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A message for Year 8 students and their parents

In Stage 4 (Years 7 and 8) at J.J. Cahill Memorial High School, all students have studied the same courses. This has given them an opportunity to try various subjects and to discover where their interests and abilities lie.

In Stage 5 (Years 9 and 10) students will begin their courses. English, Mathematics, Science, History, Geography and PDHPE are compulsory.

Students will, however, be able to choose some other courses. These courses are called electives. Students may choose an elective because they are interested in that subject or because they wish to develop skills for a future career.

For 2016, students will choose 3 electives. They will do two 100hr courses, one in 2016 and one in 2017. The 100hr course for 2017 will be selected in Term 4 2016. Two courses will be studied for 200hrs in in both Year 9 and Year 10.

This will mean all students will have a wider experience in the scope of the different disciplines by the end of Stage 5 (Year 10).

When it comes time to choose their courses for the HSC they will have experienced a wide range of skills in different disciplines. This will enable them to have a more realistic indication of the skills they need to pursue their career options.

It is important that these elective choices are discussed. Students are encouraged to pursue their interests.

R. Cowin
Principal
What electives should I choose?

Deciding what electives to choose is very important!

You should choose electives because you are interested in the things you will be doing in these courses.

You should not choose an elective because of:

- **Friends**: Your friends have different abilities and interests.
- **Teachers**: Don’t select a course because you think your favourite teacher may be taking the course.
- **Careers**: Any electives you do at this stage will not get you a job.

Stage 5 is the time for you to try as many different courses as you can. When you are selecting your courses for Stage 6, you will have to make some decisions about your future career. Until then, choose courses that you will enjoy doing.

Please be aware many elective courses involve a course fee which covers the cost of specific materials and resources. Families are asked to keep in mind the cost of these course fees when students are choosing electives.

**Course costs**

Many of the Stage 6 courses require fee payment to cover the cost of materials. There will be additional costs for excursions and specific external training for some courses. Fees must be paid by the end of Week 2, Term 1 otherwise students will need to select another course.

Funding is available, via application to the Principal for those students whose families are experiencing genuine and substantiated financial hardship.

If students drop courses or sign out of school they may apply for a refund of fees, based on pro rata costings, subject to no other payments being due.

Families are asked to keep in mind the cost of these course fees when students are choosing electives.
Instructions for choosing electives

This booklet contains information about the electives that will be offered to students in 2016.

If there are not enough students wanting to do a particular elective, the school will NOT be able to place it on the timetable.

It is important that students and parents realise that students may not be granted their choice, it depends on the curriculum needs of the year as a whole.

Students must return their ELECTIVE choices to a box marked ‘Year 9 2016 Subject Selections’ in the Administration Office by 8.30am Tuesday 29th July 2015.

“The best advice for students is to choose those courses in which they are interested, perform well and which provide a suitable background for their future careers.”

Professor George Cooney
Macquarie University (Education Faculty)
BIG HISTORY

Brief Outline:
A new course that covers the BIG questions in life. Every wondered how the Universe began and where it came from? How did humans get to where we are today? How does life continue and what developments have been essential to human society in the 21st Century.
This course is a journey through 13.8 billion years of History. If you have been wondering about these big questions well you are in good company. So has Bill Gates. This course has been sponsored by Mr Gates who has funded the development and resources for the course and is currently guided by Professor David Christian at Macquarie University.
The Big History course combines Science, History, Geography and Philosophy Theology and many more interesting areas of study. This means that the course links together ideas and concepts from all these disciplines to encourage students to learn about the questions of life. It also develops skills to test information for reliability and builds critical thinking. Big History is an academic subject that will challenge and test all learners.

Unit Outline
1 What do we know and how do we know it?
2 Where do we all come from?
3 What makes us humans?
4 How have humans changed things?
5 Where are we now and where are we heading?

General Comments
Big History is a subject that builds the capacity to learn and will encourage questioning. The subject matter will expand your brain to new levels and make you think BIG. It is subject that a lot of students who have left school wished they could have studied.

COMMERCE

Brief Outline:
The aim of the Commerce Course is to enable young people to develop the knowledge, understanding and skills to research and develop solutions to consumer, financial, legal, business and employment issues in order to make informed and responsible decisions as individuals and as part of the community.

100hr Course
Topic 1: Consumer Choice
Topic 2: Personal Finance
Topic 3: Law and Society
Topic 4: Employment Issues

200hr Course
Topic 1: Consumer Choice
Topic 2: Personal Finance
Topic 3: Law and Society
Topic 4: Employment Issues
Topic 5: Law in Action
Topic 6: Running a Business
Topic 7: Investing
Topic 8: Towards Independence
**General Comments:**
Commerce is an important and popular subject. Students build their written and verbal discussion skills whilst learning important life skills such as budgeting, the rights of young people, how to buy a car and how to construct a resume.

It gives students an understanding of senior subjects such as: Business Studies, Economics and Legal Studies as well as developing valuable commercial life skills.

**DRAMA & PERFORMANCE STUDIES**

**Brief Outline:**
In Drama and Performance Studies students will have the opportunity to explore the areas of:

- Improvisation (Role playing)
- Playbuilding (Acting and Creating Scenes and Situations)
- Dramatic Forms (Mime, Commedia, Comedy, Masks)
- Performance Skills (Acting, Voice, Movement)

During this course, students will enhance their dramatic skills through the development of their imagination, intellect and emotions. This is a practical course which allows students to collaborate with their peers in a creative and dynamic environment.

**Assessment:**
Students will be assessed through observation of individual and group progress and written assessments on aspects of the history of theatre.

**General Comments:**
Drama is fun, exciting and open to all! Also, the collaborative skills students develop are essential for many other areas of the curriculum.

**Course Fee:** $20 per year

**FOOD TECHNOLOGY**

**Brief Outline:**
Food Technology focuses on the study of foods in domestic, commercial and industrial settings.

The course covers areas such as:

- food preparation and presentation
- the history of Australian foods and eating patterns
- the nutritional needs of various groups of people (eg teenagers)
- marketing foods – packaging and labeling
- food hygiene and safety
- food processing and preservation.

**Assessment:**
Based on a combination of practical work and class activities.

**General Comments:**
Students participate in many practical activities centered around the preparation and presentation of a wide variety of foods for different occasions.

**Course Fee:**
100hr: $60
200hr: Yr9 & Yr10 - $60 per year
ELECTIVE GEOGRAPHY

*Brief Outline:* The Geography Elective course provides students with the opportunity for learning through engagement with Geography content. It provides students with a broader understanding of the discipline of Geography and the processes of geographical inquiry, and enables depth studies through flexible programming of focus areas.

Topic 1: Focus Area- Physical Geography
Topic 2: Focus Area-Australia’s Neighbours
Topic 3: Focus Area-Political Geography

*Assessment:* A variety of assessment strategies will be used to measure student achievement. These will include: examinations, special interest research projects, oral presentations, group work, class tests, essay writing.

*General Comments:* Elective Geography is done in addition to the Mandatory Australian Geography Course, not instead of it. It provides students with a genuine interest in this subject, an opportunity to further develop their knowledge and skills, thereby preparing themselves for the senior school.

GRAPHICS TECHNOLOGY

*Brief Outline:* Graphics (or drawing) is seen as being an essential skill in the development of the individual, as it is a fundamental form of communication in the world of industry.

The ability to use Technical Drawing equipment to a satisfactory level, as well as rendering skills (as used in architectural drawing), will complement students’ use of computers.

Projects completed in both Computer Aided Drafting (CAD) and computer graphics, particularly in the area of design graphics, will give students a large range of drawing skills. These drawing skills are useful as work-related skills or for personal satisfaction. The CAD program AUTOSKETCH is compliant with industry CAD packages.

*Assessment:* Practical (Class work / set tasks) 70 %
Theory (CAD) 30 %

*General Comments:* No previous drawing knowledge or experience is necessary. This will be learnt during the course. Technical Drawing equipment and a professional Rotring Drawing Board will need to be purchased by students. CAD drawing use Autosketch programs.

Course Fee: $150 Professional drawing kit.
$ 20 per year for consumable resources

INDUSTRIAL TECHNOLOGY - MULTIMEDIA

*Brief Outline:* Industrial Technology – Multimedia is a practical based course, with a focus area that provides opportunities for ALL students to develop knowledge, understanding and skills in multimedia and associated industries. Practical activities will provide opportunities for students to develop specific knowledge, understanding and skills in designing, producing and evaluating related to multimedia technologies.
These activities will include:

- graphic images - file formats, capture and manipulation
- sound files - creation, recording and editing
- video capture, creation and presentation
- computer animations
- green screen technologies
- webpage design
- design principles in multimedia presentations
- links to industry and career paths
- workplace communication skills - sketching, drawing, storyboards.

Assessment:
Students will use a range of equipment, tools and machines in the multimedia industry which may include: analogue and/or digital cameras, scanners, video capture cards, removable storage devices and printers, as well a wide variety of computer software programs including Adobe Photo elements, Adobe Premiere Elements/Pro, Flash and Dreamweaver.

General Comments:
Students will need an A3 presentation folder and a 2 GB USB thumb drive

Course Fee:  $50 per year

INDUSTRIAL TECHNOLOGY – TIMBER

Brief Outline:
This course involves the study of the wood based areas of cabinet work and wood machining. A variety of wood based projects will be designed and constructed ranging in size and complexity as students’ skills develop. The ability to plan, design, construct and appreciate, all valuable skills in a variety of scenarios, are a focus of this course.

The projects that may be made by the students include:

- wood tray
- key rack
- folding stool
- clock
- a wood lathe project
- large towel rack stand
- trinket/jewellery box
- coffee table
- optional third project

Assessment:
Practical 70 %
Theory 30 %

General Comments:
Well equipped practical rooms with dust extraction systems are available for students to use.

A wide range of power tools are also available.

Course Fee:  100hr: $50
             200hr: Yr9 - $50 Yr10 - $80
INFORMATION & SOFTWARE TECHNOLOGY

**Brief Outline:**
This course offers students the opportunity to develop their information skills using equipment they may not readily have access to at home.

During this course students have the opportunity to use digital cameras and video technology to work on multimedia, web page and internet design. Other areas that may be covered include database design, networking systems, robotics and software development and programming.

**Assessment:**
Assessment will be based on project work where the students will be assessed on their solutions to the problems being posed.

**General Comments:**
This is a course that will allow students to develop their Information Technology skills and prepare them to explore the new and emerging technologies that are so rapidly being developed.

**Course Fee:** $40 per year

LANGUAGES - (FRENCH, SPANISH)

**Brief Outline:**
The study of a Language other than English (LOTE) is highly recommended for young people in today's increasingly competitive world. In Stage 5 students can study:

- French
- Spanish

Students may choose to study ONE or even TWO languages.
Learning a language as an elective enhances students' literacy and communication skills in both the target language and English. Students learn to be effective communicators.

**Why study a language?**
- The Hispanic culture continues to have global impact on culture, architecture, art and literature.
- Spanish is spoken by more than 495 million people worldwide and is the official language in 21 countries.
- According to figures from UNESCO (The United Nations' Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) Spanish is the 3rd most spoken language in the world after Mandarin Chinese and English by number of native speakers and as a second language.
- Spanish will increasingly open doors to new job opportunities and trade internationally.
- If you can learn Spanish, you'll have a head start in learning the other Latin-based languages such as French, Italian and Portuguese.

Learning a language as an elective enhances students' literacy and communication skills in both the target language and English. Students learn to be effective communicators.

**The specific aims of the courses are:**
- to develop the four main literacy skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing.
- to learn to communicate in the target language in realistic situations
- to gain enjoyment from the mastery of another language
- to gain an increased understanding of the cultures in the Spanish-speaking world.
Assessment:
A range of assessment strategies will be used including:
- Class tests – listening and writing tests, group work, film appreciation etc.
- use of ICT skills to produce individual text and media etc.
- oral presentations
- research cultural assignments
- half-yearly and yearly exams

General Comments:
- is enjoyable and fulfilling and provides variety and interest to the overall educational experience
- promotes an understanding and appreciation of different cultures, widens student’s perception of the world and promotes tolerance of diversity and difference
- increases problem-solving skills, lateral thinking
- improves the memory, self-discipline and self-esteem
- enhances intelligence / ‘boosts’ brain power, makes students more creative in their thinking

Learning another language can help students gain a number of important life skills, including interpersonal skills, communication skills, all vital in any career

MUSIC

Brief Outline:
The Stage 5 Music course covers four areas:

- **Performance:** All students will be required to play either keyboard or guitar. As well as this they must play one other instrument. The learning of this instrument will be an examinable part of the course. Singing will also be a regular activity for all students.
- **Composition:** Understanding chord / scale relationships and writing musical compositions in a variety of styles using traditional notation and computer notation programs.
- **Musicology:** Exploring chords, scales, internals, rhythms and the study of different genres, artists and performance techniques.
- **Aural:** Learning how to identify different instruments in a broad range of music genres and exploring which elements create sounds which are typical of those music genres.

Assessment:
Students will be assessed on the following:
- Aural: 25% (Half Yearly / Yearly listening tests)
- Composition: 25% (Song writing, improvisation, computer generated)
- Musicology: 25% (theory and topic work)
- Performance: 25% (vocal / instrumental)

General Comments:
The course caters for students interested in performance, singing and song writing. Students who have gained specialist skills on other instruments will extend their knowledge in other areas of musical development.
The course aims to build confidence in performance areas not only on instruments but through presentation of musicology assessments in viva-voce and speech format.

Course Fee:
- 100hr: $40
- 200hr: Yr9 & Yr 10 - $40 per year
PHOTOGRAPHIC & DIGITAL MEDIA

Brief Outline:
Students will learn to understand the field of photographic and digital media. Students will investigate relevant events, photographers, artists, designers, agencies and critical accounts of photographic and digital media practice.
The main areas of study include:

- **MAKING PHOTOGRAPHIC AND DIGITAL WORKS**: students will make photographic and digital works that they will build into a portfolio. They will use a range of material and techniques in still interactive and moving forms. They will make photographic and digital works for different audiences, exhibitions, displays, publications and reproductions.

- **CRITICAL AND HISTORICAL STUDY**: students will learn about photographic and digital artists working in Australia, internationally and from different times and places.

Assessment:
A variety of assessment strategies will be used to measure student achievement. These will include:

- Half Yearly and Yearly examinations
- Marks in progress for making photographic and digital media and homework
- Regular submission of Photographic and Digital Media Journal
- Critical studies of photographers and digital media artists
- Historical studies of work in the form of assignments, reports, presentations and essays
- Participation in exhibitions, competitions, displays, excursions.

General Comments:
The broad areas of photographic & Digital Media as print, interactive and moving forms are extremely relevant and are of fundamental interest to students. Much of their knowledge of the world and their notions of cultural identity come from the photographic and digital images that permeate the visual arts, television, film, video, internet, multi-media and mass media environments which surround them.

**Course Fee:**

- 100hr: $100
- 200hr: Yr9 & Yr 10 - $100 per year

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY & SPORTS STUDIES

Brief Outline:
Students study a wide range of lifelong physical activities, including recreational, leisure and adventure pursuits, competitive and non-competitive games, individual and group physical fitness activities, and the use of physical activity for therapy and remediation.

This elective promotes the concept of learning through movement and provides opportunities for students to develop their movement skills, analyse movement performance and assist the performance of others. Students will engage in a balance of 50% theory and 50% practical lessons to achieve the course outcomes.

Assessment:
Students will work towards particular performance goals, pursue a formal qualification or examine issues of interest related to the physical, emotional, social, cultural or scientific dimensions of physical activity and sport.

A variety of assessment strategies will be used including:

- individual and group tasks
- oral presentations
- field studies
- research projects
• class tests

General Comments:
Physical Activity & Sports Studies represents a broad view of physical activity and the many ways individuals can build activity into their lifestyle. Recreation, physical activity, sport and related health fields provide a legitimate career pathway into the Sport and Recreation industry.

TEXTILES TECHNOLOGY

Brief Outline:
Textiles and their products are used by everyone.

Textiles and Design is a course which studies a variety of areas such as:
• Fashion design and interior decorating
• Commercial patterns and garment making
• Fabric and garment decoration – using fabric dyes and paints etc
• Leisure crafts

Assessment:
Based on both practical work and class activities.

General Comments:
Students complete many interesting practical projects to gain skills in designing, garment construction and leisure time activities.

Course Fee: $20 per year plus materials.

VISUAL ARTS

Brief Outline:
60% Art making 40% Critical and Historical Studies

Through a variety of skills and approaches, Visual Arts students build an understanding of the role of art, in all forms of media, in contemporary and historical cultures and visual worlds. Students address questions related to artistic meaning and value, developing qualified judgments to make and interpret artworks.

Students will investigate techniques and concepts of a variety of 2D, 3D and 4D artists and develop their own body of works, selected from the following:

2D: Painting, printmaking, photography and digital media, graphics
3D: Sculpture, installations, designed objects,
4D: Time-based installation works, animation, video

Assessment:
A variety of assessment strategies will be used to measure students’ creative and interpretive skills.

• Regular submission of the Visual Arts Process Diary where students explore ideas, make preliminary sketches, notes, diagrams, experiment with materials, explore alternatives, solve problems, record stimuli and make reflections.
• Progress and completion marks for individual and group artworks
• Critical studies of works by a range of artists, designers and architects in the form of reviews, research, role playing and written responses
• Historical studies of contemporary and historical cultures and visual worlds in the form of reviews, research, role playing and written responses
**General Comments:**

Visual Arts places great value on the development of students’ intellectual and practical autonomy, reflective action, critical judgement and their understanding of the visual and interactive world. Visual Arts encourages the creative and confident use of technologies including traditional and contemporary art forms and emerging applications in digital media.

Emphasis is placed on the process of interpreting and developing.

Students use the conceptual framework with the structural, subjective, cultural and postmodern frames as a basis to understanding and interpreting visual forms of communication. The knowledge, understanding, skills and values gained from the Visual Arts course assist students in building conceptual, practical and critical skills.

**Course Fee:**  $60 per year