

Saint Mary's SCHOOL

You've got this.

Curriculum Overview

2019-2020

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.

Quarterly Seminars

Students' quarterly seminars meet every other day, within the context of the regular school day. Each seminar is designed to develop the 10 key competencies and includes opportunities for students to partner with resources and organizations in the greater Raleigh area. Students will experience a quarter dedicated to each of the major themes of communication, social impact, health and wellness, and innovation. Each quarterly seminar theme meets girls where they are by providing just in time learning that engages them in content specific topics within these major themes. First semester senior Seminars are provided small group support during the busiest part of the college admission process, while the second semester provides seniors with choices specific to their interests and aspirations, including independent study or internship experiences. Central to the Saint Mary's experience of preparing girls for life, seminars are credited and 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, students may also 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. The end result: 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.



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** affords students the opportunity to choose where they study and how they use this time, preparing them for college. For students who still need or prefer the structure they can attend a learning lab. Additionally, all students have access to their faculty at the end of the day in **tutorial**. During tutorial students can schedule an appointment or drop in for help on assignments, test preparation or 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
English	English I	English II	Two English electives or AP English	Two English electives or AP English
Humanities and Social Sciences	World History I	World History II	U.S. History and possibly Philosophy (1/2) and/or U.S. Government and electives including AP electives	U.S. Government (1/2) or AP U.S. Government or AP Comparative Government and/or Philosophy (1/2) if not taken in 11th grade and possibly electives, including AP electives
Mathematics	Determined by placement test Algebra I or Geometry or Algebra II	Geometry Algebra II Pre-Calculus	Algebra II, Pre-Calculus and/or electives including AP electives	Pre-Calculus and/or electives including AP electives
Science	Physics	Chemistry and/or electives	Biology and/or electives including AP electives	AP Science and/or electives including AP electives
World Language	First Year or higher level pending placement exam	Second Year or higher level	Third Year or higher level	Fourth Year
Visual and Performing Arts	Dance, Drama, Music, or Visual Art	Dance, Drama, 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. By the time a student is a senior, she is able to select a religion or philosophy course that allows her to concentrate on a subject that interests her. 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.

[Biology](#)
[Advanced Placement Biology](#)
[Chemistry](#)
[Advanced Placement Chemistry](#)
[Physics](#)
[Advanced Placement Physics I: Algebra-Based](#)
[Ecology](#)
[Advanced Placement Environmental Science](#)
[Marine Science](#)
[Astronomy](#)
[Principles of Biomedical Science*](#)
[Human Body Systems*](#)

[Algebra I](#)
[Geometry](#)
[Algebra II](#)
[Pre-calculus](#)
[Math Analysis*](#)
[Introduction to Calculus](#)
[Advanced Placement Calculus AB](#)
[Advanced Placement Calculus BC](#)
[Multivariable Calculus](#)
[Introduction to Statistics](#)
[Advanced Placement Statistics](#)
[Introduction to Coding](#)
[Advanced Placement Computer Science A](#)

[World History I](#)
[World History II](#)
[United States History](#)
[Advanced Placement United States History](#)
[United States Government](#)
[Advanced Placement United States Government and Politics](#)
[Advanced Placement Comparative Government and Politics](#)
[Advanced Placement Psychology](#)
[History and Theology of Christianity](#)
[Origins of Western Thought](#)
[World Religions](#)
[Introduction to Ethics](#)
[Biblical Studies](#)
[Introduction to 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.

[French I](#)

[French II](#)

[French III](#)

[French IV](#)

[French V](#)

[Advanced Placement French Language and Culture](#)

[Latin II](#)

[Latin III](#)

[Latin IV](#)

[Advanced Latin](#)

[Advanced Placement Latin](#)

[Spanish I](#)

[Spanish II](#)

[Spanish III](#)

[Spanish IV](#)

[Spanish V](#)

[Advanced Placement Spanish Language and Culture](#)

English Department

The goal of the English Department is to provide opportunities for girls 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 grade 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.

[English I: World Voices](#)

[English II: Narrative Studies or Western Literature](#)

[English III and IV: Four electives of a student's choosing, such as](#)

• [Creative Writing: Fiction](#)

• [Creative Writing: Non-fiction](#)

• [Women's Detective Fiction](#)

• [American Gothic Literature](#)

• [Portrayals of Femininity in American and British Literature](#)

• [Coming of Age in America](#)

• [Southern Literature from Then to Now](#)

• [The Beat Generation/Literary Rebellion in America](#)

• [Literature of Migrations](#)

• [The World of Shakespeare](#)

[Advanced Placement English Language and Composition +](#)

[Advanced Placement English](#)

[Literature and Composition +](#)

[Artful Compositions: Teaching Writing with Art-Journaling^{^^}](#)

[Teaching Writing with Art:](#)

[The Art of Remix^{^^}](#)



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 drama 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.

**Grades 11 and 12 only*

**New course*

***This information is based on the 2019-20 course offerings.*

****This document is for reference only. For a complete list of courses please see the Saint Mary's School Curriculum Guide.*

^ Co-credit given to art

[Theatre Arts](#)
[Technical Theatre](#)
[Chorale](#)
[Chamber Choir](#)
[Chamber Music Program \(Instrumental Ensembles\)](#)
[Fundamentals of Music](#)
[Applied Music Instruction](#)
[Graphic Design and Digital Photography](#)
[Art I](#)
[Art II](#)
[Art III](#)
[Art IV*](#)
[Art Portfolio](#)
[Advanced Placement Drawing](#)
[Advanced Placement 2-D Art and Design](#)
[Media Arts](#)
[Elementary Dance](#)
[Intermediate Dance](#)
[Advanced Dance](#)
[Orchesis Dance Theatre](#)

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: Economics	Period 7: Science	Period 3: Economics	Period 7: Science	Period 3: Economics
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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