



**Buffalo Seminary Student/Parent  
Handbook  
2023 - 2024**

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## MISSION

Buffalo Seminary prepares a diverse group of young women to be engaged scholars and citizens, proud to shape society rather than be controlled by it, and ready to live and lead with honor, courage, and confidence.

## VISION

SEM is reimagining when, where, and how learning happens. Our vision is to design personal, challenging, and transformational experiences that serve all of our community, at every age and stage. Why is this our vision? We know that learning is a lifelong endeavor, and that pathways to learning will continue to expand.

## VALUES

These values are the core beliefs at SEM that shape our community, inform our decisions, and guide our actions.

**Women as Scholars and Leaders:** We cultivate the intellect and independence of women, supporting them as life-long scholars and leaders.

**Community of Belonging:** We are a community of belonging. We embrace the richness of diversity in people and ideas and strive for an equitable experience for all.

**Integrity of Character:** We expect honor, compassion, and honesty in our words and actions.

**Health and Resilience:** We nurture the wellness of ourselves and our community, knowing it is essential to learning and growth.

**Global Perspective:** We know that whether in school, in Buffalo, or in the world we must engage as empathetic and informed citizens.

## PORTRAIT OF A SEM GRADUATE

Enthusiastically share what makes me unique.

Pursue new learning experiences with curiosity.

Speak confidently and listen with an open mind.

Converse with anyone about anything.

Fully participate in the creation of a world that is just, diverse, inclusive, and ever changing.

## STATEMENT ON DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION

At Buffalo Seminary, we celebrate our diverse identities and perspectives. We embrace diversity as necessary for our collective growth and achievement. To fulfill this purpose, we welcome and seek students, families and employees who contribute to the richness of our diverse community. And we work every day to ensure that all who come within our walls have what they need to realize their potential and to participate fully in school life.

## ACADEMIC PROGRAM

Buffalo Seminary curriculum is a four-year sequential program for college-bound students. Honors and Advanced Placement courses are offered in all academic disciplines and are open to students by departmental invitation. Course of Study by year listed below:

### Freshman Year

English  
 Math  
 Physics  
 History of Western New York  
 Foreign Language  
 Arts Eye (Fine Arts)  
 Fitness/Health & Leadership  
 Coding, Engineering, and Global  
 Citizens electives

### Sophomore Year

English  
 Math  
 Biology  
 United States History  
 Foreign Language  
 Electives  
 Fitness/Health & Leadership

### Junior Year

English  
 Math  
 Chemistry  
 World History  
 Foreign Language  
 Electives  
 Capstone  
 Fitness/Health & Leadership

### Senior Year

English  
 Course in Math and/or Science  
 Fitness/Health & Leadership  
 Capstone  
 Electives in:  
 English, Foreign Language, History, Math,  
 Science, Fine Arts, Computer  
 Senior Presentation

## **Graduation Requirements**

English	4 years
History	3 years (must include U.S. History)
Math	3 years* sequence
Foreign Language	3-year sequence
Science	3 years of a lab science*
Fine Arts	5 trimesters (2 hands-on, 2 foundations)
Fitness	4 years

\*Student must have a fourth year of either Math or Science.

## **Placement in Advanced Courses**

A student's eligibility for placement in Honors, AP, or other advanced courses is determined by one or more of the following: academic standing, teacher recommendation, departmental recommendation, testing data, and/or administrative approval.



## Grading System and Reporting

A+	97-100	B	83-86	C-	70-72
A	93-96	B-	80-82	D	65-69
A-	90-92	C+	77-79	F	64 & below
B+	87-89	C	73-76		

For reporting purposes, the year is divided into trimesters. Grades and/or written reports from faculty are sent home six times a year.

Questions or concerns about grades for a particular subject should be directed by students and parents first to the subject teacher and then to the advisor or Dean of Students.

## ACADEMIC HONORS

### Honor and Merit Rolls

At the end of each trimester, GPAs are calculated. High Honor, Honor, and Merit Rolls are recorded on the final report card in June. Students whose averages are a B+ or greater, with no grade lower than a C+, earn Merit Roll. Those whose averages are an A- or greater, with no grade lower than a B, earn Honor Roll. Those whose averages are an A+, with no grade lower than an A-, earn High Honor Roll. For High Honor Roll, the minimum GPA is 4.32. Grade point averages are calculated on a 4-point scale, with added weight given for Honors and Advanced Placement Courses.

### Cum Laude Society

Membership in the Cum Laude Society is the highest level of academic recognition that can be awarded to a student. Each year up to 20% of the senior class may be inducted into the SEM chapter, based solely on academic achievement. Inductions occur in the fall and spring of senior year.

### National Honor Society

The Buffalo Seminary Chapter of National Honor Society holds an induction ceremony at the end of junior year. The selection of candidates is based on the criteria: of a minimum grade average of B+ (87%) and an application explaining how the candidate has met the qualification of leadership, service, and character. The selection committee consists of one faculty member from each department. Students inducted into NHS are required to complete additional community service through peer-tutoring at SEM during their senior year.

## ACADEMIC REVIEW COMMITTEE

After each trimester, the academic progress of each student is reviewed by the Academic Review Committee. Students experiencing academic difficulty will be placed on one of the following:

**Academic Warning:** A student earning one D for the trimester will be placed on Academic Warning. A student on Academic Warning must meet with the Dean of Students to discuss her difficulty and devise a plan to raise her grades. Parents may wish to contact the Dean of Students to set up a conference to

discuss their daughter's grades. If the student raises her grade above a D in the following trimester, she will be removed from Academic Warning. Academic Warning does not appear on a student's record.

**Academic Probation:** A student earning two or more D grades, or one F grade, will be put on Academic Probation. Students on Academic Probation are in danger of being asked to leave Buffalo Seminary unless grades improve. Students on Academic Probation must meet with the Dean of Students to devise a plan to improve performance and must report to the Learning Lab during all free periods until review by the Academic Review Committee at the midpoint of the next trimester. If the student raises her grades by the end of the next trimester and does not have more than one D and no F's, she will be moved to Academic Warning. Should she have no grades of D or F at the end of the next trimester, she will be removed from warning status. Academic Probation does not appear on a student's record.

The privilege of participating in extracurricular activities including athletic teams, theatre productions, elected offices, and other time-consuming school activities may be denied if the Academic Review Committee feels that participation is compromising academic achievement.

If a student is on Academic Probation for two consecutive trimesters, there will be a conference with parents to discuss the status of the student. It may be determined that the student will not be invited back for the following trimester or academic year. At the end of the year, academic status will be determined on an individual basis.

During a student's four years at SEM, she has one opportunity to retake a failed course in summer school. Successful completion of the summer course may allow the student to return to SEM the following academic year. However, only certain courses can be taken in summer school.

## COLLEGE COUNSELING

As part of its mission, our four-year college counseling curriculum, implemented in 2021, delivers clear, step-by-step information and skills to help students learn whatever is necessary for the stage they are in. It was designed as an intentional approach to college applications, and to help students identify their abilities, interests, and achievements.

1. SEM's ninth grade students identify their interests and are encouraged to get involved in volunteering, join clubs and athletics. Through a success-skills module, students understand the connection between rigorous coursework and their post-secondary plans.
2. Sophomores identify their strengths, set academic goals, and begin to build a resume. They are presented with ways to conduct a successful college search and the different aspects that determine 'college fit'. Furthermore, in the fall, students are introduced to standardized testing and meet individually with their counselor to review their PSAT results.
3. Our Junior College Seminar meets once per cycle during the second trimester. Students' complete personality and career inventories, research majors, build and enhance activities lists, explore scholarships, and write a resume. We spend a good deal of time brainstorming and writing their personal

statements and begin to build their college lists. Students then meet individually with their counselor throughout the third trimester polishing their essays and creating a balanced college list.

4. A Common App workshop is held in August for rising seniors to begin the first official steps in the college application process. They meet as a class once per cycle for their Senior College Seminar course during the first trimester. We finalize their resume and update their activities lists on the Common App. We practice college interviews, review the financial aid process and how to fill out the FAFSA and CSS forms, finalize their college lists and continue with essays and scholarship searches. Students must regularly meet with their counselor for assistance in the final steps of the application and submission process.

The school is responsible for advising students and their parents about college opportunities. Interviews are held with juniors and their parents in the winter of junior year, and thereafter as often as necessary. Students take responsibility for arranging campus visits, interviews, and meeting individual deadlines. The school acts as advisor: in making suggestions, indicating academic programs of specific interest, filling out school portions of the application forms, recommending standardization testing, writing a school profile, and letter of recommendation for each senior to accompany her application. Representatives of various colleges visit SEM each year to explain their offerings to interested students.

Letters of recommendation from individual faculty and from the college counselor are confidential and are not shared with students or parents as a matter of school policy. Parents may be sure, however, that it is the school's intent to present the student in the best light possible, and that college recommendations are positive documents, which reflect thorough knowledge of a student's strengths and accomplishments.

Visiting colleges is a valid part of the college search process; it is important, however, to miss as little school as possible. College visits requiring an absence from school must be arranged in writing in advance with the college counselor, teachers, and main office receptionist. Absences without prior arrangement are deemed unexcused.

College applications often ask students if they have been suspended from school; in addition, many colleges ask the same question of the SEM college counselor. It is expected that the SEM student will answer the question honestly. The college counselor will answer such a question in a candid, non-judgmental manner being as strong an advocate for the student as possible.

If suspension occurs following a student's submission of a college application, the student will be asked by SEM to inform the college(s). When such a request is made, the student will be given one week to inform the college(s). The college counselor will follow up with the college(s) to confirm that the letter has been received.

## **COMMUNITY SERVICE**

The goal of SEM's Community Service Program is to inspire and facilitate a giving spirit in each student, so that reaching out to others and giving of one's time and energy become a way of life.

Service learning and community engagement are important concepts in the community service world. The premise is that it takes time, effort, and consistency to cultivate a giving spirit. By actively engaging with one or many organizations over the course of the school year, you can be a part of the wider Buffalo community. A lot of learning goes on, and before you know it, you will have accumulated service hours!

### **Guidelines:**

- Each student is expected to complete a minimum of 10 hours of service each year.
- All service hours are to be recorded online. Click on the Community Service tab on the SEM Portal to log in your service hours.
- Students may participate in SEM organized projects or ones that students have discovered themselves.
- All work that is voluntary and that assists others will be counted as service hours.
- Projects completed during the summer will be counted toward that coming year's goal.
- Hours will be tabulated throughout the year so that you can monitor your progress towards the 10-hour goal.
- Advisors will also be informed of their advisees' hours.
- Community service hours will be recorded on each student's transcript to the end of the year.

Let's get out there and make a difference!

## **DAILY LIFE**

The day begins at 7:50 a.m. in advisory followed by Morning Meeting, a time in which all members of the SEM community come together. Classes begin at 8:12 a.m. and conclude at 3:30 p.m. There is a common lunch period for both faculty and students.

### **Attendance**

It is the expectation of the school that a student attends all her classes when school is in session. Parents are expected to call the school office by 8:00 a.m. if the student will be absent for any reason. Parents should make every attempt to schedule appointments and family activities when school is not in session.

### **Absence**

Because classes at Buffalo Seminary move quickly and much of the learning takes place in the classroom, it is difficult for a student to do well if she is absent. Any student who misses the same class 6 times or more in a trimester (excluding SEM Flex) will be contacted by the Dean of Students and her parents will be notified. At that time, the Academic Review Committee will meet to review the absences and determine any consequences. Excessive absences from a class may affect a student's overall grade in the course. Grades and academic credit are at risk for any student who has accumulated more than 18 absences from a full-year course (including college visits) or 6 from a trimester course. An unsanctioned absence may result in assignment to proctored study hall or an appearance before the Community Honor Board.



**Absences Requiring Advance Notice:** When a student needs to be absent for all or part of a day, a parent should communicate with the main office.

For all prearranged absences, a student must have any teacher whose classes she will miss sign an absence form (white slip) appended to her note and return it to the main office prior to leaving school. Students who are absent are responsible for any missed work and assignments.

A student with permission to leave must sign out at the main office when she leaves. On return, she must sign back in and proceed immediately to her next commitment.

Students involved in extracurricular activities (i.e., sports, plays, meetings after school) must be in school by 10:30 a.m. in order to participate in those activities.

### **Tardiness and Excused Tardies**

Students are expected to be on time for all school commitments. If a student arrives late, she must sign in at the main office before going to class. Four tardy slips will result in the student being put into proctored lunch for one week. Excused tardies will apply for previously scheduled appointments and bus/weather delays only.

### **The Advisory Program & Class Deans**

The student's individual advisor monitors academic and personal progress, helps in developing strategies for problem solving, and is generally a student's mentor. At each grade level, there is a Class Dean who oversees collective goal setting, monitors class dynamics, and gives support to class officers. The Class Dean helps students develop their leadership skills and encourages effective participation in the school community. Likewise, there is a faculty advisor for each of the school-sponsored clubs and boards.

## **SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT**

During the day, students have choices about where and how they spend free periods. The library is a quiet room, conducive to individual work. The gallery will also be available as a quiet, independent workspace. The study hall is available for group work. A natural gathering place for students and faculty is the atrium. Students may go out into the courtyard during free periods and lunch. The courtyard is to be accessed from the back courtyard door only and policies for use are clearly posted. Students are expected to keep all areas of the school in good order.

The school building is open and supervised from 7:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. Students may remain in the building after 3:30 p.m. but must sign in at the main office. Between the hours of 3:30 p.m. and 6:00 p.m., students may be in the study hall, library, or atrium or under the direct supervision of a coach or faculty member. Any student staying past 6:00 p.m. must communicate with the main office before 4:00 p.m. to ensure proper supervision is in place.

## Respect for the School Community and Rules

Respect and honesty are the cornerstone of the Buffalo Seminary community, and everyone bears responsibility for her own department and for the appearance of the school.

Our conversations at school should be carried on in a tone and manner respectful of classes in session, office and staff areas, assemblies, and meetings of any kind. Students need to be aware of the presence of visitors in the building, and therefore, of the importance of “first impressions.” The library is an area for quiet study and research, rather than socializing.

Students are responsible for their own possessions and are discouraged from bringing valuables or large sums of money to school. Valuables and money should be locked in student lockers or may be checked in with the main office. The school provides an area in the gym locker room for coats, boots, and athletic equipment. Each student has a locker for her personal use. The study hall is a common area and should be free of personal belongings. Items left on the floor or on tables in the study hall will be removed and a pink slip will be issued.

Music may be listened to with headphones and earbuds during students’ free periods. Headphone and earbud use are prohibited during class time, advisory, morning meeting, in the hallways and in the Atrium during lunch. During school hours, the use of cell phones is prohibited. Students may only use their cell phones during lunch (11:59-12:51), outside of the atrium. If a cell phone is used during the school day without permission, the phone will be confiscated, and a red slip will be issued.

All food and drinks (except for water) are allowed in the atrium only. Exceptions may be made only with faculty supervision. Gum chewing is prohibited anywhere on school property.

By state law, the SEM buildings and campus constitute a smoke-free environment.

## HONOR CODE

The Honor Code is an integral part of life at Buffalo Seminary and provides guidelines for both academic and social behavior.

**Academic Honor** requires respecting the intellectual and artistic property of others. The Honor Pledge should be written and signed by students on all class tests, papers, examinations, and other work which a faculty member designates as an honor assignment. The Honor Pledge states, *“I pledge on my honor that I have neither given nor received unauthorized assistance.”*

Violations to the Academic Honor System include, but are not limited to:

- Giving or receiving information in advance of a test when individuals or class sections have taken the test earlier
- Giving or receiving any aid during a test, including cell phone use
- Giving or receiving notes, textbooks, or other sources during a test unless authorized by the instructor

- Representing another's work or ideas as one's own. Plagiarism is an especially serious offense. "Cut and paste" from websites is not acceptable (even when cited.) Copying text, even with rearranging works, or failing to cite sources is plagiarism
- Permitting another student to copy work
- Removing any materials from the library, the computer lab, studios, or classrooms without properly signing them out or obtaining permission for their use

**Social Honor** means treating ourselves and the other members of our community with respect, communicating honestly with one another, valuing our differences, and representing our school in a positive way.

Violations to the Social Honor System include, but are not limited to:

- Abusing, harassing, or deliberately intimidating, a student by verbal or written form of any kind.
- Physically harming another person.
- Displaying any form of racial, cultural, sexual, or religious prejudice
- Lying, cheating, stealing, vandalizing, and other lapses in social integrity
- Possessing, using, or selling alcohol or illegal drugs on campus or during any school sponsored event, including being present at school or school activities while under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs
- Smoking on school property or at any school event
- Taking pictures or video of anyone without their permission
- Being absent or leaving school without appropriate permission
- Taking any action that may be judged prejudicial to the school, whether at school or elsewhere, or bringing discredit or embarrassment to the school through inappropriate public behavior
- Possession of a weapon of any kind violates the social honor code and results in immediate removal from classes and referral to the Head of School.

## DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

### **Proctored Lunch**

A student will be assigned to proctored lunch for one week when she has either:

- accumulated four pink slips
- received one red slip

A student placed in proctored lunch will report during lunch to the Learning Lab for the entire week. Additionally, the students will meet with our Community Counselor to complete a restorative justice assignment. If the student has not accumulated another four slips or a red slip over the course of the week, she will then be released from proctored lunch. However, if she accumulates another four pink slips or a red slip, she will remain in proctored lunch the following week.

If the student continues to accumulate pink or red slips, parents will be contacted by the Dean of Students, and a hearing before the Community Honor Board may be scheduled. Repeated infractions of school rules are considered a violation of the Honor Code.

### **Community Honor Board**

The Community Honor Board reviews academic and social honor offenses and makes a recommendation to the Head of School. The committee comprises the Vice President of School Government and four class representatives from the current and previous years, one residential prefect, and four faculty members.

A student who violates our Honor Code or major school rules will be reported to the Dean of Students and for referral to the Community Honor Board. Any student who is asked to appear before the committee is required to attend the meeting.

### **Disciplinary Actions**

In resolving discipline matters, each case is considered in relation to its own unique circumstances. Serious or repeated violations of the Honor Code may result in suspension, probation, or expulsion. The following disciplinary actions may be taken in resolving cases:

- **Probation:** Any student placed on disciplinary probation should understand that further misconduct during that period will place the student's continued enrollment at Buffalo Seminary in jeopardy.
- **Suspension:** Suspension may either be short or long term, and in or out of school, depending upon the case. Under suspension, a student may not attend classes or participate in any school related extracurricular activity. She may keep up with regular daily work and assignments and is responsible for all missed work while on suspension.
- **Expulsion:** Expulsion is invoked when a student's attitude and behavior are such that the school has determined that she cannot continue as a member of the Buffalo Seminary community.

## **STUDENT SAFETY AND WELLNESS**

As a community, Buffalo Seminary has established a culture that honors the trust that exists between adults and students in a day and residential school setting. Our faculty, coaches and staff commit to the highest levels of professionalism in all interactions and conversations with students, and they understand, observe, and protect the boundaries between the students and themselves.

Students should see any one of the following if for any reason they feel uncomfortable, confused, or disturbed by an interaction with a teacher, coach, or staff member.

Head of School – Mrs. Marlette  
Assistant Head of School – Mrs. Stothart  
Dean of Students – Ms. Cunningham  
Director of Equity & Inclusion – Ms. Burke

School Nurse – Kim Skomra  
Community Counselor  
Chair of the Board of Trustees – Jennifer Gress

### **Code of Conduct for Faculty and Staff**

A Code of Conduct for Buffalo Seminary employees is included in the Employee Handbook. The Code of Conduct outlines the expectations for professional behavior in the Buffalo Seminary workplace. Each September, a formal review of the contents of this handbook is completed by all members of the faculty and staff. The booklet is then used internally as a faculty/staff resource.

If a member of the Buffalo Seminary community believes that an employee is not behaving in an appropriate manner, concerns should be directed to one of the following: Head of School, or Chair of the Board of Trustees.

### **MEDICAL LEAVE POLICY**

SEM makes every effort to ensure the health, well-being, and safety of its students. Toward that end, it shall adhere to this Medical Leave Policy in the case of any student who requires a leave of absence from classes and/or residence at SEM due to a physical or mental condition.

Students who require such a leave of absence for 5 days or more must provide SEM with a written statement from the student's treating physician, psychologist, or clinician, stating that the leave of absence is required and generally identifying the condition necessitating the leave of absence. In this case, SEM will work with the student and/or the student's parent or guardian to develop a plan by which the student may continue her academic studies during the leave of absence.

The Dean of Students shall coordinate the provision of academic materials, assignments, and work to each student during a medical leave of absence and shall facilitate communication with the student and the student's parent/guardian. Before SEM will provide a student on a medical leave of absence with academic material, assignments, or work, it must receive a written statement from the student's treating physician, psychologist, or clinician verifying that the student is capable of safely performing such work during her medical leave of absence.

A student seeking to return to SEM for classes and/or boarding must first provide SEM with a written statement from her treating physician, psychologist, or clinician that states the following information: (1) the condition for which the student was treated during the medical leave of absence; (2) a statement that the student is physically and mentally fit to return to school and, if applicable, resume boarding and the student's return to SEM will not pose a danger to the student or others; (3) a statement concerning whether the student requires any accommodation(s) to facilitate her return to SEM; (4) a statement identifying any medication prescribed to the student if it must be taken during the school day or the student resides at SEM; (5) if the student resides at SEM, a description of any follow-up treatment that is required, including follow-up consultations, counseling, or treatment. When a

student's leave was necessitated by a psychological or psychiatric condition, this written statement must be provided by a psychiatrist or psychologist licensed to practice in New York State.

Upon receipt of this information, SEM shall consult with a physician, psychologist or other appropriate professional of its choice to evaluate the information provided and whether the student may safely return to SEM. In the event that SEM requires additional information in order to make that determination, the student and/or her parent/guardian will cooperate with SEM to promptly obtain and provide such information.

The final determination of whether a student may safely return to SEM shall be made by SEM at its discretion. In each case, SEM shall endeavor to make such a determination as quickly as possible, but it will not permit a student's return to classes, activities, or boarding until it has received the above-stated information and had adequate time to make a determination concerning whether the student can safely return to SEM.

If SEM determines that a student may not safely return to classes, activities, or boarding, it shall promptly communicate that decision to the student and her parent/guardian. If SEM concludes that a student requires an additional period of medical leave for purposes of quarantine, complete recovery, or similar reasons, it will work with the student and the student's parent/guardian to develop a plan to permit the student to continue her academic work during that leave or to facilitate the student's withdrawal.

A student seeking to return to SEM after a medical leave of absence must have completed reasonable levels of academic work before returning to school in order to demonstrate that she is capable of continuing her studies and to minimize the workload upon her return to classes. Before approval is given for a student to return to SEM following a medical leave of absence, the student must demonstrate that she has completed academic work during the leave of absence to the satisfaction of the Dean of Students.

During a medical leave of absence, a student may not return to campus for any reason or host other students as guests at the student's home, except with the specific and written consent of the Dean of Students.

## **2023-2024 DRESS CODE**

Buffalo Seminary does not require a uniform. The SEM dress code exists to allow students to express their individual style while also acknowledging SEM as an academic institution. It is the responsibility of each student and their guardian to check attire before leaving for school. Together, we strive to dress in a manner that supports our expectations of the SEM community.

Student attire will be checked each morning by individual advisors and throughout the day by teachers and administrators. If a student is out of dress code, they will receive a pink slip and must change

immediately. We require all students to always have a change of clothes in their locker. SEM will not be responsible for providing extra clothing for students who are out of dress code.

Permitted	NOT Permitted
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Shirts, sweatshirts, sweaters without logos, words, graphics, and pictures.</li> <li>- Pants and jeans free of rips and tears</li> <li>- Dresses, skirts, and shorts - fingertip length</li> <li>- Leggings worn with a top which meets the student's thigh</li> <li>- Cultural headwraps, religious head coverings</li> <li>-SEM t-shirts, long sleeves, sweatshirts</li> </ul> <p>*New: Sandals and shorts are permitted in September, October, May, and June only.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Clothing or masks that advocate for a specific political position, reference illegal drugs, alcohol, violence, or contain obscenity or hate speech</li> <li>- Clothing with logos, words, graphics, or pictures</li> <li>- Soiled, ripped, or torn clothing</li> <li>- Visible undergarments</li> <li>- Strapless tops/dresses, tops with spaghetti straps</li> <li>- Crop tops/tops that reveal a student's midriff</li> <li>- Sweatpants, joggers, or athletic pants</li> <li>- Shorts, dresses, and skirts less than fingertip length</li> <li>- Athletic shorts or bikers</li> <li>- Facial jewelry other than earrings and a single nose piercing</li> <li>- Classic croc clogs, slides, flip flops, slippers</li> <li>- Hats, bandanas, durags, beanies</li> <li>- Hoods pulled over student's head</li> <li>- Blankets, pajamas</li> </ul>

## DRUG & ALCOHOL PHILOSOPHY/POLICY

It is the philosophy of the school that students should learn how to make informed decisions about substance abuse. Therefore, Buffalo Seminary provides students with medical and legal information through both health classes and guest speakers. Possessing, using, selling, or being under the influence of alcohol or illegal substances on campus or at school sponsored events is a violation of a major school rule; the offense is deemed a serious one, for which a student may be expelled.

### **Voluntary Self-Referral**

The Assistant Head of School for Community Life can provide education and arrange for referrals and outside evaluations. Any student, or student and family, who voluntarily seek help from the Assistant Head of School for Community Life for her abuse of alcohol or other drugs, will be supported in this effort. A student who self-refers or is referred to by a parent or peer and is making satisfactory progress in following resulting recommendations will be allowed to remain at school and participate in school activities if she adheres to school rules.

Decisions regarding "satisfactory progress" will be made by the Head of School and the Assistant Head of School for Community Life. The student must be assessed by a certified chemical dependency counselor or licensed professional counselor at a school approved facility and follow through with the assessment recommendations. Parents will be required to authorize the release of the results of this

evaluation and subsequent recommendations to the school. Students may seek confidential consultation or make inquiries about available services by contacting the Head of School, the Assistant Head of School for Community Life, or her advisor.

### **Confidentiality**

All matters regarding programs with alcohol or other drugs will be kept confidential except among persons directly involved in and/or responsible for the person's education, counseling, and rehabilitation. By law, however, faculty members are mandated to report any concerns that would affect the health and safety of the individual student or other persons, e.g., suicide, abuse, threatened violence. No record of the student's participation in an evaluation/treatment program will become part of a student's permanent file.

### **Implementation**

The Head of School and the Assistant Head of School are responsible for the implementation and administration of this policy. In all cases, the Head of School will make the final decision as to the appropriate action.

## **TRADITIONS**

### **Sponsor/Sponsee**

All new students will have a sponsor. The sponsor/sponsee tradition is designed to help new students adjust to school life as quickly and easily as possible. Sponsors, therefore, contact their sponsees in the summer before school begins and encourage their participation in school activities.

### **Honor Code Assembly**

Early in the fall the entire school community gathers to pledge to follow the social and academic Honor Code. The assembly is a reminder that respect and honor are an integral part of Buffalo Seminary. Every member of the school community signs the honor pledge at this time.

### **All School Picnic**

At the start of each new school year an all-school picnic is held in early September. It is a gathering of new students, current students, families, and faculty. This event is a great kick-off for the year and is an example of the family community that exists at SEM.

### **The Hornet/Jacket Teams**

Each new student, new faculty member, and new staff member is placed on one of the two school teams: Hornets or Jackets. Students will be a member of that team for her years at SEM.

Hornet/Jacket activities are conducted by the Hornet/Jacket Board and are run throughout the school year. Special events include a variety of competitions challenging both intellectual and athletic abilities. These competitions encourage a wide range of student and faculty participation. There are two special Hornet/Jacket days. In September, new students, faculty, and staff find out which team they are on. At the end of the year, the final team competition culminates in the awarding of the Hornet/Jacket trophy.



### **Student Recognition Day**

On this day, the achievements of students in all disciplines are recognized. The day culminates with the Hornet/Jacket activity, “Putting on the Hits,” and the annual winner of the Hornet/Jacket cup is announced.

### **Class Day**

On Class Day, the entire school gathers to recognize and celebrate student achievement. Outgoing student officers announce their successors and present them with red roses. Faculty present awards for outstanding academic achievement and for contributions in other areas of school life. Student participation is required. Parents are welcome to attend.

### **Graduation**

Graduation involves the entire school in a formal ceremony. Faculty and trustees lead an academic procession followed by underclassmen and seniors dressed in white. Student participation is mandatory. Parents are welcome to attend. *In April you will receive guidelines on the appropriate attire for both Class Day and Graduation.*

### **Sign-out Privilege**

Administration may grant seniors in good social and academic standing permission to leave during free periods. Parents will be asked to sign a consent form.

## **EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

Participation in extracurricular activities is an important aspect of school and community life. Students are encouraged to participate in school-sponsored activities outside the classroom.

### **School Government**

Students at Buffalo Seminary have a unique opportunity to develop citizenship and assume leadership roles through a system of self-government. All students are members of the School Government Association (SGA).

### **The Student Council**

The council is the legislative body of the school government. Its primary function is to enable direct student participation in governing school life. Through its deliberations it may review and make regulations affecting the school community. Meetings of the council are open, and all students and faculty are encouraged to attend.

### **Interscholastic Athletics**

Through its membership in the Monsignor Martin Athletic Association (MMHSAA) and NYSAIS, Buffalo Seminary currently fields teams in basketball, bowling, crew, cross country, fencing, field hockey, golf, lacrosse, sailing, soccer, squash, swimming, and tennis. Team eligibility and other guidelines for participation in the interscholastic sports program are explained in the school’s athletic handbook, which is presented at the beginning of each sports season and available on the portal.

## CLUBS & SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

### Clubs

AV Club  
 Black Student Union  
 Chamber Ensemble  
 Connect Life  
 Glee Choir  
 SEMachords  
 Seminaria  
 The Monocle  
 Urban Gardening

### Special Interest Groups

Art Club  
 Book Club  
 Computer Science Club  
 Crochet Club  
 Disney Club  
 French Club  
 Gender & Sexuality Assoc. (GSA)  
 Hispanic Cultural Club  
 Jewelry Making Club

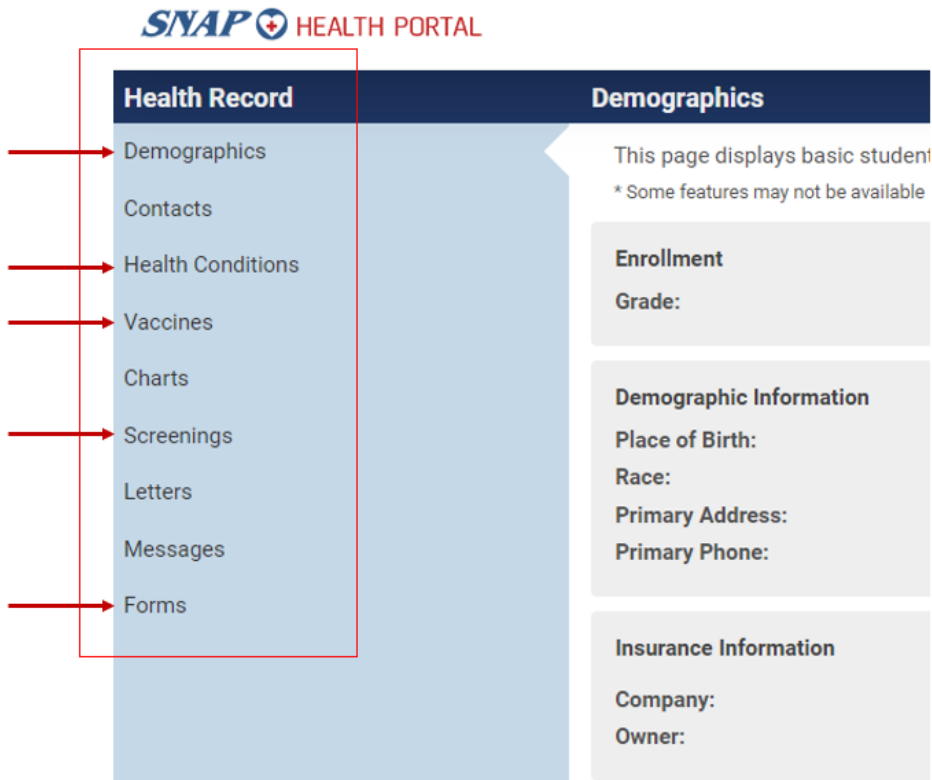
Jewish Cultural Club (JCC)  
 Math Club  
 One Love Club  
 Photography Club  
 Science Club  
 SEM Music Collective  
 SEM Poet Society  
 Tea Club  
 Volleyball Club

## PROCEDURES/POLICIES

### Health Forms

Annual Requirements:

Navigate on the left side of the window under Health Record.



1. Demographics - Be sure to edit the permissions section to give approval for us to treat and/or transport your child in case of emergency.
2. Health Conditions - Please use this section to enter and confirm any student health issues that are ongoing.

3. Vaccines – Please check to be sure that your child’s vaccines are up to date and compliant with NYS requirements. Please upload your vaccine record from your doctor in this section.
4. Screenings – Please upload the most recent copy of the NYS physical exam form completed by your pediatrician in this section.
5. Forms – Please download, complete this form and have your pediatrician sign it. Upload it to this section.

Please contact us with any questions:

Tech or “how to” questions: Beth Adamczyk [badamczyk@buffaloseminary.org](mailto:badamczyk@buffaloseminary.org)

Health questions: Kim Skomra, R.N. [kskomra@buffaloseminary.org](mailto:kskomra@buffaloseminary.org)

### **Payment of Fees**

Students whose financial obligations are significantly in arrears will be on financial suspension and asked not to attend school until appropriate arrangements have been made to meet these obligations. Any returned checks will result in a service charge. Seniors with accounts in arrears will not be allowed to participate in graduation, and their final transcript will be held.

### **Visitors**

All visitors must report to the Main Office to be greeted, to sign in and be issued a visitor pass. Visitor passes are required for all visitors on the campus. Visitors must sign out and return their pass at the conclusion of their visit. Visitors must specify the nature of their visit and the name of the person/office to be visited. Students from other schools are not permitted in the building during the school day unless attending a school event with permission from the Assistant Head of School for Community Life. After school, visitors are permitted in the front hall only.

Visitors are not permitted in the school building or courtyard after school hours or on weekends unless attending an event. SEM students must sign in after hours in the evenings and weekends noting the purpose of their visit. Special events such as dances or movies will require a permission slip for that event. Visitors are expected to conform to the standards of conduct required of SEM students.

### **Parking**

All students who drive to school, even occasionally, must register their car with the main office. Parking in the immediate neighborhood is limited. Students are not allowed to park along Bidwell Parkway in front of the school and must keep that area reserved for faculty, staff, parents, and guests. Student parking is available on Potomac, Chapin, and the far side of Bidwell Parkway. Please do not park on Argyle.

### **Search and Seizure**

Lockers are the property of the school, and the school retains the right to inspect lockers at any time for any reason without notice, student consent, or a search warrant.

While purses and school bags are considered personal property, search of the same may be conducted if there is “reasonable cause” based on a school official’s experience and judgment for purposes of locating drugs, alcohol, weapons, or property taken without permission of the owner.



### **Sexual Harassment**

There is no tolerance for sexual harassment at Buffalo Seminary. Any instance of sexual harassment should be reported to the Head of School and will be treated as a social Honor Code violation.

### **Non-Discrimination**

Buffalo Seminary is a culturally and religiously diverse, college-preparatory day and boarding school for young women in grades 9-12. Acceptance is granted without regard to race, religion, ethnic or national origin.

## **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

In the event of any emergency or cancellation of school, the school has in place a messenger service that automatically notifies our families of these situations. It is imperative that families keep the school apprised of any changes in phone numbers and email addresses.

### **Emergency Closings**

Occasionally inclement weather and other circumstances may force the cancellation of school. By 6:30 a.m. every family will receive a phone call or a text message from Buffalo Seminary notifying them that the school is closed. This information will also be available on the web. In addition, all major radio and TV stations will post our closing. Weather conditions vary greatly in Western New York; students for whom travel would be unsafe should call the school if poor driving conditions prevent their coming to school.

### **Evacuations**

Procedures for emergency evacuation of the school building are explained early in the fall. Evacuation drills are frequent and unannounced. Written instructions are posted in each classroom. Students are required to exit quickly and quietly. Each class has a designated area outside the building to which students are to report for attendance and further instructions.

### **Medical Emergency**

A student not feeling well may report to the school nurse/health office with the permission of the classroom teacher. If the student and health office deem it necessary, parents will be notified, and arrangements can be made for the student to go home. Students may not make their own arrangements without consulting the main office or the school nurse.

## **BUFFALO SEMINARY ACCEPTABLE USE OF TECHNOLOGY**

Buffalo Seminary provides computer resources, including Internet access, to students and school personnel with a firm commitment that the educational advantages far outweigh the disadvantages. In return, we ask the SEM community to exercise appropriate responsibility in the use of school equipment and facilities and to use Internet access provided by the school for educational purposes.

Some activities are expressly prohibited by federal, state, or local laws and ordinances. Other activities are inappropriate, as defined by the administration of the school. SEM will cooperate fully with local,

state, or federal officials in any investigation related to any illegal activities conducted through the school network.

All students and their parents/guardians must sign and return to the school the “Acceptable Use Agreement.” These guidelines are legally binding and must be renewed annually.

For students, a violation of this agreement may be treated as a violation of the Honor Code or rules of conduct. Violating any portion of the signed agreement or gaining full access to the Internet without signing the agreement may result in disciplinary review, including possible suspension or expulsion from SEM and/or legal action.

All online activities are logged through our proxy server. Limited privacy can also be expected concerning personal files. All work stored on the SEM network is the property of Buffalo Seminary, although we are not responsible for its content.

SEM cannot guarantee that network services will be without error. Student files are backed up to our server and all efforts will be made to restore lost or damaged schoolwork files. The school will not be responsible for any lost data or interrupted service caused by malfunction, negligence, error, or omission. Students are encouraged to back up their files frequently.

Students have full Internet access, though the school does block access to certain categories of sites, such as pornography and sites that promote hate, intolerance, or violence. \*New for the 2023-2024 school year: SEM will block all social media sites during the entirety of the school day.

Students using computers during class are subject to disciplinary action if found to be using their computer for any purpose other than the task assigned by the teacher.

## ACCEPTABLE USE GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS

**Use good judgment.** If you are unsure about the acceptability of any activity, check with a teacher or one of the technology staff. If you mistakenly access inappropriate information, you must notify a teacher or staff person immediately.

**Keep your password private.** Do not share it with anyone. If you forget your password, the technology staff can reset it.

**Be safe.** Remember that everything communicated via the Internet inside or outside of school is easily accessible to the world (even when sites appear to be password protected.) This means that anything posted online has the potential to be read by anyone. This includes communications through social networking sites.

**Abide by the Honor Code.** You must not copy, save, or redistribute copyrighted material. Users should assume material is copyrighted unless it is stated clearly to the contrary. Technology makes it easy to plagiarize, steal, or cheat. You must be sure to practice honesty and integrity in your work.

**Use your manners and don't be a bully.** Just as you are expected to exercise good behavior and good manners in the real world, you are expected to use good manners online as well. The general rules of “netiquette” include common courtesy, politeness, and the avoidance of vulgar language. Do not access, create, or share material that is profane or obscene, that advocates illegal acts, or advocates violence or discrimination towards other people.

**Do not hack.** Any attempt to gain unauthorized access to other computer systems through the SEM network or to go beyond your authorized access to the network is prohibited. This includes attempting to log in through another person's account or access another person's files. Tampering with or changing any hardware or software settings of any public SEM computer is prohibited.

Do not take pictures or videos of anyone in the SEM community without their permission.

Responsible use of technology will allow students to learn and grow in an environment of increased communication, collaboration, and creativity.

## TABLET/LAPTOP PROGRAM RULES

**Please note: Violation of any of these rules will result in disciplinary action.**

1. *You are responsible for the safety and security of your computer at all times.* Always keep it in your sight unless it is either in a monitored charging station, locked in your locker, or in a teacher's care.
2. Tablets should be taken home every day and brought *back to school every day fully charged.* If your computer is losing the charge quickly, please see the tech office.
3. The computer must be in its case whenever you take it outside (to or from school or anywhere else).
4. When moving between classes, the lid must be closed, or locked in the “tablet mode.” The computer must be held under your arm close to your body so that it is less likely to drop.
5. Food crumbs and spilled drinks damage computers. You may open a computer at a table only if there is no food or drink on it.
6. Screens are very sensitive. Do not place anything on top of or near the computer that could put pressure on the screen. Also, be careful not to scratch your screen when wearing rings or bracelets. Do not leave anything on the keyboard, such as a pencil, which could break the screen upon closure.
7. Be careful when swiveling the tablet screen: tablet hinges swivel back in one direction. Be careful never to force the hinge; it should only take gentle pressure. Be careful not to get the stylus tether or power cord caught.
8. The hard drive can be damaged if you bump your computer while it is on. Be careful how you place your computer in your carrying case, on tables, in your locker, anywhere. *Never bump, drop, or force it.*
9. Don't let your computer overheat. Make sure the fan vents don't get blocked. For example, don't leave it on a soft surface like a blanket because the vents might get covered. Put your computer on a flat board or book if you want to work on a couch or bed.
10. The power brick (in the middle of the AC cord) can become hot; never let it be covered by blankets or anything that prevents good ventilation.

11. Extreme temperatures can damage your computer. Don't leave it in a hot or cold car. If your computer has been exposed to extreme temperatures, please allow it to return to room temperature before turning it on.
12. *No stickers* or personal decorations of any kind may be adhered to the exterior of the computer. There are stickers on the bottom of the computer which *MUST* remain there. If any of them start to peel off, you must stop in the tech office to have them secured.
13. You are permitted to add files and customize the computer to your own working style (i.e., background screens, default fonts, and other system enhancements) as long as they are appropriate.
14. You are permitted to install games, music, and software on the computer as long as it is legally owned and installed as per a license agreement. An exception to this is peer to peer file sharing software. Applications like LimeWire, FrostWire, kaza or bit torrent are strictly prohibited. If student installed programs cause system errors, it will be necessary that the tablet be re-imaged.
15. All software installed by SEM must remain on the tablet at all times and attempts to disable installed software or settings are a violation of the honor code.
16. You must respect all copyright laws for software and all audio or video files and not install illegal software or files on the Tablet PC. Any illegal programs or files will be removed.



## 2023-2024 STUDENT HANDBOOK SIGNATURE PAGE

Parents/Guardians,

Please take the time to review and discuss the information in the SEM Student Handbook with your student. Included in the handbook is important information regarding school policies and procedures.

All students will be required to sign the handbook during class meetings within the first week of the school year.

I acknowledge that I have read and understand the policies and procedures as outlined in the Buffalo Seminary Student Handbook.

Student First Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_