

Take your choice of what's new

Following is a rundown of the new and/or revised high school elective courses recently approved by the Farmington Board of Education:

Medieval History - 800-1300: A one-semester course designed to help students explore major events and trends that defined the social, political, economic and religious structures of the Middle Ages. Written by North Farmington High School teacher Derek Day.

International Marketing: A one-semester course designed to expose students to concepts, principles and theories of marketing and the realities in the global framework. It also explores related careers in foreign languages, economics, marketing, finance, foreign services and importing/exporting. Written by marketing and economics teachers at the district's three high schools.

Contemporary Issues in Science: This course brings an integrated approach, with students researching current issues and presenting their findings in a variety of formats.

Written by teachers Steve Dail, Roy Lewis, Kevin Miesner, Joyce Tomlinson and Randall Wright.

Electrathon - An Integration of Science, Mathematics and Technology: The two-credit course melds science and technology. Students design, construct, test and race an electrical car. The course was previously taught by teachers Dail and Paul Bennett.

Principles of Weather and Climate: Students study the atmosphere, its physical nature and dynamics, and impact on life on earth both short- and long-term. The course also familiarizes students with the technological methods of analyzing and monitoring the atmosphere. Written by Bill Nedela.

Radio/Television Production: Students learn the basics of audio and video production, and also "critically analyze these two powerful media that have such an enormous effect on our society." Written by teachers Dean Cobb and Mark Wilson.

Housing and Interior Design (Revised): Students

learn the necessary tools to become "competent housing consumers" and learn about career opportunities. Revised by teachers Sharon Drochak, Kathryn Chrzanowski, Linda Lethmon, Joette Morden and A. Sutachek.

Parenting/Child Development I (Revised): Learning how to become responsible parents is one of the main objectives of this course, updated by Drochak, Chrzanowski, Lethmon, Morden and Sutachek.

Foods & Nutrition I (Revised): This course helps students go beyond the basics to cover food science, diet and health, cultural heritage diversity, food preparation, conservation, contemporary trends and technology and career opportunities. Revised by Drochak, Chrzanowski, Lethmon, Morden and Sutachek.

Personal Finance (Revised): Banking and investing skills are part of what students tackle in this course, updated by Drochak, Chrzanowski, Lethmon, Morden, Sutachek and Thomas Evasic.

Classes from page A1

and Climate, Electrathon and Radio/Television Production. The board also approved revisions to courses on parenting-child development, nutrition, personal finance and interior design.

"These kinds of opportunities for kids speak very well about what we do," said Fouchey, patting a stack of stapled course descriptions about one-inch thick. "It's commitment to quality."

According to school board President Priscilla Brouillette, the state of new and improved offerings represents "a remarkable array of electives that allows students to delve deeper into many subjects, including weather, personal finance..."

"I think we were all very proud on the board that we were able to approve such innovative new classes," Brouillette said. Fouchey said the move to block scheduling became a catalyst for the variety of new offerings. Teachers and other staff members brainstormed courses that could challenge and further inspire students while also offering up an expanded menu of curriculum choices - to help fill seven class periods instead of six, under the old system. (Students do not attend every class every day.)

Two of the new courses Fouchey is particularly excited about are International Marketing and Contemporary Issues in Science.

"It's a course about understanding... how things are handled from culture to culture," Fouchey said about the marketing elective.

He mentioned a couple of



Jerry Fouchey

advertising "snafus" from the past where such an approach might have been beneficial. One of them, from the 1960s, had to do with the Chevy Nova.

"Which in Spanish means 'no go,'" Fouchey said.

And Japan isn't much of a successful market for American-made automobiles because - at least until several years ago - the steering wheel continued to be installed on the "American" side of the dashboard.

Fouchey said International Marketing certainly will gain in enrollment. One definite source is the district's English as a second language student population, which is increasing every year.

The elective also should always have a wealth of current events from which teachers can fill 85-minute blocks. For example, the recent rioting at the

World Trade Organization in Seattle could have spurred "enough" material for one month.

Meanwhile, Contemporary Issues in Science is a researched-based integrated course, giving students a chance to probe current issues. Presentations could be made in many formats. Among those listed in the course description are lectures, photo displays, logos, paintings and even comic books.

Fouchey acknowledged that, as challenging as the courses are expected to be, students probably will have fun learning, simply because of the various ways to approach and present the subject.

Having such electives available to students, noted Brouillette, fosters enthusiasm and creativity that they can only carry with them beyond graduation.

"Sometimes electives are what keeps them motivated," Brouillette said. "In many cases, it enhances their school day, so they don't have to just take required academics. We feel high school is the time that that should happen, to explore."

RRRASOC coordinator named to national board

Heidi Jo Wayco has been elected to the board of the National

Recycling Coalition for a three-year term. Wayco is recycling

coordinator with the Resource Recovery and Recycling Authority of Southwest Oakland County.

RRRASOC members are Farmington, Farmington Hills, Novi, South Lyon, Southfield, Walled Lake and Wixom and Lyon Township.

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The Farmington Observer

A HomeTown Communications Network™ publication
33411 Grand River, Farmington, MI 48335
(On the southwest corner of Grand River and Farmington Rds.)

SUBSCRIPTION RATES:

CARRIER DELIVERY	MAIL DELIVERY
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REFLECTIONS on a year gone by

This has been a difficult year for some... a merciful year for others. We ask you to join us in expressing our sympathies to the families we have served during the past twelve months.

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