

# Curriculum Overview

Saint  
Mary's  
SCHOOL

You've got this.

2021-2022



# 10 Key Competencies



## 1. Collaboration

The ability to productively engage in a group setting, both face-to-face and virtually. An awareness of self and of others to move a team forward along common values and goals.



## 2. Communication

The balance of speaking and active listening, writing and reading. A strong grasp on the verbal and non-verbal aspects of expression.



## 3. Critical thinking

The utilization of novel and adaptive thinking, coupled with analytical skills, to form creative solutions that positively impact society.



## 4. Cross cultural intelligence

The ability to navigate and operate in, and adapt to, a globally connected world. The recognition that a diverse team drives innovation and productivity.



## 5. Growth mindset

The resiliency, dedication, hard work, and belief in self to accomplish any task. A commitment to being a lifelong learner.



## 6. New media literacy and computational thinking

The ability to critically assess, navigate, and create across diverse digital platforms. A strong grasp of this competency enhances effective communication and collaboration.



## 7. Self-expression

The ability to articulately share original thoughts and ideas in creative ways, while staying true to an authentic sense of self.



## 8. Self-directed learning

The demonstration of personal interests and the motivation to set goals and objectives to move those interests forward.



## 9. Servant leadership

A commitment to putting the good of a community and others before self-interests.



## 10. Social-emotional intelligence

The ability to accurately assess social cues, as well as the spoken and unspoken language around you. Social-emotional intelligence is the foundation for effective collaboration and meaning-making.

Sources: *Institute for the Future: Future Work Skills 2020* and *Partnership for 21st Century Learning*

## Mission

Saint Mary's School, a community dedicated to academic excellence and personal achievement, prepares young women for college and life. To accomplish our mission, Saint Mary's School:

- Challenges each young woman to embrace the habits of an intellectual life, engages her with the past and the emerging future, and empowers her to serve and shape her world
- Fosters in each young woman a spirit of connection to others, guides her in developing her spiritual and ethical integrity, and prepares her to take responsibility for herself and her future

## Overview

To fulfill its longstanding mission to prepare girls for college and life, Saint Mary's School integrates what it knows girls need, with what it knows of the changing world girls will be facing, and does so in an environment offering girls relevant, forward-looking, real-world opportunities to create a different kind of program – one expressly for girls, one that goes deep, not wide.



## Advisory Program

The Saint Mary's School advisory program is a personalized, academic advising program designed to guide students as they navigate their high school experience. A student's advisor is a central connecting point for the student and provides an integrated understanding of the student's academic and personal growth and development. Each student is part of an advisory consisting of approximately six students. Advisory meets four times a week, including one weekly advisory lunch. Additionally, students meet on a one-to-one basis with their advisor.

## Seminar Program

The Seminar Program at Saint Mary's School is designed to develop the 10 key competencies and includes opportunities for students to partner with resources and organizations in the greater Raleigh area. Seminars are organized by grade-level on a quarterly basis. Students participate in seminar programming every other day within the context of their regular school day. For grades 9-11, each quarter is dedicated to one of four major themes: communication, social impact, innovation, and health and wellness. Each seminar meets girls where they are by providing just-in-time learning to engage them in content-specific topics within these themes. The Seminar Program for seniors focuses on the college admission process for the first two quarters of the year, and engages students in independent study or internship experiences during the last two quarters. Central to the Saint Mary's experience of preparing girls for life, participation in the Seminar Program is required for graduation.

## Portfolio for Life

Each student creates and maintains a digital Portfolio for Life that chronicles her experiences at Saint Mary's and her development of the 10 key competencies. The portfolio gives girls a tool to reflect on their growth, assess their efforts, and celebrate their successes. Required for all students, girls may individualize their portfolio by incorporating additional sections specific to their unique interests and aspirations. Time is allotted each quarter for students to work alone and/or with their advisors on their portfolios. Each student graduates with a Portfolio for Life that gives her a clear record of her learning and growth as well as a resource to confidently talk about her herself and her accomplishments. She will carry her portfolio with her to college and build on it throughout her adult life. It will be a reminder of where she has been and a way to inspire where she is going.

## After-School Activities

Saint Mary's School offers a variety of after-school activities designed to provide students with a physical and mental break from the rigors of their academic day. Activities are offered on a trimester basis. Knowing girls do best and are most engaged when they have choice and variety, Saint Mary's offers two after-school tracks: a physical fitness track that includes team sports and physical activities like yoga and running; and a performing arts track that includes performance in school productions and technical theatre.

With two tracks offering multiple options, students may choose something different each trimester. For instance, a student may opt to play a sport after school for her first trimester activity, then opt to perform in the school musical during her second trimester, and then take a Triangle Fitness class during her third trimester. Whatever she chooses, her after-school activities are designed to engage her in new experiences and provide an opportunity for her to re-set, both physically and mentally, after her school day.



## Self-directed Study

Self-directed study includes Independent Study, Pathways, and online coursework. If a student chooses to engage in work related to an academic discipline outside of the formal, directly supervised classroom or laboratory, she may do so under the self-directed study umbrella. It is to be noted that this type of learning is challenging and requires a high level of self-motivation and discipline. It is important to think deeply as to whether this kind of learning is a fit for your learning profile. Assistance in working through the decision-making process is available through faculty, college counseling, or a student's advisor.

## Learning Lab / Flex Period / Tutorial

Saint Mary's students have opportunities throughout the week to work with faculty outside of class. All 9th and 10th graders are assigned a learning lab as one of their classes, while 11th and 12th grade students have the option of a flex period or a learning lab. During **learning lab** students complete work and prepare for assessments in a structured environment with learning coaches. In addition, students move through a study skills curriculum designed by Saint Mary's faculty, which includes topics such as time management, organization, goal setting, memory skills, and test-taking strategies. **Flex period** allows students to choose where they study and how they use this time in preparation for the greater independence they will experience in college. For students who still need or prefer the structure, they can attend a learning lab. Additionally, all students have access to faculty at the end of the day in **tutorial**. During tutorial students can schedule an appointment or drop in for help with assignments, test preparation, or to collaborate with their teachers.

# Sample Four-Year Plan

As a college preparatory school our entire curriculum prepares girls for college level work. The value and importance of school context in the college admissions process is our top priority. We differentiate in our classrooms so that each student can find her own success.

Subject	9th Grade	10th Grade	11th Grade	12th Grade
<b>English</b>	English I	English II	Two English electives or AP English	Two English electives or AP English
<b>Humanities and Social Sciences</b>	World History I	World History II or AP World History	U.S. History or AP U.S. History and possibly Philosophy/Religion (1/2) and/or U.S. Government (1/2)	U.S. Government (1/2) or AP U.S. Government or AP Comparative Government and/or Philosophy/Religion (1/2) if not taken in 11th grade AP Psychology HSS electives
<b>Mathematics</b>	Determined by placement test Algebra I or <b>Geometry</b> or Algebra II	<b>Geometry</b> <b>Algebra II</b> Pre-Calculus	<b>Algebra II</b> <b>Pre-Calculus</b> Math Analysis Calculus/Statistics AP Calculus	<b>Pre-Calculus</b> and/or Calculus/Statistics AP Calculus (AB or BC) AP Statistics
<b>Science</b>	Physics	Chemistry and/or electives	<b>Biology</b> and/or AP electives or Biomedical Science	AP Science and/or Human Body Systems
<b>World Languages</b>	First Year or higher level pending placement exam	Second Year or higher level	Third Year or higher level	Fourth Year or higher level
<b>Visual and Performing Arts</b>	Dance, Theatre, Music, or Visual Art	Dance, Theatre, Music, or Visual Art	Electives	Electives





## Science Department

Science plays such a major role in modern life, it is vital that students have an understanding of its workings. Science courses make students aware of the vast amount of information being discovered daily about our world. The science program offers courses in both the biological and the physical sciences. It aims to stimulate critical thinking, to teach students how to understand and interpret data, and how to apply the scientific method. Laboratory experiences form a major part of science study. Through them, students explore the world via the microscope, experimentation and observation, and field work, which helps them relate the more abstract concepts to their immediate experience. Opportunities for individual research programs are available for students who wish to go beyond the basic required courses.

## Mathematics Department

The main objective of the mathematics program is to support students as they become mathematically-literate citizens who know the appropriate mathematical and technological tools to use and when to use them in various problem-solving settings. Students work in independent, whole-class, and small-group settings to increase their mathematical confidence and their communication skills. The types of problems and the learning environment in the mathematics classrooms foster persistence, critical thinking, and reflection. All courses require students to communicate conceptual understanding (both verbally and in written form), justify and explain results, and apply mathematics to real-world situations.

## Humanities and Social Sciences Department

The Humanities and Social Sciences Department encompasses a range of courses that include the study of history, cultures, government, religion, philosophy, economics, and psychology. Through these courses, students have the opportunity to develop a deeper understanding of themselves and their world. The courses in Humanities and Social Sciences take students from the general view of the world, presented in the World History sequence, to the more specific and specialized, as they move to United States History, then to government, religion, philosophy and electives. In all of their classes in this department, students build the skills they will need to succeed in college and are prepared to become informed and responsible citizens of the world.

### [Science Department Course Offerings](#)

Biology  
AP Biology  
Chemistry  
AP Chemistry  
Physics  
AP Physics I: Algebra-Based  
AP Environmental Science  
Principles of Biomedical Science  
Human Body Systems

### [Mathematics Department Course Offerings](#)

Algebra I  
Geometry  
Algebra II  
Pre-Calculus  
Math Analysis  
Calculus Topics  
AP Calculus AB  
AP Calculus BC  
Multivariable Calculus  
Statistics Topics  
AP Statistics  
Coding  
AP Computer Science A

### [Humanities and Social Sciences Course Offerings](#)

World History I  
World History II  
AP World History  
United States History  
AP United States History  
United States Government  
AP United States Government and Politics  
AP Comparative Government and Politics  
AP Psychology  
World Religions  
Ethics  
Economics  
Entrepreneurship: New Ventures



## World Languages Department

Learning a language opens doors to other worlds and creates links between students and the cultures studied. Students develop a deeper commitment to and interest in a language through active instruction that provides a current, global, interdisciplinary perspective. In all three World Language offerings, French, Latin, and Spanish, students strive for mastery in each and every aspect of language acquisition, integrating reading, writing, listening, and speaking.

### World Languages Course Offerings

French I	Spanish I
French II	Spanish II
French III	Spanish III
French IV	Spanish IV
French V	Spanish V
AP French Language and Culture	AP Spanish Literature and Culture
	AP Spanish Language and Culture

Latin IV

AP Latin

*The Latin program is being phased out.*

### English Department Course Offerings

English I: World Voices

English II: Narrative Studies

English II: Western Literature

English III and IV: Electives of a student's choosing such as:

- Creative Writing: Fiction
- Creative Writing: Non-fiction
- Women's Detective Fiction
- Gothic Literature
- Finding Love in Literature
- Coming of Age
- The World of Shakespeare
- Teaching Writing with Art: Journaling
- Teaching Writing with Art: The Art of Remix

AP English Language and Composition

AP English Literature and Composition

## English Department

The goal of the English Department is to provide opportunities for students to build their literacy skills across multiple modalities—reading, writing, speaking, listening, analysis, and media. Courses provide students with literary works from a wide range of time periods and cultures beginning in the ninth grade with a focus on global literature and cultural awareness. In 10th grade students work on understanding aspects of successful narratives, and in 11th and 12th grades they may take semester-long electives that provide opportunities for in-depth looks at topics of interest in both classical and modern literature. Two different AP English offerings are available for qualified 11th and 12th graders. The English Department also sponsors independent studies, the annual essay contests, and occasional oratory competitions.



## Visual and Performing Arts Department

The Visual and Performing Arts Department offers an extensive range of coursework that offers opportunities for students to explore and build skills in visual art, dance, theatre, and music. The **visual art** program offers students the opportunity to exercise self-expression through a range of courses. In these studio classes, students are encouraged to increase their skill levels and maximize their artistic potential by exposure to a variety of techniques and mediums in an atmosphere that embraces a high expectation of creative decision making and a high quality of production. The **dance** program offers courses that provide solid technical training in ballet and modern, while offering opportunities for students to explore and incorporate jazz, hip hop, stretch/yoga, and conditioning. It also offers a resident student dance company, Orchesis Dance Theatre, that performs two concert programs each year. The **theatre** program offers opportunities to study acting, explore dramatic literature, read and analyze scripts, and become familiar with the history of theatre. Students also work as production company members in stage management, acting, set, costume, lighting and sound design, and various technical and stage crews for the annual play and musical performed each year. In the **music** program, every level of interest and ability is supported with a rich variety of vocal and instrumental training both in performance ensembles and through individual lessons. Expert instruction in applied music is provided in voice and a wide range of instruments, which students can pursue at elementary, intermediate, and advanced levels.

### Visual and Performing Arts Course Offerings

- Theatre Arts
- Technical Theatre
- Chorale
- Chamber Choir
- Chamber Music Program  
(Instrumental Ensembles)
- Applied Music Instruction
- Art I
- Art II
- Art III
- Art IV
- Art Portfolio
- AP Drawing
- AP 2-D Art and Design
- Graphic Design and Digital Photography
- Media Arts
- Elementary Dance
- Intermediate Dance
- Advanced Dance
- Orchesis Dance Theatre

*This document is for reference only.*

*For a complete list of courses, please see the **Curriculum Guide**.*

## SAMPLE SCHEDULE

MONDAY A	TUESDAY B	WEDNESDAY A	THURSDAY B	FRIDAY A
Period 1: English	Period 5: Math	LATE START 9 a.m.	Period 5: Math	Period 1: English
Period 2: Seminar	Period 6: Study period	Period 1: English	Period 6: Study period	Period 2: Seminar
Community time	Community time	Period 2: Seminar	Community time	Community time
Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
Period 3: Humanities	Period 7: Science	Period 3: Humanities	Period 7: Science	Period 3: Humanities
Period 4: Elective	Period 8: World Language	Period 4: Elective	Period 8: World Language	Period 4: Elective
Tutorial	Tutorial	Tutorial	Tutorial	Tutorial





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