissections, drawings, models, field trips, films, and lectures.

### ***Electricity and Magnetism***

Ngawang Pasang

SESSION 3

In this class, you will explore some of the daily experiences you have with electricity, magnets and light. You will find answers to such questions as, why is there a spark when we touch doorknobs? How do microwaves heat food? Why do bulbs glow? How do motors and generators work? Why do metals attract magnets? Why do we see colors?

## ***Mechanics***

Trefor Evans

SESSION

4

This course is designed to improve the students' ability to communicate the concepts of physics in simple language. Even though math is the language of physics, the course concentrates more on concepts rather than on math. Apart from tests and homework, the class involves doing number of experiments, and few projects. In this class, we will cover mechanical concepts such as Newton's Laws, linear motion, momentum and energy.

## ***Health***

Gina Duffin

SESSION 4

Understanding health is an important part of living a well-balanced and productive life. In this course we will study physical and mental health and illness, the consequences of substance abuse, how the human body functions, and relationships and sexuality. Hands-on projects, field-trips, readings, debates, and discussions will be utilized throughout the session to help the student appreciate and realize the value and role of a healthy lifestyle.

## ***Ecology***

Trefor Evans

SESSION 5

Participation in the trip is a requirement for this course. There is a significant cost for this trip. Financial aid is available for any student currently receiving tuition assistance.

## ***Literature and Writing***

### ***Shakespeare***

Kim Schraf

SESSION 1

This course will take an in-depth look at the life, times, works and inimitable style of the greatest English-speaking poet and dramatist, William Shakespeare. Because we can devote a full session to such a study, we will be able to explore more than one play, experiment with staging scenes for performance, attend the theatre, screen a spectrum of videos and debate the controversial authorship question. These seven weeks will be challenging but rewarding; the work will be hands-on and collaborative. You'll walk away with a new perspective on the late 16th century as well as your own

### ***Research Writing***

Kim Schraf

SESSION 2

This course is designed to introduce students to the fundamental elements of the college research paper. Through intensive research in the library and individual analysis in the classroom, students will acquire skills in topic selection, researching and note-taking, the development of an efficient outline and thesis statement, and in accurate documentation through in-text citations and a Works Cited list. Students will be required to utilize rough drafts in the completion of a substantial research paper. Although this course is demanding, it is a necessity for the college-bound student who wants to be prepared.

### ***Poetry***

Kim Schraf

SESSION 3

“Float like a butterfly, sting like a bee . . .” Even Ali (the Greatest) was given to bouts of simile and hyperbole. If you are too (or if you just want to find out what simile and hyperbole are), join us for a session of deep diving into the study of poetry. (Enough metaphor already!) We’ll read, listen to, and discuss works by poets of different generations and cultures writing in traditional and contemporary styles – from Whitman to Walcott, from sonnets to rap. We’ll study the mechanics of poetry, discovering the method to the meaning. We’ll also write original poems, talk to practicing poets, and attend performances to enhance our critical appreciation and enjoyment of poetry.

### ***Language of Film***

Kim Schraf

SESSION 4

This course will undertake an exploration of film as an art form and as an expression of the human condition. Beginning at the beginning, and using genres of movies as our guideposts, we hope to learn the language of film and how it is employed to create tone, style, and theme. Students will be expected to write frequently in both critical and creative voices. The films themselves and documentaries about them will serve as teaching tools, and we’ll view many excerpts as well as at least one film per week in its entirety. Final presentations will further investigate a filmmaker, a style or genre, or a film technique in the form of oral presentations to the group by each student with visual support.

### ***Contemporary Theater***

Kim Schraf

SESSION 5

Some contemporary playwrights are changing the voice of American theater with their work. We’ll explore these works, and examine the structure of dramatic writing and the role of theater in our lives. Intensive reading and writing, theater workshops and performances, as well as creative dramatics of our own will keep things varied and fresh.

## ***Foreign Language***

### ***Spanish 1A***

Michelle Banks

#### SESSION 4

This class does not require any knowledge of a foreign language, and introduces students to basic Spanish structures, including: present tense, regular and irregular verbs, definite and indefinite articles, use of "ser" and "estar", simple sentence formation, and beginning vocabulary words. The class is designed to develop students' ability to speak, read, write and understand Spanish. Spanish and Latin American culture are also explored.

#### **Spanish 1B**

Michelle Banks

SESSION 5

This class is designed for students who have taken Spanish 1A or who have taken Spanish elsewhere. The course covers the use of stem-changing, irregular and reflexive verbs, object pronouns, preterit tense and commands. Emphasis is placed on developing students' comprehension through reading stories, plays and poetry in Spanish.

#### **Spanish 2A**

Michelle Banks

SESSION 4

This is the first course of the second year of Spanish. Students will continue to build vocabulary and additional time will be spent developing and improving conversational skills. The course will cover the imperfect, preterit, and conditional tenses.

#### **Spanish 2B**

Michelle Banks

SESSION 5

This course is designed to follow Spanish 2A. In this course emphasis is placed on improving students' fluency and ease with the spoken language.

## **Social Studies**

#### **World Geography**

Ron McClain

SESSION 1

The world: how do we map and measure it? Use and abuse it? And how do its features shape the evolution of human culture? This class includes a survey of the earth's physical geography and a series of case studies that demonstrate the interplay between that geography and important episodes in ancient and modern history. There will be considerable focus on current events (mountain shearing, mining in West Virginia, migration in Somalia, the next hurricane in the Caribbean) and weekly projects related to the themes of the course.

## ***Black and White in America***

Rich Hoppock

SESSION

2

This course surveys 400 years of race relations in the United States, focusing in particular on the shared and unique experiences of blacks and whites in this country. How did a nation willing to aspire to the notion that "all men are created equal" get so dependent on a system of enslavement and later apartheid the consequences of which still pervade our social fabric today? We pay particular attention to the ways our political system has been used both to support and diminish great inequity and injustice. We focus on the growth of slavery in colonial times, the pre-Civil War political campaigns to expand and limit the "peculiar" institution, the growth of Jim Crow after the War, and the Civil Rights movement in the 60's and 70's. And we examine the current state of these race relations and what might lie ahead?

## ***20<sup>th</sup> Century US Foreign Policy***

Ron McClain

SESSION 3

This course focuses on America's changing role in the world over the past 100 years. We will use historical texts, novels, films and interviews to study the major events and political shifts that have resulted in the United States' unprecedented domination of the world stage. (1/2 US History credit)

## ***Latin American History and Culture***

Michelle Banks

SESSION 3

Latin America represents an incredible mix of indigenous, African and European cultures and has an exciting and complex history. In this course we will study the history and culture of the region with a focus on Mexico. As more people of Hispanic descent join those who have been in the United States for centuries and economic ties are expanded throughout the Americas, an understanding of this fascinating area becomes increasingly essential. Plan on field trips to museums and cultural events. Students in this class will travel to Mexico's Yucatan peninsula and have an opportunity to experience Latin America first-hand.

There is a significant cost for this trip. Financial aid is available for any student currently receiving tuition assistance.(1/2 World History credit)

## ***US Government***

Rich Hoppock

SESSION 4

What conditions motivated the constitutional framers of this country? What did the framers fear? What rights did they seek to protect? In this class we will discuss the forming of the US Constitution. The class will examine the three branches of government and the overlap of those branches. We will also discuss the adaptations to the constitution and the advent of political parties. Lastly, we will compare the ideologies of the founding fathers to the practices of our modern government. The class will take advantage of the proximity to Capitol Hill.

***DC History***

Rich Hoppock

SESSION

5

Who were Benjamin Banneker and Pierre L' Enfant? How did these two figures affect the development of the District of Columbia? What do you know of Black Georgetown and the U Street corridor? About the alley communities? These questions and more will be discussed. The primary objective of the course will be to examine the economic, historical, political, and social development of the District of Columbia from its inception to the present. Through maps, pictures, interviews, on-site visits, texts, and other sources, students will research and create a project on a selected D.C. neighborhood.

## **UPPER SCHOOL READING SEMINARS**

### ***Women in Literature and History***

Nijole Gedutis

Why didn't Queen Elizabeth ever marry? Who is that madwoman in the attic? What was the first nation to grant women the right to vote? Why did Nicole Kidman wear that big nose? In this class, we'll study the past 500 years through the women that influenced, reflected, questioned, and challenged their times and their places, delving into the subject via history, fiction, poetry, art, film, drama, projects, and relevant trips -- from the Renaissance to *Reviving Ophelia*; the BBC's *Pride and Prejudice* to *The Hours*; Emily Dickinson to Frida Kahlo. Writing will be a major focus, as students will be asked to do research and share their own thoughts and opinions on a regular basis, all the while collecting their writing in a portfolio and building towards a cumulative end-of-the-year project. (1 English credit)

### **Gambling 101: The History of Capitalism**

Ron McClain

This reading seminar will focus on the history of capitalism and a discussion of our current economic system in the United States. We will study how businesses are set up, how goods and services are created and distributed, and how the history of the world has been shaped by the ages of exploration, discovery, and industrialization. We will start the year in the Middle Ages and end with an investigation of the Internet economy.

And we will spend time learning about different kinds of economic systems, including the socialist and communist ones.

Readings for the course will include current newspapers and magazines, along with novels and plays about life in different political and economic organizations. There will be weekly writing assignments about current events articles and longer papers about research topics (i.e. a biography of an inventor or industrialist).

We will learn about the stock market, manage small investments, design business plans, and figure out how Tiger Woods got to be worth millions and Bill Gates billions. We will cover insurance and taxes and gambling. And we'll discuss how human material wealth is distributed around the world and what the implications are for our individual and collective futures. Students will earn \_ credit in English and \_ credit in World History for this course.

### ***Voices From the Other America: Caribbean & Latin American Writers and Artists***

Michelle Banks

This course is a survey of Caribbean and Latin American artists and writers whose work has influenced the political, social, and cultural landscape in their countries of origin as well as here in the US. While we will focus primarily on mid and late 20<sup>th</sup> century artists/writers, we will explore both the history and evolution of Caribbean and

Latin American writing/art as well the impact of regional and political histories on literature and the arts. Our work will not be limited to one genre or form; we will read novels, short stories, poetry, essays, and testimonials, view films, and look at the work of visual artists. Special attention will be paid to specific “movements” and styles such as *negritude & negrismo*, magical realism, dub-poetry, realism, Brazilian literary *troubadours*, and the literature of protest. Some of the artists and writers we will look at are: Roque Dalton (El Salvador), Ernesto Galeano (Uruguay), Isabel Allende (Chile), Gabriel Garcia Marquez (Colombia), Carlos Fuentes (Mexico), Edwidge Danticant (Haiti), Junot Diaz (Dominican Republic), VS Naipaul (Trinidad), Nancy Morejon & Nicolas Guillen (Cuba), Sebastiao Salgado (Brazil), Diego Rivera (Mexico), and Fernando Botero (Colombia).

## **MIDDLE SCHOOL Program Description**

The Middle School Program at Parkmont consists of the following components:

### **English**

English is a year-long course that meets daily. Students are placed in classes according to their ability and age. The English program at Parkmont is designed to improve a student's ability to read and write as well as develop an interest in various genres of literature. Small classes allow teachers to be creative in their assignments and promote full participation in class discussions. An emphasis on good organizational skills helps to sustain achievement of the program's goals.

Underlying the entire curriculum at Parkmont is a strong emphasis on writing skills. The mechanics of clear writing, correct grammatical usage and proper spelling are all introduced within the context of teaching writing. Rewriting serves as a major tool for improvement, and all final drafts will be collected in a writing folder to monitor each student's progress during the year.

Cooperative learning is highly valued at Parkmont. Student writing and editing groups learn to evaluate their own work. Peer review is seen as an important evaluating tool. There is always the recognition that success in the English classroom will translate into positive results in Main Lesson classes and greater ease with academic work in general.

### **Math**

Math is also a year-long class that meets daily. The Math program at Parkmont focuses on an understanding and utilization of basic math skills. Classes are organized on the basis of tested skill levels, with courses offered in General Math I, General Math II and Pre-Algebra, Algebra I and Algebra II. Homework will be assigned every day and weekly review tests will be given to help students develop confidence in test taking and to improve their speed.

### **Main Lesson Courses**

An Important Note about Main Lessons...

Main lesson classes are very different from the kinds of courses most students have taken at other schools. Parkmont has the following reasons for offering this selection:

- The seven-week intensive classes meet ten hours a week and cover topics in Science, Social Studies, and Arts.
- Students can concentrate all their academic energy on one major topic rather than dividing their interests over four or five main academic areas. They can give each Main Lesson their best effort with undivided attention.
- One of the things that Parkmont students, past and present, like about this school is how easy it is to get to know the teachers. Students spend several

hours a day with their main lesson teachers, so both students and teachers get to know one another well.

- There is a lot of flexibility in the way that the school day is set up. Parkmont devotes a considerable amount of time to Main Lesson courses in order to give students the opportunity to go on field trips, see movies, invite guest speakers to their classes, work on special projects, start researching for a paper at the library, conduct simulations, play games, role play, etc. Education becomes more exciting when students are able to use the community as a resource, talk to people and experience new challenges.
- Main lessons provide a unique, special plan that reflects students' individual interests, abilities, and needs. Students choose their own Main Lesson courses with the help of their advisors. Each student is viewed as deserving an academic program that reflects his or her particular interests.

### **Afternoon Classes**

Courses are offered in Tennis, Basketball, Soccer, Softball, Art, Photography, Yearbook, Computer Skills, and Study Skills. These classes meet at the end of the day on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday. Students should take at least one sports class per year.

### **Advisory**

Students meet with their advisors in small groups three times per week, and in all-school meetings once a week, to consider personal issues, community concerns, and academic progress.

### **Evaluations & Grades**

Students and their families receive written evaluations in their courses every seven weeks. Some classes are evaluated on a pass-fail basis. Interim reports are sent, mid-session, to students who are in danger of not passing, or to those who are showing exceptional progress.

### **Internships**

The internship program gives Parkmont students the opportunity to experience a job environment, to learn new skills and test ideas about working, to help the community by providing useful services, and to develop responsibility in a new setting. The internship program will run for 14 weeks, during Sessions Four and Five. Students will go to their internships once a week, for two hours at a time.

Students work with the Internship Coordinator to find placements that reflect their interests and strengths. Students and internship sponsors sign contracts outlining their respective responsibilities.

Parkmont has been running an internship program for Middle School students for the past 18 years. Student placements have included a veterinary office, museum, photo lab, nursing home, record store, pet shop, toy store, bike shop, non-profits, and various other organizations. In past years, internships have led to summer jobs for some Middle

School students.

## MIDDLE SCHOOL MAIN LESSON Courses 2005-2006

<b>Session</b>	<b>Science</b>	<b>Social Studies</b>
<b>1</b>	Scientific Discovery <i>Mike</i>	Ancient Civilizations <i>Rich</i>
<b>2</b>	Structures <i>Mike</i>	Healthy Choices <i>Gina</i>
<b>3</b>	Crime Lab <i>Mike</i>	The US Civil Rights Movement <i>Rich</i>
<b>4</b>	Robotics <i>Mike</i>	<i>Street Law</i> Rich
<b>5</b>	Flight <i>Mike</i>	Creative Writing <i>Nijole</i>

# **MIDDLE SCHOOL Course Descriptions**

## **Science**

### ***Scientific Discovery***

Mike Moyer

SESSION 1

Science encompasses the arts of questioning, hypothesizing, investigating, discovering, and communicating. Mathematics is the language that provides clarity and understanding. Using a hands-on approach that integrates mathematics, science and other disciplines, students in "Scientific Discovery" explore a problem or solve a mystery rather than fixating on the so-called right answer. Relying on direct experiences rather than textbooks, the various activities in the course will captivate the student's imagination while illuminating essential scientific themes, concepts, and methods. Activity titles include: "Oobleck: What Scientists Do"; "Paper Towel Testing"; "Bubble-ology"; and "Hot Water and Warm Homes from Sunlight". A student's grade in this course is based on quizzes, class participation, and weekly evaluation of their laboratory notebooks.

### ***Structures***

Mike Moyer

SESSION 2

Structures created by architects and engineers play a big part in our lives. We live in houses or apartment buildings, travel over bridges, and draw television signals from tall towers. The design and methods of construction for each of these kinds of structures depend on concepts that have evolved through thousands of years of experimentation.

Students will begin to understand some of the basic elements of structural design as they use drinking straws and other common materials to build models of everyday structures including houses, bridges, and towers. Each set of activities has been designed to serve two broad purposes: to be meaningful to students at a personal level and to act as a stimulus for better scientific understanding of the world.

### ***Crime Lab***

Mike Moyer

SESSION 3

Become a super science sleuth while performing crime-solving, case-breaking, and crook-catching activities. From dusting for fingerprints to analyzing handwriting and identifying ink found on a ransom note, this course is designed to give you a first-hand look at how detectives and forensic scientists use science to solve real-life crimes. Make a plaster cast of a shoe, identify lip prints left on a glass. Examine hair and clothing fibers. Practice chemistry to identify mystery substances. You will learn even more of the techniques practiced by professional crime detectors. In addition to having many opportunities to experiment with forensic science techniques, you'll also learn about some famous crimes and how they were or weren't solved. But more important, by using your crime-detecting skills, you'll learn how to think more clearly and effectively, abilities that will help you in whatever you do. Evaluation in the course will be based on quizzes, evaluation of student notebooks, and a book report.

### ***Robotics***

Mike Moyer

SESSION 4

Robotics technology is becoming increasingly relevant as a course in the science curriculum. This course will contribute to the “technology literacy” of the students. The robotics program we will use is called “ROBOLAB” and was developed by LEGO DACTA, Tufts University’s College of Engineering, and National Instruments. Students use ROBOLAB to create very simple to amazingly complex computer programs for their self-made robots. Grades in the course are based on periodic review of the student’s notebook, quizzes, and homework assignments.

### ***Flight***

Mike Moyer

SESSION 5

In this course, the sky is the limit. A part of the Activities Integrating Math and Science (AIMS) program, Flight invites students to explore every aspect of the science of aerodynamics. Flying is magic for all children, and this course attempts to clarify some of the reasons why the magic works while preserving its sense of mystery. Students will enjoy constructing and testing kites, paper airplanes, balloon rockets, super tubes and much more. In all cases, students will be challenged to observe, predict, test, and generalize using precise data and accurate calculations--the foundations of the scientific method.

## ***Social Studies***

### ***Ancient Civilizations***

Rich Hoppock

SESSION

1

Did you know that the Greeks and the Romans had the first democracies hundreds of years before the birth of Christ? Did you know that in ancient Egypt ritual false beards were worn by queens as well as kings? Did you know that the Romans cleaned their clothes with human urine? In class we will discuss these questions and other topics about the cultures and histories of Ancient Egypt, Greece, and Rome.

### ***Healthy Choices***

Gina Duffin

SESSION 2

The way we take care of our bodies effects how we feel about ourselves, our families, friends and school. In this course we will explore this link and learn strategies for improving our physical, mental and emotional health. This class work will apply topics of health to the context of our lives and hopefully shape or create habits of diet, exercise and behavior that are helpful for us all. You will be required to consider and question your daily choices and take steps to modify your behavior. This course will involve some light exercise.

### ***The U.S. Civil Rights Movement***

Rich Hoppock

### SESSION 3

In this course we will examine the origins, major events, and key figures involved in the U.S. Civil Rights Movement. Questions that we will address in class include: Which key people, organizations, and institutions determined the course of the movement? What legislation was created because of this movement? What changes did the movement bring to U.S. law and culture? How has the Civil Rights Movement affected our lives? What has been the legacy and continued impact of the movement on present day race politics and social/economic issues in our country?

#### ***Street Law***

Rich Hoppock

### SESSION 4

You have all heard of “pleading the fifth,” but what does it actually mean? What are your rights if you are ever accused of a crime and what would happen during a trial? Maybe you have pondered the actual purpose of laws and considered a world without law. This course will explore these questions and our own the legal system through experiences such as trips to a court, reenactments and debate of landmark court cases, and films on how the law impacts people. Along the way you will learn about the most influential and thorny legal issues of the past 100 years.

#### ***Creative Writing***

Nijole Gedutis

### SESSION 5

Mystery! Drama! History! Love sonnets! The creative writing class will delve into these and other forms of literature as students learn the ins and outs of creating character, mood and setting, developing unique descriptions, and establishing intrigue and suspense to keep readers on the edge of their seats. The class will function largely as a writing workshop—giving students a chance to decide what they’d like to write. Students will create their own plans, schedules and deadlines (with the help of their teacher) for how they will complete each of their writing projects. They will give and receive feedback from peers. In addition, portions of class time will be devoted to studying professional writers to examine different techniques and styles. Ultimately, students will present excerpts of their finalized pieces at an informal reading with invited friends and family.

## **PARKMONT FACULTY AND STAFF**

### ***Ron McClain***

Parkmont's Director, has 34 years of teaching and administrative experience in Washington's private schools. A 1971 graduate of Harvard University, he has led more than 100 outdoor adventures with students at Parkmont, Somerset, and Edmund Burke and enjoys teaching history and math. He spends his non-school time coaching sons, Matthew (16) and Michael (14) in Takoma Park and daughter, Maggie (9). He is a founding member of the Washington Small Schools Association and has served as a trustee of the Association of Independent Schools of Greater Washington, the Takoma Park Nursery School and the Dance Exchange Cooperative.

### ***Michelle Banks***

was born and raised in Washington, D.C., and returns to Parkmont for her eleventh year. She attended Brandeis University and the American University, and has worked as an AIDS educator, photographer, actor, and youth outreach worker here in Washington and in Tucson, AZ. When not in DC, she coordinates a school support and literacy project for rural children in Alta Verapaz, Guatemala.

### ***Gina Duffin***

is originally from Laurel, Maryland. She has studied in Khon Kaen, Thailand, and graduated with a degree in Environmental Studies from Allegheny College in Northwestern Pennsylvania. Gina enjoys hiking, biking, camping, skiing, playing tennis and softball, eating delicious vegetarian food, and participating in environmental demonstrations and protests with her friends.

### ***Alison Duvall***

graduated from Syracuse University with a B.F.A. in art photography in 1999. When she is not teaching, she loves horseback riding, swimming, anything to do with art or photography, and spending time with her husband, Pete.

### ***Nijole Gedutis***

is entering her 7<sup>th</sup> year at Parkmont. She is from Texas, and graduated as an English major from Pomona College in Southern California in 1998. She likes to spend time with her friends; eat good food; read good books; see good movies, and travel the world.

### ***Rich Hoppock***

is originally from Chevy Chase, Maryland. He received Bachelor degrees in History and Spanish Literature from Cornell University in upstate New York. He has also studied at the University of Barcelona. Outside of school Rich enjoys travel, biking, running, reading, cooking, eating, hiking, playing frisbee, slowly learning to play guitar, and reiki.

***Judy Lentz***

is a native of Washington, D.C. and attended the University of North Carolina. She came to Parkmont in 1980 when her son attended middle school. Judy taught photography and is currently the Parkmont Poetry Festival Coordinator, and serves on Parkmont's Board of Trustees. She enjoys skiing, canoeing and hiking with her husband and dog.

***Mike Moyer***

is a graduate of Dickinson College and the University of Florida's College of Environmental Engineering and has over twenty years of teaching experience at the junior and senior high levels. After four years at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Mike returns to Parkmont for his fifteenth year of teaching science.

***Ngawang Pasang***

is originally from Tibet, but grew up in India. He attended high school in Vermont and graduated from Earlham College in Indiana in 1999. During his free time, Ngawang enjoys reading, cooking Indian dishes, biking, watching and playing all kinds of sports.

***Christy Halvorson Ross***

returns for her eleventh year to Parkmont where she is the Director of Development. Christy graduated from Connecticut College, and has studied at England's Oxford University and in Rome, Italy. She also runs a music booking and management agency. Christy spends her free time doing ceramics, gardening, running, and being in the outdoors with her husband, Garth, their son Simon, daughter Eva, and their dog.

***Kim Schraf***

is a graduate of St. John's College in Annapolis. She has been teaching for twenty-five years, most recently in the Washington area. When not in the classroom, Kim is working as an actor and as a narrator for the Library of Congress' Talking Books Program.

## **AFTERNOON CLASS Course Descriptions**

### ***Basketball***

Teaches the fundamentals of dribbling, passing and shooting.

### ***Computer/Internet***

In this class, students will learn the basics of typing, word processing, creating and using spreadsheets, Internet use and web design. Games used in the class include Algeblaster, Mathblaster, Oregon Trails and Mindsweep.

### ***Calligraphy***

Various styles of lettering (Roman, Gothic, Italic) are taught, culminating in final projects such as broadsides, booklets and greeting cards.

### ***Ceramics***

In this class we will work with clay to create artistic and utilitarian pottery. We will do slab and coil hand-building and wheel work. Glazing and firing techniques will also be taught.

### ***Digital Photography***

Learning how to use digital cameras and Photoshop to manipulate photographs.

### ***Drawing and Painting***

Students will explore art through these mediums.

### ***Fitness***

Through aerobic exercise and by using free weights, we will work all muscle groups, paying special attention to form and alignment.

### ***Petition***

Supervises writing of the Senior Petition.

### ***SAT Prep***

A review course of verbal and math skills in preparation for the Scholastic Aptitude Test.

### ***Soccer***

Students will learn the many skills needed to play the world's most popular sport: soccer. Passing, dribbling, offense, goaltending and strategy are all taught and practiced on the field.

### ***Softball***

Spring is the time for America's great leisure pastime: softball. In softball class, students learn the intricate rules of the game as well as fielding, pitching and throwing skills.

### ***Study Skills***

This class is part of our support services program for students needing extra help

planning and organizing their workload. A daily plan is created, and topics such as note-taking, outlining, and reading and test-taking strategies are covered. It is also a time for students to get extra help with their homework.

***Tennis***

Teaches the fundamentals of tennis