



# The New Trier News

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## Out with the old, in with the new Program of Studies

2016-2017 school year ushers in new choices

by May Paddor

New AP science requirements, a new Film 2 class and AP Music Composition class; there are always new Program of Studies additions that surprise during registration.

Dr. Paul Sally, Associate Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, said changes are made to the Program of Studies each year. "In terms of course changes, prerequisite changes, level reclassifications and name changes, those might total 10-12 each year, the real significant ones 3-4," Sally said.

These significant changes can include anything from adding complete courses to changing the levels at which they're offered. "Sometimes we'll change course levels to expand it. That's happened in the science department where sometimes level 9 courses become a level 2 and 3 course, but it's still the same course, just the level designation is different," Sally said.

A significant change that's been presented for next year includes the level requirement changes to take AP science classes. Students who have taken two years of level four classes

are able to take an AP science class their junior year but students will still not be allowed to take any APs their sophomore year.

The science department chair, Michael Lee, said, "The main reason is we want kids to graduate with well-rounded experience and not be so specialized in AP sciences. It's hard enough as it is right now for kids trying to be on that AP track."

There have been requirement changes for students enrolled in level 2 and 3 sciences. The prerequisites for AP science classes is now three years of science. Lee said, "You could have kids who have three 2 level classes in the past and get into any AP they want without a parent request. That seems odd when kids get a parent request form to go from a 2 level class to a 3 level class."

The science department feels that a level change of any kind should come with feedback from a student's support system.

"I think kids will think twice about whether or not they want to get into the AP track. It's not to prevent the student from taking it, but it's more to have that conversation and really ask, 'Are you sure you really want to do this, because I do not recommend it,'" Lee said.

This pre-requisite change makes for more flexibility, Lee said.

"It will offer some flexibility. If a student wants to take one AP during

## Program of Studies

Curriculum Information and Planning Guide for Students, Parents, and Teachers



The 2015-16 Program of Studies continues all available courses | New Trier

their four years, maybe they can take it junior year and take an elective senior year."

A smaller change introduced was the name change for the Speech and Theatre Department to Media, Speech and Theatre.

"Name changes are certainly about communication with Speech and Theatre, the feeling around the school was the department name as a whole was missing one of their three branches," Sally said.

Significant changes, including the addition of new classes, all originate with teachers and eventually get reviewed by the board members.

"There are constantly new ideas for classes that are being thought up by departments. I would almost say

all of them originate with teachers. It's a very bottom up, grassroots practice," Sally said.

Student demand also establishes new classes. The Film 2 class and the AP Music Theory class are being introduced next year for students who want to take the next step to get the attention of colleges and summer programs.

The Media, Speech and Theatre Department chair, Nina Lynn, said, "We've had students who've learned the skills in the first class and they were getting more advanced assignments within the class itself, but that wasn't being recognized on their transcript."

Lynn explained how students who were advanced in Film

Production would retake the class for several years while further progressing their film skills. Therefore, Film Production 2 will entail the same progressions that advanced students were introduced to originally.

The Media, Speech and Theatre department is discussing new classes for when the new arts facility opens. Lynn said, "The goal is for there to be a Film Production 3 and our hope is to also offer a broadcast journalism class. We'll widen the experiences for students."

The AP Music Theory class was created with the same idea of widening student experiences. David Ladd, the Music Department chair, said, "It's been a gap in our program and most schools, especially the schools around us, already have it. It's geared more towards taking the AP test and the current Advanced Music Theory and Composition was geared more towards writing compositions."

Whether or not these new classes make it to the 2017-2018 Program of Studies depends on registration.

However, the overall reason for all these changes is to continue meeting student needs. "If a student is interested in our discipline, we are going to find a way for those students to advance in any way that we can," said Lynn.

## AP Biology a possibility for incoming juniors

4-level bio can now be surpassed

by Maya Kowitz

Students and teachers alike are preparing for next year's change in the science curriculum, which will allow rising juniors on the PCB 4-level track, who took Physics and Chemistry their freshman and sophomore year, to take AP Biology instead of 4-level Biology.

Students are excited about this change, as it allows them to take two AP Sciences at New Trier without having to double up on science classes during senior year.

"This way I can get AP credit for two different sciences versus one," said sophomore Patrick Helle, who is planning to take AP Bio his junior year.

Those two AP sciences help students get ahead for college, and that's a major reason why they are deciding to take the course.

"I'm taking AP Bio because I think it will be worth the extra time and work for college and the more challenging experience," said sophomore Carolyn Genty.

Even though the option is open to all students currently taking 4-level Chemistry PCB, the course is not the right choice for all of them. Both 4-level Chemistry PCB teacher Bill Loris and AP Biology teacher Jim Burnside said that it comes down to the student's reading level. "As a student, I wasn't a really fast reader, and that would've hurt me in AP Bio. Reading level is

key," Burnside said.

Burnside also commented that the course is directed towards a certain type of student, and current chemistry students who fit those qualities will have the most success.

"The class favors the student who's organized, a strong reader, and who understands how to stay consistent with their work," Burnside said.

Being the right fit aside, some are concerned about allowing juniors to add another AP to an already rigorous course load.

Most teachers are supportive of the option to take AP, but will approve the choice on a case-by-case basis.

"There's going to be some kids where it's okay for them. But we also counseled [the students]; think about what else you're taking, think about your overall course load. With both AP English and AP US History, it might just be too much," Loris said.

Burnside agreed, saying that students who have more time to devote to AP Biology are generally more successful.

"I see students that are taking four majors their senior year and they are very successful in AP Bio," Burnside said. "But if they had bumped up to five majors and multiple APs, they wouldn't have been, just because there are only 24 hours in the day."

The decision to allow students to bypass 4-level Bio and instead take AP Biology was made

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## Ethics bowl asking the real questions

Philosophy, ethics debated at first high school level bowl

by Kate Holly

A husband and wife, Andre and Leslie, decide to have a child. They chose to use a process which genetically modifies the embryo so diseases and deformities can be avoided. However, they want to use this process to give a disability to their child.

Andre and Leslie are both deaf and would like their child to experience deaf culture first-hand.

Their friends who object say they are jeopardizing the child's future by knowingly putting their

*'We feel as though we can engage in deeper discussions and that the Philosophy Club is heading in a forward direction for next year'*

child in that situation. Andre and Leslie argue that they would be in a better parenting position since their family would share a similar experience.

So, is it ethical to bring a child to life knowing they will have a preventable disability?

This hypothetical situation was just one of the 15 scenarios up for debate at the National High School Ethics Bowl on Saturday, Jan. 23, at the University of Chicago.



NT's team, J.R. Miller, George Zervas, Louis Shaw pictured | Christensen

New Trier won third place, with two wins and one tie. Oak Park and Chicago Lab won first and second place, respectively.

The four students who represented New Trier were seniors Ryan Doede and J.R. Miller and juniors Louis Shaw and George Zervas, alongside the sponsor of New Trier's Philosophy Club, Michael Christensen.

Doede and Miller founded Philosophy Club in 2014, but this was the first year New Trier had a team in the Ethics Bowl, as this was the first time the bowl was open at the high school level to students in the Chicagoland area.

"Philosophy is awesome, but it is very hard to apply it practically," Doede said. "It's probably fair to say that ethics, of anything in philosophy, is the most applicable section of it."

According to Christensen,

Ethics Bowl was originally just a collegiate level competition. It is currently funded by the Squire Family Foundation, a foundation for the promotion of philosophical discussion established in 2007, which pushed for Ethics Bowl to be open to high school students as well.

The New Trier team began preparation in late November, discussing the 15 scenarios and potential solutions, including the most ethical and unethical reasonings.

They met weekly, exploring all potential angles to the scenarios in an attempt to find the most ethical solutions.

The team carried a lot of momentum: "We go between totally disagreeing with everything the other person is saying to being able to jump off each other's points and edit them," Doede said. "Either way, the

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