

Upper School Profile 2021–22

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 114 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

More than 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 2022 enrollment	114
Upper School enrollment	451
Student-to-faculty ratio	6:1
Average class size	16
Students of color	57%
Students receiving financial aid	21%
Admitted to four-year colleges	100%

National Merit

Class of 2021

Semifinalists	16
Commended	31
Total	47
Total % of class	48%

Test Scores

Class of 2021 and 2022

	mean	mid 50%
ACT	34	33–35
SAT		
EBRW	753	750–770
Math	758	730–800

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 Citizenship 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.

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 2019–2021

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

Statistics and Probability

Post-Calculus Options

Complex Analysis

Differential Equations

Knot Theory (Intro/Adv.)

Linear Algebra

Mathematical Modeling

Multivariable Calculus

Number Theory

Quantum Information/
Computation

Electives

Cryptology

Lab Science

3 years required

Required Courses

Biology

Chemistry

Electives

Advanced Biological Research
Methods

Applied Molecular Biology

Bioorganic Chemistry

Calculus-based Mechanics

Computational Biology

Drug Design

Experimental Biology

Mechanisms of Cancer

Modern Physics

Neuroscience of Addiction

Optics, Imaging and

Astrophysics

Physics

Physics Research

Sensory Neuroscience

Social Action Science Research

XRT: Experiment and
Research Team

Interdisciplinary Courses

Environmental and

Earth Science

History, Social Sciences, and Civics

3 years required

Required Courses

American History

Global History I

Global History II

Senior Seminars

American Government

International Relations

Religion in America

Electives

American Indian History

California History:

Foot, Hoof, Rail

Capitalism and the Apocalypse

Economic Inequality

Environmental Economics

50 Words for Snow:

Translation Theory

How Not to Think Wrong

Interpreting Religions

Japanamerica:

Japanese Pop Culture

Macroeconomics

Microeconomics

Philosophy of Consciousness
and Personhood

Post-Colonial Latin-American

History

Psychology

Senior Economic Thesis Seminar

Steel, Telescopes and Trains:

Recreating Science and

Technology

Urban Studies

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 Communication

Spanish Literature

Design Thinking, Engineering, and Computer Science

Advanced Programming

Workshop

Chemical Engineering

Computer and Digital Security

Computer Vision

Creature Comforts

Electric Bike Building

Functional Programming

I-Lab Engineering and

Fabrication Workshop

Intro to Computer Programming

Intro to Mechanical Engineering

Machine Learning (Intro/Adv)

Mobile App Design

Object-Oriented Programming

Product Design (Intro/Adv)

Programming and Data

Analytics

Video Game Development

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

Afrofuturism: Black Histories,
Black Futures

Anna Karenina in Our Time

Chronicles of Wandering

Fiction Writing

The Immortal Gothic Genre

Reading Like Victorians

Satire

Shakespeare in the World

Electives

Intro to Journalism

Speech and Debate

Yearbook and Online

Media Production

Independent and Collaborative Study

Arts:

Fine and Performing

2 semesters required
in the same subject

Performing Arts

A Cappella Soundwaves

Chorale (Intro/Adv)

Fall Play

Groove Workshop

Jazz Ensemble

Music Design and Production
(Intro/Adv)

Musical Theater (Intro/Adv)

Steel Drums

Fine Arts

Drawing (Intro/Adv)

Graphic Design (Intro/Adv)

Mixed Media (Intro/Adv)

Painting (Intro/Adv)

Sculpture (Intro/Adv)

Interdisciplinary Arts

Fabricating Your Artistic Vision
(Intro/Adv)

Stained Glass

Yearbook and Online Media
Production

Independent and Collaborative Study

Additional Requirements

Athletics and Wellness

8 seasons required

Interdisciplinary Studies

2 years required

Nueva Quest: Pursuit of In-Depth Mastery

4 years required

Design Engineering

Design Thinking

History and Philosophy
of Science

Science of Mind

4 years required

College Acceptances and Matriculation Classes of 2017 to 2021

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 (2)
Bates College
Becker College
Bennington College
Berklee College of Music
Birmingham-Southern College
Boston College
Boston University (8)
Bowdoin College (3)
Brandeis University
Brown University (11)
Bryn Mawr College (5)
Bucknell University
California Institute of Technology (2)
California Institute of the Arts
California Lutheran University
California Poly-Pomona
California Poly-San Luis Obispo
California State University-Long Beach
Carleton College
Carnegie Mellon University (7)
Case Western Reserve University (4)
Central St Martins College of Art & Design
Chapman University
Claremont McKenna College
Clark University
Cleveland Institute of Music
Colby College (5)
Colgate University
College of William and Mary
College of Wooster
Colorado College (2)
Colorado School of Mines
Colorado State University
Columbia University (7)
Connecticut College
Cooper Union
Cornell University (3)
Dartmouth College (4)
Davidson College
Deep Springs College
DePaul University
Dickinson College
Drew University
Drexel University
Duke Kunshan University
Duke University (5)
Durham University
Eastman School of Music
Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University
Emerson College
Emory University
Emory University, Oxford
Fairfield University
Fordham University
Franklin and Marshall College

George Washington University
Georgetown University (2)
Georgia Institute of Technology
Gettysburg College
Gonzaga University
Grinnell College
Hamilton College (2)
Hampshire College
Harvard University (8)
Harvey Mudd College (9)
Haverford College (4)
Imperial College, London
Ithaca College
Johns Hopkins University (4)
Juilliard School
Kalamazoo College
Kenyon College
Kettering University
King's College, London
Knox College
Lafayette College
Lawrence University
Lehigh University
Lewis & Clark College
London School of Economics
Loyola Marymount University (3)
Loyola University, Chicago
Loyola University, Maryland
Loyola University, New Orleans
Macalester College
Maryland Institute College of Art
Marymount Manhattan College
Massachusetts College of Art and Design
Massachusetts Institute of Technology (6)
McGill University
Middlebury College (3)
Mills College
Mount Holyoke College
Muhlenberg College
New England Conservatory of Music
New York University (5)
New York University, Abu Dhabi
North Carolina School of the Arts
North Carolina State University
Northeastern University (14)
Northwestern University (7)
Oberlin College
Oberlin Conservatory of Music
Occidental College (8)
Ohio State University
Olin College of Engineering (7)
Otis College of Art and Design
Otterbein University
Pace University
Pennsylvania State University
Pitzer College (2)
Pomona College (3)
Pratt Institute

Princeton University (8)
Purdue University (3)
Reed College (3)
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (3)
Rhode Island School of Design (3)
Rice University
Ringling College of Art and Design
Rochester Institute of Technology
Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology
San Diego State University
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
School of Visual Arts
Sciences Po - Columbia U
Sciences Po - UC Berkeley
Scripps College (6)
Seattle University
Sewanee: University of the South
Skidmore College
Smith College (3)
Sonoma State University
Southern Methodist University
St. John's College
St. Olaf College
Stanford University (45)
Stevens Institute of Technology
Swarthmore College (5)
Syracuse University
Temple University
The New School
Trinity College
Trinity University
Tufts University (12)
Tulane University
Union College
United States Military Academy
United States Naval Academy
University College, London
University of Alaska
University of Bristol
University of British Columbia
University of California-Berkeley (16)
University of California-Davis
University of California-Irvine
University of California-Los Angeles (4)
University of California-Merced
University of California-Riverside
University of California-San Diego (3)
University of California-Santa Barbara
University of California-Santa Cruz (3)

University of Cambridge
University of Chicago (28)
University of Colorado
University of Denver
University of Edinburgh
University of Exeter
University of Glasgow
University of Hartford
University of Hong Kong
University of Houston
University of Illinois (2)
University of Leeds
University of Manchester
University of Massachusetts-Amherst
University of Miami
University of Michigan (9)
University of Minnesota
University of North Carolina
University of Oregon (2)
University of Oxford
University of Pennsylvania (7)
University of Pittsburgh
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 (12)
University of St Andrews (2)
University of Sussex
University of Texas
University of the Pacific
University of Toronto (2)
University of Vermont
University of Virginia
University of Washington
University of Waterloo
University of Wisconsin
University of York
Ursinus College
Vanderbilt University
Vassar College (3)
Villanova University
Wake Forest University
Washington College
Washington University, St Louis (8)
Wellesley College (5)
Wesleyan University (2)
Wheaton College
Whitman College
Whittier College
Willamette University
Williams College (3)
Worcester Polytechnic Institute (7)
Xavier University
Yale University (6)
Yale-NUS College

The 413 members of the first five classes applied to 240 colleges, were admitted to 224, and are attending 102 different institutions in 28 states, the District of Columbia, Canada, England, France, and Scotland. Adventurous and independent, over 70% of Nueva graduates choose to leave the state of California for college and annually over a third are the sole matriculant to their college.