

EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT PORTOLA HIGH SCHOOL'S

Social Studies Electives

ABOUT PHS SOCIAL STUDIES ELECTIVES

Portola High School offers more Social Studies elective courses than any other high school in IUSD. Rather than waiting until college to be exposed to the range and diversity of subjects that the social studies field has to offer, PHS learners are encouraged to take advantage of our course offerings and enroll in one or more of our semester and/or yearlong electives.

WHO CAN TAKE A PHS SOCIAL STUDIES ELECTIVE?

All PHS learners in 11th and 12th grade are welcome to take a Social Studies elective course (with the exception of AP Human Geography, which is also open to 10th graders). While it is strongly recommended that students earn their most recent Social Studies teacher's recommendation to take an Honors or AP elective course, it is not required.

WHAT ELECTIVES ARE OFFERED?

SEMESTER-LONG ELECTIVES:

- ★ Intro to Ethnic Studies (CP) ***NEW***
- ★ Religion and Society (CP & Honors)
- ★ Contemporary Issues (CP & Honors)
- ★ Disney Through the Decades (CP & Honors)
- ★ Psychology (CP)
- ★ Sociology (CP)
- ★ Scholastic Police Academy (CP)

YEARLONG ELECTIVES:

- ★ AP Human Geography
- ★ AP Economics
- ★ AP World History
- ★ AP United States History
- ★ AP Psychology

To learn more about each elective, click on the links below:

[**Social Studies Elective Promotion \(Google Slides\)**](#)
& [**PHS Course Offerings \(Website\)**](#)

SEMESTER-LONG COURSE PAIRING SUGGESTIONS

All of the CP and Honors Social Studies electives are single semester classes that can be paired together or with single semester classes from other disciplines (such as health) depending on the student's interest and need. These can be either 1st semester or 2nd semester. The pairings below are suggestions, not requirements, and students can take one or more of these courses in any configuration that piques their interest.

SOCIAL STUDIES INTEREST TYPE	COURSE A	COURSE B
Students interested in race, identity, current events, and social justice	Intro to Ethnic Studies	Contemporary Issues
Students interested in why people make the choices they make	Psychology	Sociology
Students interested in discussing the biggest questions and culture	Psychology OR Sociology OR Contemporary Issues	Religion and Society
Students interested in law and society	Contemporary Issues	Scholastic Police Academy OR Sociology
Students that are interested in popular culture and myth	Disney Through the Decades	Psychology OR Sociology OR Religion and Society
Students interested in examining issues of race, class, and gender in the past and present	Disney Through the Decades	Contemporary Issues

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: Should I take a CP, Honors, or AP Social Studies class?

A: There is a stark difference between the rigor and expectations in a CP (College Prep) course versus an Honors/AP course. Before making a decision, examine this infographic: [Guide to Success in H/AP Social Studies](#). On the first slide, you will see reading excerpts from CP, Honors, and AP courses. On the second slide, you will see tips on how to be successful in an Honors/AP course.

Q: If I sign up for an Honors or AP course and decide it is not right for me, can I drop it?

A: No, you cannot drop an Honors or AP course once the school year starts. For yearlong courses, there is a possibility that you may drop out of the course after 1st-semester ends, but there is no guarantee.

Q: I am currently a freshman in Modern World History and am deciding between Honors American History and AP Human Geography. Which course should I take?

A: Please look over this [Sophomore Choice Guide](#) to help you make a decision.

Q: There are two psychology electives: CP Psychology and AP Psychology. Which course should I take?

A: Please look over [Which Psych Is Right For You?](#) to help you make a decision.

EXTRA RESOURCES

Videos:

- ★ [Why Teachers and Students Love the PHS Social Studies Electives](#) (10 min)

Teachers dive into why they are passionate about the courses they teach and what students will take away from these courses. Students share what they loved most about these courses.

Don't have 10 minutes to spare? Skip to what you need:

SEMESTER-LONG ELECTIVES:

- ★ Contemporary Issues (0:11)
- ★ Scholastic Police Academy (2:32)
- ★ Religion and Society (2:56)
- ★ Disney Through the Decades (4:51)
- ★ Psychology (7:49)
- ★ Sociology (8:39)

YEARLONG ELECTIVES:

- ★ AP Economics (1:10)
- ★ AP Human Geography (1:46)
- ★ AP United States History (3:52)
- ★ AP World History (6:01)
- ★ AP Psychology (6:46)

- ★ [About the AP/Honors Social Studies Classes](#) (4-5 min each)

Some of the Social Studies teachers and their students share what you can expect from their Honors/AP courses.

★ [About Disney Through the Decades](#) (2 min)

Listen to Mrs. Martasian as she describes what a student can expect from Disney Through the Decades, including Honors.

★ [Religion and Society: Student Testimonials](#) (2 min)

Listen to two former students share what they enjoyed about Religion and Society.

★ [AP Human Geography: About the Class & Student Testimonials](#) (1 min)

Watch this short video clip to learn a bit more about AP Human Geography, including reading quotes from former students.

★ [AP Psychology: About the Class & Student Testimonials](#) (1 min)

Watch this short video clip to learn a bit more about AP Psychology, including reading quotes from former students.