



ACADEMICS INTRODUCTION

The academic program at Granada High School has always been stellar. Of course it has changed since January 1964 when the first students entered classrooms that had no heat or electricity. State requirements like driver's education and vocational tests are no longer required; nor are mini-courses in jewelry making, bicycling, dance and the Vietnam War offered. But the school's curriculum has always reflected the highest academic standards reflective of a liberal arts education.

A student from 1964 entering Granada today would gasp at the course-offering catalog of 2014. There are seventeen Advanced Placement courses offered. Freshmen are required to take a F.I.T. (Freshmen In Transition) class--a cross-curricular course designed to bridge the transition to high school by providing students with academic and social/emotional support. Students learn organization, note taking and study skills; technology etiquette and computer basics; character development, and Granada High School ethics and expectations are also part of the curriculum. Students also complete a four-year academic and career success plan in this class.¹³⁰

Today's students also have a chance of taking courses offered by the Regional Occupational Program (ROP). ROP classes are offered to juniors and seniors in high schools throughout the Tri-Valley and emphasize the development of skills necessary for employment and career development.

Granada has, from its inception, investigated ways of bringing relevant education to its students. Mini-courses were offered in the early years, and alumni still reflect on some of these courses and how they stand out in their memory. Early on, Granada partnered with Las Positas College by having the college offer a 7AM calculus class on the GHS campus. Of course, this made it easy for GHS students to take a college class, thus earning college credits. It also eased staffing and allowed other courses to be offered on campus.

The Marine Biology was extremely popular for the last forty-five years. In fifty years only three different teachers have taught this class. Roland Carlson, who taught it until retirement in the 1990s, developed it and then Terri Grass who is still teaching the class picked it up. (Christine Capitani also taught the class when Ms. Grass was on leave). One side effect of this class was Mr. Carlson drove a large SUV, which was great for the many field trips the class took. After this retirement, Ms. Grass inquired about the possibility of getting a van to transport students on the fieldtrips. Through the generosity of Codioli Motors, a van was donated to Granada and is still in use today.

Just as the early teachers at GHS experimented with large group, small group instructional methodologies, other examples of interdisciplinary instruction have woven through Granada's academic landscape. Perhaps the most successful of these classes to incorporate interdisciplinary

¹³⁰ 2014-2015 Granada High School Course Catalog and Planning Guide, p. 47

instruction was an American Studies class in the 1990s. This class grouped juniors into the same English/United States History class where the teachers wove American Literature through the historical periods. Over a three-year period students created a class project each year. One year the class was turned into a museum. Another year the class developed a quilt with each square representing different aspects of American history and literature. The class then teamed with the home economics department students, who sewed the quilt together. Finally, a calendar was developed in a third year.

An ambitious school wide writing project grew in the 1990s. The English department created a school wide writing rubric. The intent was to teach a common writing standard across the curriculum. It still represents one of the best examples of an interdisciplinary quest for consistency across all areas of the school's curriculum.

One area that has changed dramatically over the past fifty years is the industrial arts program. The "shop" building was one of the first buildings completed on campus. Besides wood and metal "shop" students also studied drafting, auto and electronics. Again, a GHS student in 1964 would not recognize what is being taught in these classes today. Because of high economic expense, the woods program was cancelled in the 1990s, and the metal class has few sections today. Schools, and not just Granada, could not afford the computer-aided equipment required to offer these classes. Automotive Technology is still a popular offering, but the other classes have morphed into Architectural Design, Principles of Engineering, Electronics, Robotics, Computer Applications, Computer Accounting, Computer Science and Software Engineering, Computer Graphics, Game Design, Computer Programming, and Web Page Design.

This publication was not designed to investigate thoroughly the many facets of academic life over the past 50 years. We did select, however, five classes from different eras to highlight the innovative spirit of Granada.

AEROSPACE CLASS

One class that illustrated the innovative and forward thinking that has been part of Granada from its inception was the Aerospace class taught in the late 1970s by Linda Williams.

The class started in the fall 1977, and by the next year had 80 students registered. The class itself was not designed to teach the students how to fly, but Ms. Williams had the training and credential to "sign off" on students so they could take the written private pilot's exam.¹³¹

The Granada Supporters were instrumental in establishing this class as they donated a used \$1400 flight simulator. Besides the flight simulator, the class was a prime example of the interdisciplinary approach to education so important to educators. As Williams explained, "They learn English, math, physiology, meteorology, history and geography."¹³²

¹³¹ *The Herald*, October 12, 1978, p.1

¹³² *The Herald*, October 12, 1978, p.1

She further explained that she participated in situations at Mather Air Force Base and learned what happened when the brain did not get enough oxygen. Through experiments in class, students learned the physiology involved, as part of a hands-on approach, rather than strictly from the textbook.

This class, unfortunately, was short-lived due to various reasons. One, few teachers had the experience of Ms. Williams, so the course was tied up in one individual; secondly, the financial climate in the State changed with the passage of Prop 13; and finally, the State Department of Education increased academic standards which had an adverse affect on elective courses.

MINI COURSE: VIETNAM

There was never a dull moment for GHS in the 1970's. There was controversy swirling around about the famous TUFOLD scheduling system. This module type schedule was seen by some as too confusing, as well as full of conflicts, which caused some students not to attend one of their classes on any given day.

Also in the 1970's the GHS Social Science department seemed to be in the "headlines" on a regular basis. The "70's" were an explosive decade with many national issues that divided Americans across political and social viewpoints. Many people saw the department as a strong one, with many excellent and experienced teachers. Others viewed it with less enthusiasm, believing that some of the teachers communicated a much too liberal view of national and world events.

Attempting to make use of the school's flexible schedule, as well as trying to offer students the most relevant curriculum possible, the Social Science department created a number of "mini-courses" which would be available to interested students. The courses were varied in content, and could be taken as electives, with or without credit. The mini- courses usually were ten weeks in length.

One of these mini-courses was on the Vietnam War. This course started in the spring of 1970, during a very turbulent time in American history when opinions of American involvement in that war were greatly divided. On top of that, the issue of the draft (this was way before our all-volunteer army) was a hot button issue. Again, GHS was at the forefront of the issue, sponsoring some seminars about the Selective Service (draft) how it worked and what the responsibilities of students were once they turned 18 years of age.

Within this kind of highly charged political atmosphere, the Vietnam War mini course came under intense scrutiny by parents, community members and even some Board of Education members. There were letters to the editor in the local paper complaining about the content of the course, as well as the "political and philosophical leanings" of the teacher. On the other hand, many people were very supportive of the class, with students saying that they had learned many things about America's involvement in the war that they had never even realized before. All this made for great theater as once again the GHS Social Science department made headlines.

F.E.A.S.T (Food Education and Service Training)

The FEAST program began at Granada around 1968. It was conceived as an interdisciplinary approach to food service education. A team of teachers was trained in summer workshops at City College of San Francisco and San Francisco State University. The team consisted of teachers who taught food service, English and math and included a counselor. The program was sponsored by the California Home Economics Careers Department.

Joyce Werner, Ernie Dust (English) and Jerry March (Counseling) were on the first team. They trained at City College and had regular meetings to coordinate curriculum. Ms. Werner and the students served lunch once a week in the home economics room.

In 1972, Marjorie Henry was hired. The team consisted of Ernie Dust, Jerry March and Claudia Wanlin (English). At that time, the new Student Union was being built with a cafeteria kitchen. On December 7, 1972, the faculty dining room opened to regular, everyday service. The school budget did not support an extra prep period for the non-food teachers any longer, so it fell to the food service teacher to incorporate math and English into the curriculum. The counseling department continued to work closely with the program.



From the early 1970s until it closed in 1988, the FEAST dining room was a popular lunchtime attraction for the staff at Granada. The lunchroom had the décor of a restaurant and the students were the servers. A popular item on the menu was fresh soup. As the popularity of the program increased, it also became popular with administrators throughout the district. Simply put, it added a degree of sophistication and elegance to Granada High School.

Chefs from the American Culinary Federation sponsored an annual awards dinner. Students worked alongside chefs in preparing the meal. Scholarships and awards were given.

The program flourished and included catering jobs, field trips, and a healthy scholarship program and continued the daily lunch program until 1988. In the meantime, the funding changed to ROP.

After the restaurant closed in 1988, the program changed to work experience. The new title was ROP Hotel and Restaurant Occupations. Classes were taught at Granada, Foothill and Amador High Schools. Students were placed and supervised in jobs throughout the Livermore Valley.

The following are Marge Henry's reflections of the FEAST program:

I loved this program, especially with TUFOLD. Students were able to schedule a large block of time enabling them to complete a project. I believe it benefitted a great number of kids, particularly those who were more kinesthetic learners.

We enjoyed great support from City College, Diablo Valley College, the American Culinary Academy, the Golden Gate Restaurant Association, and

many hotels and restaurants where we went for field trips. Our trips on BART were eye openers for many students who had never been to San Francisco.

I have so many great memories from that time. We picked the excess pumpkins from Hagemann's patch the day after Halloween. They turned into pumpkin pies after quite a bit of messy processing and were sold at Thanksgiving.¹³³

LATIN

Latin was a traditional high school language class taught throughout the country in the 1960s. Catherine Freis was the first Latin teacher at Granada. Jim Willis took the class over in 1968 and taught it through 1981 when it was dropped from the curriculum, an unfortunate victim of Proposition 13. From 1968 through 1976, students enjoyed participating in the Latin Club, highlighted by Saturnalia, a reenactment of an ancient Roman festival, including the roasting of a pig and a toga party where "slaves" were auctioned off – even including Mr. Willis.

Routinely, there would be around 20-25 students in Latin 1, close to 20 students in Latin 2, and a handful (6-10 students) continuing on into 3rd and 4th year Latin. Because of the limited number of students in Latin 3 and 4, those two classes were usually offered only once per week, with a LARGE amount of homework assigned for the following week. According to Mr. Willis, at its height, Granada's Latin program had close to 70 students.

In about the mid 1980s, the first two years of Latin were reinstated into Granada's curriculum, but that only lasted for a couple of years.

As the reader might imagine, Latin attracted intellectuals and brainy "characters." To illustrate that point, the following is the student written description of the Latin Club which appeared in the 1976 yearbook: "The Latin Club has two chief purposes. The first is to provide a haven for the emotionally unstable, and the other is to promote the use of the abacus. This wild organization holds meetings during each week without a Wednesday."

FRESHMEN IN TRANSITION

With the introduction of the trimester schedule, Granada freshmen were introduced to F.I.T. – the "Freshman in Transition" course that all ninth graders take during their first trimester of high school. Now in its sixth year, F.I.T. has helped cultivate a positive campus culture of achievement by focusing on both opportunity and support. More students than ever are involved in Homecoming events, clubs, and athletics. Discipline concerns are down. And overall academic achievement has continued to improve. Along with F.I.T., numerous other elective courses have been introduced in all departments, including the core academic subjects, so that students can continue to expand their interests.

¹³³ Marge Henry, March 25, 2014