

DURHAM ACADEMY

COLLEGE PROFILE 2023-2024

The purpose of a Durham Academy education is to prepare each student to live a **MORAL**, **HAPPY** and **PRODUCTIVE** life.

FOUNDED IN 1933	PRE-K – 12TH GRADE ENROLLMENT 1,247 students	EDUCATIONAL MODEL independent, all genders, nonsectarian
UPPER SCHOOL STUDENTS 459 <i>114 in Class of 2024</i>	STUDENTS OF COLOR 48% <i>54% in Upper School</i>	15 AVERAGE CLASS SIZE 8:1 RATIO OF STUDENTS TO FACULTY
\$4.7 Million+ TOTAL TUITION ASSISTANCE AWARDED	AVERAGE UPPER SCHOOL FACULTY TENURE 11.7 Years	UPPER SCHOOL FACULTY WITH ADVANCED DEGREES 86%

STRATEGIC VISION

Prepare our students for life, meet the needs of our students and innovate more boldly, with a foundation of broadening and deepening our work with diversity, equity and engagement.

57 STUDENT-ATHLETES PLAYING IN COLLEGE <i>over the last five years</i>	44 CONFERENCE CHAMPIONSHIPS <i>in the last five years</i>	2021, 2022, 2023 UPPER SCHOOL SPEECH & DEBATE TEAM TARHEEL FORENSIC LEAGUE STATE CHAMPIONS
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COLLEGE COUNSELING PHILOSOPHY

Durham Academy's college counseling team represents 50 years of collective experience in college and university admissions. As the 114 members of the Class of 2024 prepare to apply to colleges and universities as unique as the students themselves, DA's individualized approach focuses on finding each student's ideal fit by emphasizing the development of key life skills throughout the process: self-awareness, self-confidence, tolerance for uncertainty and navigating complexity. A student development and career exploration counselor rounds out the team to introduce students to a range of real-life opportunities including professional work experiences, potential career paths and college and career networking with DA parents, alumni and Durham community members.

[Learn more at url.da.org/collegefit](http://url.da.org/collegefit)

[View our five-year matriculation list at url.da.org/colleges-attended](http://url.da.org/colleges-attended)

ACADEMIC PROGRAM

ADVANCING BEYOND APs

The 2023-2024 school year is the last in which Durham Academy will offer AP courses. Our new, internally designed Advanced (ADV) curriculum meets or exceeds the rigor of collegiate coursework and gives students the skills they need for success in higher education and life. ADV courses go beyond AP curricula by emphasizing depth over breadth, student inquiry, and more authentic forms of assessment. In 2023-2024, ADV courses will be offered alongside APs in the Math, History, and Computer Science departments.

In 2023-2024, the most challenging courses are labeled Honors, AP, and Advanced (ADV). Upper School students are limited to four (4) of these upper-level courses per semester but may petition the Academic Committee for permission to take a fifth Honors/AP/ADV course. Most Honors/AP/ADV courses are reserved for 11th- and 12th-graders. A complete list of the Honors/AP/ADV course offerings is detailed below.

[Learn more at da.org/advancing](http://da.org/advancing)

ADVANCED CLASSES

Bold text denotes full-year courses

AP COURSES

AP Art History
AP Biology
AP Calculus AB
AP Calculus BC
AP Chemistry
AP Chinese Language and Culture
AP Computer Science A, Algorithms, and Data Strategies
AP Engl 11: English Language & Composition
AP English 12: Contemporary Global Issues in Fiction
AP English 12: Medieval Literatures
AP English 12: Postmodernism
AP English 12: Shakespeare
AP English 12: Issues in Modern American Literature and Society
AP English 12: Love & Money in American Lit

AP English 12: Women's Literature
AP Environmental Science
AP European History
AP French Language and Culture
AP Human Geography
AP Latin: Vergil's Aeneid and Caesar's Gallic War
AP Macroeconomics
AP Micro Economics
AP Music Theory
AP Physics C: Mechanics
AP Psychology
AP Research
AP Spanish Language and Culture
AP Spanish Literature
AP Statistics
AP U.S. Government and Politics
AP U.S. History

ADV COURSES

ADV Ancient Technologies
ADV Calculus C
ADV CS III: Topics in Computer Science, ML and AI
ADV CS III: Topics in Computer Science, Data Structures
ADV French Literature
ADV Geometries
ADV Global Inequalities
ADV Historical Approaches to Women and Gender
ADV Mathematical Modeling
ADV Multivariable Calculus

[Find the complete list of Upper School course offerings at url.da.org/us-course-catalog](http://url.da.org/us-course-catalog)

GRADING SCALE

Grades are based on a 100-point scale. GPAs are **unweighted** and based on a 4.33 scale. Cumulative GPAs are based on final grades earned in Durham Academy courses.

A+ 97-100 4.33	B+ 87-89 3.33	C+ 77-79 2.33	D+ 67-69 1.33	F <60 0.0
A 93-96 4.0	B 83-86 3.0	C 73-76 2.0	D 63-66 1.0	
A- 90-92 3.67	B- 80-82 2.67	C- 70-72 1.67	D- 60-62 0.67	

COVID-19 Grading and Evaluations: Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, DA shifted to virtual learning from March–June 2020; operated in a hybrid (virtual/in-person) model in the 2020–2021 school year. Student class time remained equivalent to in-person instruction. We were still able to evaluate students and offer end-of-year grades.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND ENGAGEMENT AT DA

Throughout its history, Durham Academy has recognized that diversity, equity and engagement (DEE) enrich and enliven the intellectual and social environment of an academic community. Co-ed since its founding in 1933 and one of the first schools to integrate in Durham, DA has committed itself at every level — from the boardroom to the classroom — to the dual pursuit of excellence and diversity. Students grow fastest toward their best selves as happy, successful learners when they feel welcomed, empowered, responsible and safe. As an essential element of the school's identity, DEE is the foundation of DA's Strategic Vision, and the school has expanded our DEE work to ensure that all of our students feel a deep sense of belonging and heightened sense of empathy and understanding. DEE at DA is not ancillary but rather core to our mission and relevant to all our work, including training for faculty and staff, affinity groups for teachers, parents and students, the expansion of recruitment and support of underrepresented students and employees, increased focus on the school's culture and character, a review of our policies, programs and practices, and inspiring cultural competency and critical thinking through our curriculum.

UNIQUE PROGRAMS

INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES

Students pursue interests that fall outside of traditional academic disciplines. Coursework often includes meaningful engagement with the local community and emphasizes authentic demonstrations of learning. Examples include:

Peer Educators: Eight seniors are selected from over three dozen applicants to co-teach a Life Skills course to ninth-graders. Peer Educators sign a contract agreeing to serve as role models for their younger Upper School peers, both on and off campus, throughout the school year.

Problem-Solving for Real Businesses: A semester course in which students identify and solve strategic marketing, technological or operational problems presented by local and global business partners. During three problem-solving cycles, students collaborate in small teams to identify root causes and pitch potential solutions.

Teaching Literacy Skills (Augustine Tutoring): A year-long course in which students travel to a neighboring elementary school for four class periods within their seven-day rotation, to tutor students identified as reading below grade level.

INDEPENDENT LEARNING

Students have the opportunity to pursue a longstanding personal interest, delve deeply into a topic, or develop a skill by designing a semester course for themselves. They work 5-7 hours a week under the supervision of a faculty member in a relevant academic field to produce a culminating project or presentation that they share with the community.

[Find current examples at independentstudy.sites.da.org](http://independentstudy.sites.da.org)

CAVALIER CAPSTONES

Students in grades 9-11 participate in a week of culminating learning opportunities that deepen and broaden their learning, and complement and enhance the Upper School curriculum. Choices include outdoor education, hands-on projects, global exploration, interdisciplinary and community-based mini-courses, service and leadership opportunities, and career exploration.

[View the 2023 catalog at url.da.org/capstones2023](http://url.da.org/capstones2023)

THE DA GRADUATE: A MISSION-DRIVEN LIFE

Moral. Happy. Productive. Those words are at the heart of Durham Academy's mission statement — and have been for 53 years — because at DA, character matters. More than homework or grades or SAT scores, character is what endures. Our mission to prepare students for moral, happy, productive lives means DA is as committed to developing our students' moral compass as we are to developing their intellect. The 15 character traits of the Durham Academy Graduate represent the values of a mission-driven life, which we hope to infuse in all our students.

MORAL

EMPATHY
KINDNESS
INTEGRITY
RESPONSIBILITY
COURAGE

HAPPY

CURIOSITY
ENGAGEMENT
AUTHENTICITY
JOY
BALANCE

PRODUCTIVE

CREATIVITY
DRIVE
RESILIENCE
GENEROSITY
WISDOM

ACCREDITATION/MEMBER SCHOOL

Southern Association for College Admission Counseling (SACAC), Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS), National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS), Southern Association of Independent Schools (SAIS)

DURHAM ACADEMY



Michael Ulku-Steiner
Head of School

Kristen Klein
Associate Head of School

Lanis Wilson
Upper School Director

Jazmin Garcia Smith
Senior Dean of College Counseling

Christopher Briggs
Dean of College Counseling

Katie McEnroe
Dean of College Counseling

Lori Reade
Student Development & Career
Exploration Counselor

Nancy Swain
College Counseling Assistant