

# Upper School Profile 2019–20

## School

Since 1967, the Nueva School has delivered an innovative, award-winning learning experience designed to meet the needs of academically gifted learners.

Over the past 50 years we have become internationally recognized for our unique curricular approach, which inspires the passions, purpose, and potential in each student while igniting a lifelong love of learning.

Nueva's Upper School, launched in 2013, is a re-imagining of high school. In many ways more like a university than a traditional high school, Nueva offers broad-based interdisciplinary studies coupled with deep explorations into specific areas of interest.

Nueva is accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges and is a member of the California Association of Independent Schools.

## Students

Nueva attracts inquisitive, high-performing students from the greater San Francisco Bay Area who have been drawn to the possibilities and challenges of a young, innovative high school.

These socially minded intellectual entrepreneurs, researchers, and artists — a senior class of 91 students who possess a high degree of agency and self-direction — enjoy hard problems, risk-taking, and peer-to-peer learning.

## Advanced Curriculum

At the heart of Nueva's program is an advanced, interdisciplinary curriculum with significant emphasis on self-directed learning, collaboration, and primary research. A typical student course load is 7–8 classes per semester. Seniors typically take 7 classes.

In scope and depth, all courses offered range from college preparatory to college-level. **The majority of core courses meet or exceed the rigor of Advanced Placement courses; Nueva does not designate Honors or AP courses.**

The academic program builds a robust foundation in the major disciplines, supports deep inquiry into topics of individual interest, and provides explicit instruction in methods of thinking and reasoning. Advanced electives and independent courses of study allow students to move at an accelerated pace in the directions they choose.

## Faculty

Nearly 80% of our upper school faculty hold advanced degrees. Many have taught at the university level and have been recognized by local, state, and national organizations for leadership, excellence, and innovation in teaching.



## Facts and Figures

Class of 2020 enrollment	91
Upper School enrollment	423
Student-to-faculty ratio	5:1
Average class size	14
Students of color	57%
Students receiving financial aid	21%
Admitted to four-year colleges	100%



## National Merit

Class of 2019	
Semifinalists	12
Commended	28
Hispanic Scholar	1
Total	41
Total % of class	54%



## Test Scores

Class of 2019		
	mean	mid 50%
<b>ACT</b>	34	33–35
<b>SAT</b>		
EBRW	743	720–770
Math	760	740–800
<b>SAT Subject Tests</b>		
Math II	759	650–800
English Lit.	709	670–760
Physics	757	750–800

## Grading

**Nueva intentionally discourages academic competition among our students. We do not calculate class rank and do not offer academic honors, prizes, or valedictorian status.**

To facilitate meaningful assessment of students' skills against absolute benchmarks, students receive both standards-based grades and in-depth written narratives focused on core learning competencies. Nueva reinforces continuous feedback and recognizes the need for students to learn from their mistakes as they take risks and tackle difficult problems.

Grade 9 courses are Credit/No Credit. In Grades 10–12, the highest grade is an A (no "A+" grades), which indicates the student has reached an Exemplary status with regard to the standards for that course; a "B" indicates Proficiency; and a "C" indicates a Foundational achievement of the standards. We do not weight grades.

It is Nueva's policy not to report disciplinary infractions; our expectation is that students will self-report any serious violations of school conduct policy. Nueva's college counseling office works with students to ensure they provide colleges with appropriate context for the students' decisions and their consequences.

## Applied Learning

Nueva supports in-depth inquiry, research, and experimentation through programs that extend and deepen the core curriculum.

**Quest Projects**, an annual requirement, enable individual, mentored pursuits in areas of passionate interest. Recent projects include developing a public health initiative to address obesity in post-embargo Cuba, designing and building a jet-pack for human flight, and writing a screenplay adaptation of *Hamlet*.

**The Global Immersion Program** provides students with broadening academic and cultural perspectives. They have studied anthropology and history (Peru), wildlife biology (Costa Rica), land management (American West), military culture (North Carolina), political caucuses (Nevada), immigration (Mexico), and AIDS activism (New York).

**Intersession** is a two-week intensive that allows students to work, think, experiment, and lead in courses taught by local and international experts in their fields. From surgical virtual reality to constitutional law to graffiti art, Nueva students describe this mid-year program as an "intellectual party."

## Defining Elements of a Nueva Education

### Design Thinking

Students learn and develop an approach to problem-solving in which they identify pressing and practical needs and problems, generate creative ideas, and introduce, test, and refine solutions under real-world conditions.

### Science of Mind

Students study foundational principles of psychology and neuroscience, developing fluency in social-emotional best practices through peer feedback and coaching.

### What Is a Nueva Student?

In their free time, Nueva students write programs and poetry, create laboratories in their basements and other worlds in their journals, borrow quantum mechanics textbooks from their teachers, and stay up late debating Dante. On a Friday evening, student-built robots cruise the halls, debates about global economics unfold at teachers' desks, and goggle-clad students pursue supervised but purely extracurricular research.

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Nueva was lauded by Pulitzer Prize-winning and *New York Times* best-selling author Thomas Friedman in his book *That Used to Be Us* as "what's right in America's schools."

## Upper School Course Offerings 2019–2020

### Math

3 years required

*\*Math 1, 2, and 3 is an integrated math sequence in which students learn geometry, algebra 2, trigonometry, pre-calculus, basic statistics, and functions.*

Math 1\*

Math 2\*

Math 3\*

Calculus

#### Post-Calculus Options

Multivariable Calculus  
Mathematical Modeling  
Differential Equations  
Number Theory  
Complex Analysis  
Linear Algebra

#### Electives

Cryptography  
Statistics and Probability

#### Independent and Collaborative Study

### Lab Science

3 years required

#### Required Courses

Biology  
Chemistry

#### Electives

Physics  
Modern Physics  
Calculus-based Mechanics  
Bioorganic Chemistry  
Drug Design  
Experimental Biology  
Physics Research  
Applied Molecular Biology  
Mechanisms of Cancer  
Biological and Cognitive Neuroscience  
Neuroscience of Addiction  
Computational Biology  
Advanced Biological Research Methods  
Social Action Science Research  
XRT: Experiment and Research Team  
Chemical Engineering  
Intro to Mechanical Engineering

#### Interdisciplinary Courses

Environmental and Earth Science

### History, Social Sciences, and Civics

3 years required

#### Required Courses

Global History I  
Global History II  
American History

#### Senior Seminars

American Government  
Rise and Fall of Rome  
International Relations  
Religion in America

#### Electives

Post-Colonial Latin-American History  
Interpreting Religions  
Economic Inequality  
Environmental Economics  
Deindustrialization and Neo-liberalism in Modern America  
Senior Economic Thesis Seminar  
How Not to Think Wrong  
Microeconomics  
Macroeconomics  
Steel, Telescopes and Trains: Recreating Science and Technology  
Japanamerica: Japanese Pop Culture  
50 Words for Snow: Translation Theory  
Capitalism and the Apocalypse  
California History: Foot, Hoof, Rail  
Philosophy of Consciousness

### Design Thinking, Engineering, and Computer Science

I-Lab Engineering and Fabrication Workshop  
Creature Comforts  
Programming and Data Analytics  
Functional Programming  
Electric Bike Building  
Product Design (Intro/Adv)  
Computer and Digital Security  
Intro to Computer Programming  
Advanced Programming Workshop  
Mobile App Design  
Object-Oriented Programming  
Machine Learning (Intro/Adv)

#### Independent and Collaborative Study

### Literature and Communications

4 years required

#### Required Courses

English 9: The Great Dialogue  
English 10: Landscapes of Self and Other  
English 11: American Literature

#### Senior Seminars

Adaptations: From Text to Screen and Stage  
Fiction Writing  
The Immortal Gothic Genre  
“This World is not Conclusion”: 20th Century American Poetry  
Shakespeare in the World  
20th Century American Drama  
Contemporary Narratives of Slavery  
The Multitudes: Creative Writing  
French Literature from the Hexagon and Beyond  
Afrofuturism: Black Histories, Black Futures  
Tales of Monsters and Monstrosity  
Seeking Truth in Amalgamation: The Memoir  
Philosophy of Consciousness and Personhood

#### Electives

Intro to Journalism  
Yearbook and Online Media Production  
Speech and Debate

#### Independent and Collaborative Study

### World Languages

3 years required

Chinese 1, 2, 3, 4, 5  
Japanese 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6  
Spanish 1, 2, 3, 4

#### Advanced Spanish Classes

Spanish Oral Communication  
Spanish Literature (Intro/Adv)  
Society and Culture of Spain  
Advanced Spanish: Drug Trafficking and Human Rights in the Americas  
Our Americas

### Arts:

#### Fine and Performing

2 semesters required in the same subject

#### Performing Arts

Fall Play  
Musical Theater (Intro/Adv)  
Chorale (Intro/Adv)  
A Cappella Soundwaves  
Music Design and Production (Intro/Adv)  
Jazz Ensemble  
Steel Drums  
Groove Workshop

#### Fine Arts

Drawing (Intro/Adv)  
Graphic Design (Intro/Adv)  
Mixed Media (Intro/Adv)  
Painting (Intro/Adv)  
Sculpture (Intro/Adv)

#### Interdisciplinary Arts

Stained Glass  
Fabricating Your Artistic Vision (Intro/Adv)  
Yearbook and Online Media Production

#### Independent and Collaborative Study

### Additional Requirements

**Nueva Quest: Pursuit of In-Depth Mastery**  
4 years required

**Athletics and Wellness**  
8 seasons required

**Interdisciplinary Studies**  
2 years required

Design Thinking  
Design Engineering  
History and Philosophy of Science

**Science of Mind**  
4 years required

## College Acceptances and Matriculation Classes of 2017, 2018, and 2019

Bold indicates matriculation by at least one student

Allegheny College  
**American University (2)**  
**Amherst College**  
Arizona State University  
Baldwin Wallace University  
Bard College  
**Barnard College**  
Bates College  
Bennington College  
**Berklee College of Music**  
**Birmingham-Southern College**  
**Boston College**  
**Boston University (6)**  
**Bowdoin College (3)**  
**Brandeis University**  
**Brown University (7)**  
**Bryn Mawr College (3)**  
**Bucknell University**  
**California Institute of Technology**  
California Institute of the Arts  
California Poly - Pomona  
**California Poly - San Luis Obispo**  
Carleton College  
**Carnegie Mellon University (3)**  
Case Western Reserve University  
**Central St Martins College of Art & Design**  
Chapman University  
City College of San Francisco  
**Claremont McKenna College**  
Clark University  
Cleveland Institute of Music  
**Colby College (5)**  
College of William & Mary  
College of Wooster  
**Colorado College**  
Colorado State University  
**Columbia University**  
Connecticut College  
Cornell University  
**Dartmouth College (2)**  
Davidson College  
DePaul University  
Dickinson College  
Drew University  
**Drexel University**  
**Duke University (2)**  
Durham University  
Eastman School of Music  
**Embry-Riddle University**  
Emerson College  
**Emory University**  
Fairfield University  
**Fordham University**  
Franklin & Marshall College  
George Washington University  
**Georgetown University**  
Georgia Institute of Technology

Gettysburg College  
Grinnell College  
**Hamilton College (2)**  
Hampshire College  
**Harvard College (4)**  
**Harvey Mudd College (5)**  
**Haverford College (2)**  
Imperial College London  
Istituto Marangoni, London  
Ithaca College  
**Johns Hopkins University**  
Kalamazoo College  
**Kenyon College**  
King's College London  
Knox College  
Lawrence University  
Lehigh University  
**Lewis & Clark College**  
**Loyola Marymount University**  
**Macalester College**  
Marymount Manhattan College  
Massachusetts College of Art and Design  
**Massachusetts Institute of Technology (3)**  
McGill University  
**Middlebury College (2)**  
**Mills College**  
**Mount Holyoke College**  
Muhlenberg College  
New England Conservatory of Music  
**New York University (4)**  
New York University, Abu Dhabi  
**North Carolina School of the Arts**  
**Northeastern University (6)**  
**Northwestern University (2)**  
**Oberlin College of Arts and Sciences**  
Oberlin Conservatory of Music  
**Occidental College (4)**  
**Olin College of Engineering (6)**  
Otis College of Art and Design  
Otterbein University  
Oxford College of Emory University  
Pace University  
**Pitzer College**  
**Pomona College (2)**  
Pratt Institute  
**Princeton University (4)**  
Purdue University

Reed College  
**Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (3)**  
**Rhode Island School of Design (3)**  
**Rice University (2)**  
Rochester Institute of Technology  
Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology  
San Francisco State University  
San Jose State University  
Santa Clara University  
Sarah Lawrence College  
Savannah College of Art and Design  
School of the Art Institute of Chicago  
**Sciences Po - Columbia University**  
Sciences Po - UC Berkeley  
**Scripps College (4)**  
Seattle University  
Sewanee: University of the South  
Skidmore College  
**Smith College (2)**  
**Southern Methodist University**  
St. Olaf College  
**Stanford University (28)**  
Stevens Institute of Technology  
**Swarthmore College (4)**  
Syracuse University  
**The New School**  
Trinity University  
**Tufts University (7)**  
Tulane University  
Union College  
University of Alaska  
**University of California, Berkeley (6)**  
University of California, Davis  
**University of California, Irvine**  
**University of California, Los Angeles**  
University of California, Merced  
University of California, Riverside  
University of California, San Diego  
**University of California, Santa Barbara**  
**University of California, Santa Cruz**  
University of Cambridge  
**University of Chicago (16)**  
University of Colorado  
**University of Edinburgh**

University of Exeter  
University of Glasgow  
University of Hartford  
University of Houston  
University of Illinois  
University of Leeds  
University of Miami  
**University of Michigan (3)**  
University of Minnesota  
University of North Carolina  
**University of Oregon**  
University of Oxford  
**University of Pennsylvania (2)**  
University of Portland  
University of Puget Sound  
University of Redlands  
University of Richmond  
University of Rochester  
University of San Diego  
University of San Francisco  
**University of Southern California (6)**  
**University of St Andrews (2)**  
University of Sussex  
University of Texas  
University of the Pacific  
**University of Toronto**  
University of Vermont  
University of Virginia  
University of Washington  
University of Waterloo  
University of Wisconsin  
**University of York**  
Ursinus College  
Vanderbilt University  
**Vassar College (2)**  
Washington College  
**Washington University in St. Louis (2)**  
**Wellesley College (3)**  
Wentworth Institute of Technology  
**Wesleyan University**  
Westmont College  
Wheaton College (MA)  
Whitman College  
Whittier College  
Willamette University  
**Williams College (3)**  
**Worcester Polytechnic Institute (4)**  
**Yale University (5)**

The 227 members of the first three classes applied to 210 colleges, were admitted to 196, and are attending 82 different institutions in 23 states, the District of Columbia, Canada, England, France, and Scotland. Adventurous and independent, nearly 80% of Nueva graduates choose to leave the state of California for college and over a third are the sole Nueva matriculant to their college.