Whether it is through the reading of The Wall Street Journal for an economics class, observing the Rhode Island Supreme Court in session for American Government, interviewing a Vietnam veteran for U.S. History, touring historic Newport, participating in the school-wide debate or researching primary source documents on the Internet or in the school’s archives, students taking classes in the History and Social Science Department become actively engaged in their studies. Events in recent history once again confirm the importance of recognizing increasing global interdependence and the demands it places on all citizens to understand the complexities of both our nation and our world. All courses in the department strive to examine the subject matter in order to apply the knowledge and skills acquired to understanding and participating in today’s world. The department offers a rigorous program with a range of courses available for every student through his/her St. George’s career. The basic curriculum seeks to take students beyond memorization to a level of comprehension, coherence and critical thinking. Such skills are fostered through classroom discussions generally incorporating the Socratic method in order to bring forth diverse perspectives and interpretations. Students in all courses must harness the power of effective communication through oral, written and computer-generated presentations. Through this process students acquire an appreciation for the past, a respect for social systems and a sense of civic responsibility, with an ultimate department goal of fostering and encouraging a lifelong interest in the society and world in which we live.

The Modern World: History 210

Open to third- and fourth-formers
This yearlong course takes a comparative approach to modern world history, and begins by examining the origins of the Western concept of democracy. Students then focus on the United States, its constitutional foundations, individual rights and civil liberties and the structure and function of American elections. Students will study the Western tradition of citizenship in order to understand their own evolving roles and responsibilities in the modern world. In the second semester, the lens of inquiry widens to the political, economic and social systems in Latin America, Asia, Africa and Europe. Students each choose a particular country for in-depth study, culminating in a research paper and oral presentations. Throughout the course there is an emphasis on enhancing students’ knowledge of world geography. They will also become conversant with contemporary issues through daily reading of The New York Times, as well as on-line information perspectives from international sources news organizations such as the BBC. The Modern World is the History Department’s foundation course. As such, it stresses further development of a student’s ability to read closely; to write and speak clearly; and to gather, organize and analyze information from a variety of primary and secondary sources. In collaboration with the Director of Library Services, students are carefully guided through all stages of writing a research paper. Teachers of the course hope to foster a global perspective and an interest in historical inquiry.

Asian Civilizations: History 220

Open to third- and fourth-formers
Asia is home to great civilizations that at one time were the most powerful in the world. In the late 20th and early 21st century, this region has been returning to global power. Students of history are compelled to ask, what circumstances, experiences and values gave rise to these societies? In this class, students study the underpinnings of Asian civilizations through an interdisciplinary approach that includes history, religion, philosophy and the arts. Students study the history of China, Korea, Japan and India to understand how these regions developed from the ancient era until the “Arrival of the West” in the 19th century. Special focus is on the evolution of politics and culture in India and China over the 20th century. The main text for the course is Rhoads Murphey’s A History of Asia (Sixth Edition). Supplemental texts include Benjamin Hoff’s The Tao of Pooh, Richard Kim’s Lost Names, website
readings, films, and multiple articles and book chapter excerpts. Assessments will include reading and geography quizzes, short papers, oral presentations, tests, a mid-term exam, a final exam and a research paper in the second semester. This course is not open to those students who intend to enroll in or have completed World Religions. Completion of Asian Civilizations fulfills one semester or one trimester of the graduation requirement in Theology & Religious Studies.

**Advanced Placement European History: History 300/A**

*Open by invitation to fourth-, fifth- and sixth-formers*

This course examines European history in-depth from the Renaissance to the present and is designed for students who possess an intense interest in the study of history as well as strong reading and writing skills. Students study the critical events, trends and people that shaped European history. An important element of the course is analyzing and interpreting primary source documents, such as Machiavelli's *The Prince*; Locke's *Second Treatise on Government*; Voltaire's *Candide*; and Hitler’s *Mein Kampf*. Students prepare in-class oral presentations, computer-generated presentations and write a major research paper. This course prepares students for the Advanced Placement Examination in May. Texts for the course may include McKay, Hill and Buckler's *A History of Western Society*; Tierney's *Great Issues in Western Civilization*; Bolt’s *A Man for All Seasons* and Koestler’s *Darkness at Noon*. Manchester’s *A World Lit Only by Fire: The Medieval Mind and the Renaissance* is assigned as the summer reading selection in preparation for this course.

**United States History: History 400**

*Open to fifth- and sixth-formers*

This yearlong course provides a survey of American history from the pre-contact era through the modern world. Specific themes include political and economic factors that have influenced the major events in America’s past, the history of America’s expansion into world affairs, and the role of women, African-, Native- and Hispanic-Americans in the development of the United States. More generally, this course seeks to give students broad exposure to the survey of American History, while teaching them to think from a variety of perspectives and connect historical patterns over time. Students complete nightly assigned reading from the main textbook *The Americans* (Littell) while supplementing their knowledge through primary and secondary sources. Additional assignments will consist of tests and quizzes on content, short writing assignments, in-class debates, research essays, and collaborative projects. Significant attention is given to note-taking, research skills, historiography and critical analysis. Each student writes a final essay on a topic of their choosing which will highlight their mastery of the aforementioned skills.

**Advanced Placement U.S. History/American Studies: History 450/A**

*(Required co-enrollment in English 450/A: AP English/American Studies)*

*Open by invitation to fifth- and sixth-formers*

Students who enroll in History 450 also enroll in English 450/A: AP English / American Studies. The United States History portion of American Studies will focus on a survey of the major events of America’s past. A second goal is to help students think like an historian by studying the major events from multiple historical perspectives and primary source analysis. The main text is *The American Pageant* (Kennedy and Cohen). Daily assignments consist of 10-20 pages of textbook reading and written notes are required for these assignments. Pageant is a college-level text and covers America’s history in great depth. Excellent reading comprehension skills, well-grounded study habits and a genuine enjoyment for the study of history are the main requirements of this course. In other words, this course must be one of your “top” academic priorities. Supplemental reading assignments will come from *The American
Political Tradition (Hofstadter) and Interpretations of American History (Grob and Billias). Students can count on two to three graded assignments each week consisting of reading quizzes, essay tests in class and out of class five paragraph essays based on Hofstadter’s book. Once students are added to the class list by their demonstrated commitment to this rigorous history course, there is no option to switch to an alternative course. There will be two summer reading selections: Bunker Hill by Nathaniel Philbrick and Empire of Wealth by John Steele Gordon. Students will be required to write two essays on these titles that will be submitted on the first day of class and will “count” for 20% of the first trimester grade. The course will prepare students for the AP exam in May. All students in this course are required to prepare for and sit for this exam.

**Global Studies: History/Social Science 510**  
*(Spring travel component)*

*Open to sixth-formers*

As peoples and cultures are brought into closer contact in the 21st Century, this seminar-style year-long course will allow students to study how these exchanges shape the world in which they live and will hopefully lead. The course will begin with an examination of the forces of globalization, focusing on political, economic, and cultural theories. After a preliminary exploration of international relations and global challenges, students will focus in greater depth on one country and the development of a research-based independent study. Students will then travel to the selected country during the spring vacation for field research before returning to campus and producing a thesis-length paper to be defended before a committee and shared with the larger St. George’s School community.

**World War II: History 521**

*Open to sixth-former; Prerequisite U.S. History*

This trimester course will focus on World War II specifically, the rise and fall of Nazi Germany. The required text is *The Nazi Seizure of Power* by William Sheridan Allen. This book focuses on the Nazi seizure of power in one German town, Northeim. In addition, Allen explores the nature of Nazi rule in Northeim during WW II. Students will choose another title to complement the required reading. Assignments will include: reading quizzes, document analysis, and essay writing with a research piece. Offered fall only.

**Vietnam: History 522**

*Open to sixth-formers; Prerequisite U.S. History*

This trimester course follows on History 521, World War II, to focus on the American experience in Vietnam, 1954-1975. The required text is *America’s Longest War* by George Herring. This book is a thorough discussion of these themes: Why America got involved in a major land war in Asia? Why did the American effort not meet with success? What was the impact of the war on the United States—at home? Students will choose another title to complement the required reading. Assignments will include: reading quizzes, document analysis, and essay writing with a research piece. Offered winter only.

**Historical Biography: History 523**

*Open to sixth-formers; Prerequisite U.S. History*

In the spring, the department offers a form of “Choice Reading” in the form of Historical Biography. Students will choose two historical biographies of significant figures in American or world history. Assignments will include two six- to eight-page essays on reading choices and each essay will include a required research piece. In addition, the course will meet at least once per week to study and debate current events. Offered spring only.
**Psychology: Social Science 543**

*Open to sixth-formers*

This trimester course provides an introduction to one of the most popular college courses. Its unique design promotes skill development in the areas of collaboration, communication, analysis and discovery. After establishing the foundational knowledge of the field, key concepts in psychology will be explored based on student interest and choice. Individual and small group investigations lead to student presentations as units of instruction to their peers in the form of Wikis, video presentations, lectures, discussions and facilitated discussion panels. In addition to the prominent theorists and diagnostic categories, students often choose to explore their interests in the areas of social, abnormal, forensic and sport psychology. An electronic textbook is used for this class along with significant journal articles, other scholarly work, and information from contemporary media. Although there is no academic prerequisite, this course requires strong organizational and time management skills, as students will be expected to work independently inside and outside of the classroom. Offered spring only.

**Advanced Placement American Government and Politics: History/Social Science 610/A**

*Open by invitation to sixth-formers; Prerequisite U.S. History*

This course, a college-level introduction to American government and political science, prepares students for successful completion of the Advanced Placement American Government and Politics Exam offered each May. Students develop an understanding of the history and workings of the American political system, including an in-depth examination of the institutions and policy processes of the U.S. Congress, the president, the bureaucracy and the federal courts. Likewise, elections, political parties, interest groups and civil liberties and civil rights issues are studied. Students examine the constitutional underpinnings and critical historical events that have helped to shape the American system of government in order to attain a better understanding of the current workings of the government. Students analyze primary source documents, including decisions from Supreme Court cases and acts of the legislature. Students prepare a significant research paper each semester. The basic text is Lineberry’s *Government in America*. Current events are studied through subscriptions to *The Week*. This course prepares students for the AP exam. However, students may choose an alternative research project in lieu of the AP exam.

**Advanced Placement Economics: History/Social Science 620/A**

*Open by invitation to sixth-formers*

This yearlong course offers a broad examination of the principles of microeconomic theory and macroeconomic analysis. After introducing basic economic concepts like opportunity costs, the concept of scarcity, and the law of comparative advantage, the course of study focuses on marginal utility analysis; the laws of supply and demand; the law of diminishing returns; the costs of production; profit maximization; the theories of the firm in perfect and imperfect competition; factor markets and international trade. Beginning in the second trimester, students focus on macroeconomics. Primary emphasis is placed upon developing an understanding of aggregate demand and supply; monetary and fiscal policy; money and banking; unemployment; Gross Domestic Product; the proper role of government; and current macroeconomic issues. The course prepares students to take the Advanced Placement examinations in micro and macroeconomics in May. The course also examines economics in the larger context of politics, history, and public policy and focuses on developing skills applicable to careers in corporate and business law and finance. Texts include Mankiw’s *Principles of Economics* (7th edition), *The Wall Street Journal*, Wheelan’s *Naked Economics* and Mankiw’s *Principles of Economics Study Guide*. 