



Academics at
BLAIR ACADEMY
— FOUNDED 1848 —
COME. STUDY. LEARN.

Blair's academic program prepares students to excel in college & beyond.



Our broad and varied curriculum includes introductory to advanced classes in nine different disciplines; thus, students at every level experience rigorous traditional coursework and explore exciting electives designed to help them develop the skills necessary for success in an ever-changing world.

Learning at Blair is a demanding, creative and collaborative process, one that increasingly urges students to pursue their own academic interests and seek knowledge without limits. Interdisciplinary exploration of questions, problems and ideas inspires students to seek deeper understanding of a subject through reflection and analytical thought, while hard work and the mentorship of Blair's faculty spark intellectual curiosity and lead to learning habits that last a lifetime.

We invite you to delve into our academic offerings in this publication and learn more on our website at www.blair.edu/academics.



Overview of general requirements

The academic year is divided into two semesters and a student receives 1.5 units of credit for the successful completion of a single-semester course and 3 units of credit for a successfully completed yearlong course.

The Blair diploma is granted to students whom the faculty and Head of School judge to be members in good standing of the School community and who have met the following requirements for graduation:

English: Minimum 4 years for a total of 12 units for a four-year student

Mathematics: Minimum 3 years (Algebra I, Geometry & Algebra II or their equivalents) for a total of 9 units for a four-year student

Languages: Minimum 2 years of one modern or classical language for a total of 6 units for a four-year student

Sciences: Minimum of 3 years in sciences (2 of which must be laboratory sciences, Biology & either Chemistry, Robotics or Physics) for a total of 9 units for a four-year student

History: Minimum of 2 years in United States History/Modern European History. In addition, four-year students must take Global Issues for a total of 9 units for a four-year student

Fine & Performing Arts: Minimum of three semesters of study for a four-year student

Self & Society: Minimum one semester of study

Ninth-Grade Program: 1.5 units for all 9th graders

Foundations of Well-Being I & II: Foundations of Well-Being I is a .5 credit, semester-long course in the 9th grade. Foundations of Well-Being II is a 1.0 credit course that is year-long for all 10th graders. The curriculum builds skills that support student mental, emotional and physical well-being.

Independent Study

Students in the 11th or 12th grade wishing to take a course the School does not offer or a course that does not fit their schedules may propose an independent study as a fifth or, in exceptional cases, a sixth course. Students select a faculty advisor with whom they work to create a written proposal. A student may undertake only one independent study per term.

Advanced Courses at Blair

With the goals of giving students a greater sampling of college-level work and ownership of coursework with room to explore with their teachers, Blair offers more than 40 advanced curriculum courses in place of traditional Advanced Placement (AP) courses. These rigorous offerings are created by faculty who are passionate about their respective fields and designed to introduce students to core subjects at the equivalent level of first-year college courses or take a deep dive into a particular theme, skill or discipline.

For more details about our graduation requirements, please scan the QR code to the right or visit www.blair.edu/course-catalog.



ENGLISH

“Developing an appreciation for literature and fictional characters helps us become thoughtful and engaged members of the global community.”

JAMES MOORE • ENGLISH DEPARTMENT CHAIR

Blair’s English department teaches students to read closely and perceptively, write clearly and incisively, and speak confidently and effectively, while helping them acquire a familiarity with and appreciation for British, American and world literature. We emphasize the development and practice of rhetorical skills, social awareness and empathy that will serve students well throughout their lives.

Students converse and write regularly about themselves, their communities, and the characters and ideas they encounter in literature. Class time is focused on structured and informal discussion about texts, both from the syllabus and those generated by students. Bolstered by regular exploration of grammar and rhetoric, students write in a variety of forms, ranging from journal entries to sustained analytical and creative pieces, and, as part of our focus on public speaking, scripts for the English 1 Video Stories

Project and the annual Sophomore and Senior Speech Contests. Interested and accomplished sophomores and juniors are invited to apply for the three-semester Advanced Seminar in Literary Writing, which gives them the guidance, structure and time to conceive, develop and publish a significant literary manuscript.

Our reading lists provide grounding in fundamental texts of the anglophone literary tradition and exposure to a diversity of voices, old and new. In the first two years, all classes study Shakespeare as well as more contemporary poetry and prose. American Studies and Rhetoric, available to juniors, focuses on American literature and culture. Advanced English Seminars, available to accomplished juniors and seniors, explore a range of more focused topics, including, but not limited to, Shakespeare’s plays, Literary Modernism, the Harlem Renaissance, science fiction and fantasy, and film analysis.



COURSES

- English 1 & 2
- American Studies & Rhetoric (grade 11)
- The Meaning of Life (grades 11 and 12)
- Advanced Seminars (grades 11 and 12)
 - 4-3-2-1 (exploring literary forms)
 - African American Literature
 - Authoring America on the Road
 - Fantasy & Science Fiction
 - Literary Modernism
 - Nuns, Guns & Roses (literature by women)
 - Philosophy & Literature
 - Reel Reading (film analysis)
 - Shakespeare & Company
 - The Literature of Broadway Musicals
- Advanced Seminar in Literary Writing (by application)
 - Foundations of Advanced Literary Writing (1 semester)
 - Capstone (2 semesters)

BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

- Sophomore & Senior Speech Contests
- Student-run Friday School Meeting
- Weekly Chapel Talks
- The English 1 Video Stories Project
- *Bowsprit*, the Blair literary magazine
- *The Oracle*, the online student newspaper
- *The ACTA*, the Blair yearbook

“Effective storytelling and the ability to convey your values are key leadership skills. Blair students hone these skills each year as they build relationships on campus and beyond. Our graduates are prepared to communicate effectively as they become the leaders of tomorrow.”

PETER G. CURRAN P'27 '27 • HEAD OF SCHOOL



HISTORY

“Blair students develop critical academic skills that lead to success at the college level, including reading comprehension, written expression, speaking, critical thinking and research skills.”

JASON BECK • HISTORY DEPARTMENT CHAIR

Beginning in ninth-grade Global Issues, students have an opportunity to explore three important regions in the developing world: Africa, Asia and the Middle East. The 10th-grade year focuses on Modern European History, with a special emphasis on the roots of the United States. The 11th-grade year continues this theme through courses in United States history. During 12th grade, history students may choose from a number of electives, including Economics and Intellectual History.

In addition to the regular curriculum, the Society of Skeptics offers weekly lectures by a wide variety of speakers, including noted historians, authors, and business and educational leaders. Skeptics speakers have included: CNN's Lou Dobbs, Columbia University history professor Eric Foner, Lafayette College professor of history Joshua Sanborn, George Mason University history professor Peter Mandaville, two former governors of New Jersey, chair of the 9/11 Commission Governor Thomas Kean and former U.S. ambassador to Vietnam *Raymond Burghardt '63*.



COURSES

- Global Issues
- Modern European History
- U.S. History
- Advanced Survey: U.S. History
- Advanced Seminar: Comparative Government & Politics
- Advanced Seminar: Constitutional Law
- Advanced Survey: Microeconomics
- Advanced Survey: European History
- Intellectual History
- Race in America

BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

- Weekly Society of Skeptics lectures
- Alumni Roundtable & Current Events Forums
- Master classes taught by Skeptics & Alumni speakers
- Diplomacy Club
- Student government
- Model United Nations
- Trips to Intelligence Squared debates
- Travel to the Washington Ideas Forum & other lectures & museums in New York City, Philadelphia & Washington, D.C.
- School break trips to Europe, Asia & Africa
- Young Republican & Young Democrat Clubs
- Blair in Kenya

“Our daughter immediately felt she belonged at Blair. The School offers a strong foundation for a lifetime of opportunity, mixing leadership and academic excellence within a value system that promotes kindness and decency, which is incredibly important in this day and age.”

BILL & KRISTY • PARENTS OF STUDENT FROM NORTH CAROLINA



MATHEMATICS

“Student mathematicians at Blair learn to speak math. Below the surface of each concept is a complex interplay of why and how, and our curriculum encourages students to dig into those deeper questions and to use them as a basis for communication, connection and collaboration.”

DANYELLE DOLDOORIAN • MATHEMATICS DEPARTMENT CHAIR

The heart of mathematical thought starts at the intersection of logic and creativity. Blair math teachers create rigorous and reflective learning opportunities that teach students to build connections, explore patterns, craft arguments, reason logically, make creative leaps, discover fascinating conclusions, understand the world better and, ultimately, enjoy the intellectual struggle of a uniquely beautiful art form.

The objectives of all Blair math courses are to foster analytical and critical thinking and to allow students to understand and appreciate the beauty inherent in mathematics. Blair math courses also prepare students for success in mathematics at the university level and

create an awareness of the need for mathematical literacy in the modern economy. Our faculty articulate mathematical thinking clearly and accurately and use appropriate technology to support the goals of the department.

The departmental graduation requirements are Algebra 1, Geometry and Algebra 2, but virtually all students take at least one math course beyond the required sequence, with more than 95 percent of the 12th-grade class enrolled in one level of calculus. The math department comprises 13 faculty members with an average teaching experience of 15 years.



COURSES

- Algebra 1
- Geometry
- Geometry Honors
- Algebra 2
- Algebra 2 Honors AB
- Algebra 2 Honors BC
- Precalculus
- Precalculus Honors AB
- Precalculus/Calculus A
- Calculus
- Advanced Seminar: Differential Calculus
- Advanced Survey: Integral Calculus & Sequences & Series
- Advanced Survey: Applied Statistics
- Advanced Seminar: Multivariable Calculus
- Advanced Seminar: Data Science
- Statistics
- Mathematical Modeling

BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

- Math Team
- American mathematics competitions
- Independent mathematics competitions
- Investment Club
- Peer Tutoring
- Women & Girls in STEM Club

“Our teachers could be working on Wall Street, in industry or doing research, but they choose to live and teach at Blair. Their care for students and their commitment to adolescent development in the classroom, on the field and in the dorms are extraordinary, and we feel it every day.”

APAAR • STUDENT FROM NEW YORK



LANGUAGES

“In a world where instant communication has never been more accessible, it is even more important that students can authentically communicate with a deep understanding of the historical and contemporary cultural context. This is what our teachers strive to impart to students.”

MARIA ISSENCHMIDT • LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT CHAIR

Blair language classes support energetic interaction as students work with one another and their instructors to learn to speak, understand, read and write in Spanish, French, Chinese and classical Latin. In the modern languages, classroom immersion is key: Students pledge to speak only in the language they are studying for the duration of each class, a teaching tool that has become a hallmark of the language department's philosophy.

Our modern-language teachers are all native or near-native speakers, and our classics faculty focuses on the art of close reading, fully appreciating the nuance of language and introducing students to ancient literature. Connecting students to the broader cultural context of the languages Blair teaches is paramount. Beyond the classroom, faculty and students regularly engage with members of Spanish- and Chinese-speaking communities within driving distance of campus.



COURSES

- Spanish 1, 2, 3 & 4
- Spanish 2 & 3 Honors
- Advanced Survey: Spanish Language
- Advanced Seminar: Magical Realism in Contemporary Latin-American Literature
- Advanced Seminar: Spanish-American Film & Culture
- French 1, 2, 3 & 4
- French 3 Honors
- Advanced Survey: French Colonization & Culture
- Advanced Seminar: Current Events & Media Perspectives in the Francophone World
- Advanced Seminar: Francophone Cinema
- Chinese 1, 2 & 3
- Chinese 3 Honors
- Advanced Survey: Chinese Language A
- Advanced Survey: Chinese Language B
- Latin 1, 2 & 3
- Advanced Survey: Death of a Republic

BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

- Blair International Awareness Club (BIAC)
- Annual International Weekend festivities
- La Conexión
- Trips to New York City's Chinatown
- National French Week events



“Blair was a game changer for our son. To say that he came out of his shell is an understatement. His confidence, as well as his oral and written communication skills, expanded significantly, making him well prepared for college and beyond.”

MARK & MARGOT • PARENTS OF STUDENT FROM CONNECTICUT

SCIENCE

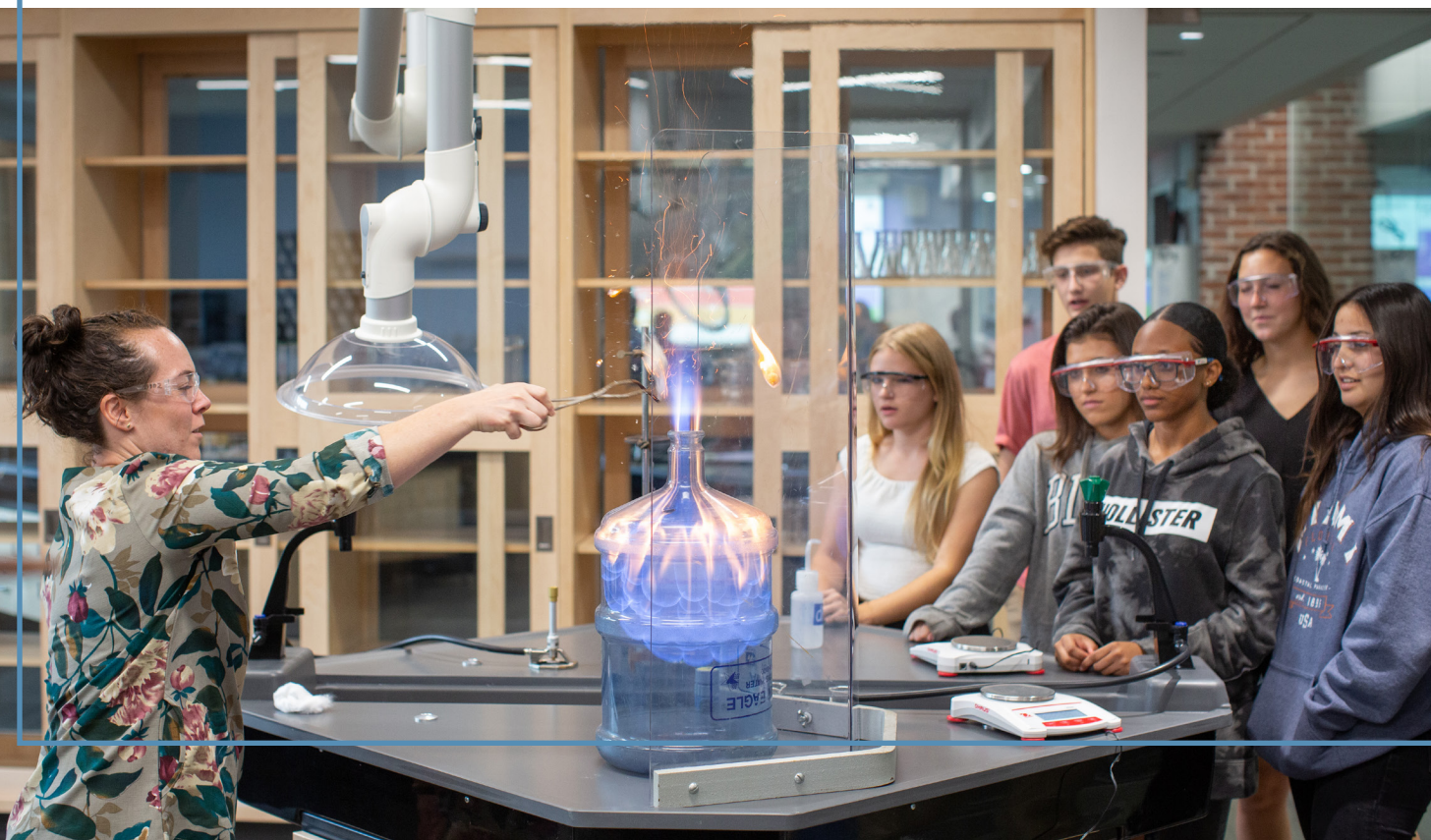
“Laboratory and fieldwork enhance learning, foster excitement for the subject matter and reinforce understanding of complex scientific topics.”

KELLY HADDEN • SCIENCE DEPARTMENT CHAIR

Students gain an understanding of the techniques and processes for gathering and analyzing evidence to support common scientific theories in Blair's science classes. Our traditional courses in biology, chemistry and physics stress this extensively. As students move through grade levels and respective coursework, expectations increase, and students enrolled in advanced courses in biology, chemistry or physics are expected to display a significant level of confidence and comfort in the lab environment.

The department's goal is to foster in students a strong interest in and genuine enthusiasm for applying

their scientific knowledge to everyday phenomena in the world around them, especially to parts of the world about which they are most curious. Within our curriculum, students have the opportunity to explore their interests by enrolling in courses such as Marine Biology, Advanced Anatomy and Physiology, Engineering Science, Environmental Science, Organic Chemistry, Robotics, Physics of Renewable Energy and Integrated Science Research. Designed by our teaching faculty, all of these courses aim to appeal to the varied science interests of Blair students.



COURSES

- Biology
- Biology Honors
- Chemistry
- Chemistry Honors
- Foundations of Integrated Science Research
- Physics
- Engineering Science
- Environmental Science
- Marine Science
- Robotics
- Advanced Survey: Biology
- Advanced Seminar: Organic Chemistry
- Advanced Survey: Physics 1
- Advanced Survey: Physics 2
- Advanced Survey: Anatomy & Physiology
- Advanced Survey: Engineering Science
- Advanced Seminar: Integrated Science Research
- Advanced Seminar: Physics of Renewable Energy
- Advanced Survey: Psychology—Understanding the Science & Mind of Human Behavior

BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

- Research Fellows Program
- Earthshine Club
- Integrated Science Research
- Marine Science class trip to the Jersey shore
- Blair Science Poster Exposition
- Robotics Team
- International Biology Olympiad & National Biology Competition
- Chemistry Club
- Evening astrology sessions & summer minisessions



“My parents continuously praise how well my teachers, and especially my advisor, know me. While faculty members are obviously here to teach us and to help us grow as people, they really are on your side, eager to help you with any struggle, inside or outside the classroom.”

CLARA • STUDENT FROM SOUTH CAROLINA



FINE ARTS

“Blair’s vibrant arts program inspires students to participate at every level and prepares them to become true artists.”

KATE SYKES • FINE ARTS DEPARTMENT CHAIR

From introductory to advanced, Blair art course offerings include everything from painting and drawing (including architectural) to ceramics, graphic design, print-making and art history. For those who want to pursue art beyond Blair, the fine arts department offers a unique course designed to allow students to develop a comprehensive portfolio. Fine arts students regularly bring their ideas to life using the digital design-and-fabrication tools in Blair’s maker space, and the department encourages student artists to incorporate multimedia into project work of every kind.

Blair art teachers are passionate artists. They not only teach the arts, but they also live the arts through their own work. Our teachers share their love for the arts and professional experience with their students. Many students—even those who do not intend to pursue degrees in the arts—continue to take art classes in college and beyond, developing a talent discovered in Blair art classes. In addition, student filmmakers and photographers capture the life of the school community in creative and inspiring projects that focus on academics, the arts, athletics and other aspects of campus life.





COURSES

- Two-Dimensional Art 1 & 2
- Drawing 1
- Painting 1
- Advanced Seminar: Experimental Art
- Photo 1
- Digital Photo 1 & 2
- Analog Photo 2
- Ceramics 1, 2 & 3
- Graphic Design 1 & 2
- Film Production 1 & 2
- Architecture 1 & 2
- Art Portfolio
- Advanced Seminar: Portfolio
- Advanced Survey: Why Art Matters
- Art for Social Change

BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

- State-of-the-art ceramics room
- Blair Art Stars
- Trips to art venues in New York City & Philadelphia
- Trips to iconic art destinations in Europe during School breaks
- Student art critiques
- Professional art exhibitions in the Romano Gallery
- Master classes with visiting professional artists
- “Empty Bowls” service project
- Off-campus art shows
- Opportunities to display artwork throughout campus, including the Romano Gallery
- Maker space technicians
- Photography Club
- Annual Student Film Festival
- Opportunities to create videos for class councils & more
- Student Arts Guild



COMPUTER SCIENCE

“We focus on modern computer science, including underlying theory, knowledge and skills that transcend specific and ever-changing technologies.”

SAMUEL G. ADAMS IV • DIRECTOR OF TECHNOLOGY & COMPUTER SCIENCE DEPARTMENT CHAIR

Computer science connects theory and practice, combining mathematics, programming and engineering. Students taking computer science classes are encouraged to think in both abstract and concrete terms, and faculty encourage students to develop technical aptitudes that will serve them well as they transition into college. Emphasis is placed on project-based learning, with hands-on work dominating class time.

Students taking our multilevel programming course use the Python programming language to complete projects that emphasize all aspects of computational thinking. In addition to developing fundamental skills, students develop new areas of interest and a deeper

understanding of the real-world connections of their work. Our Advanced Seminar: Computer Science course explores the type of material and concepts a student might expect in a first-year college course. Students gain a working familiarity with the Java programming language and study concepts that apply more generally to all programming languages.

Robotics integrates programming concepts with physical mechanisms such as motors and sensors. Students study both the hardware and software aspects of robotics and build working robots that perform complex tasks. Software design brings programming concepts to students in very real and practical ways as they create working real-world applications.



COURSES

- Introduction to Programming
- Robotics
- Software Design 1
- Software Design 2
- Advanced Seminar: Data Science
- Advanced Seminar: Computer Science

BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

- Competitive Robotics Team
- State-of-the-art technology in Bogle Science Center
- State-of-the-art technology in the Chiang-Elghanayan Center for Innovation & Collaboration
- Open use of Blair's maker space
- Blair Girls Who Code Club
- EdAccess Technology & Education Conference
- Independent study projects
- Ninth-Grade Program
- Maker space digital design & fabrication
- Headmasters' Societies Games maker space projects
- Real-World Robotics Seminar
- Hands-on introduction to Da Vinci® Surgical System
- Girls Go CyberStart National Championship



“Blair teachers care about more than your grades; they want to make sure you are happy and successful here. Their support gives students confidence and teaches us how to be independent.”

IGNACIO • STUDENT FROM SPAIN

PERFORMING ARTS

“Students learn by doing, whether they are working out the tricky fingering for a Bach string piece or handling a complicated phrase from an Aeschylus monologue.”

JENNIFER PAGOTTO • PERFORMING ARTS DEPARTMENT CHAIR

At Blair, art is not just a creative outlet, but also an ingrained part of the curriculum and the academic day. Our theatre, vocal and instrumental music groups perform broad repertoires that challenge students technically and conceptually; Blair performing artists range from the inexperienced-but-curious beginner to the tried-and-talented old hand who has performed for years.

The Blair Academy Players entertain the Blair community with three major productions each year

(including a musical), and our outstanding music department boasts a Symphony Orchestra, the Blair Academy Singers and Chamber Choir, as well as a host of smaller musical ensembles. In addition to performing at seasonal concerts in Armstrong-Hipkins Center for the Arts and collaborating with groups from other prep schools across the Northeast, the Blair Academy Symphony Orchestra and Singers have performed in New York City, Los Angeles, San Francisco, San Diego, Vienna, Salzburg, Prague, Budapest, and throughout Italy and the United Kingdom.





COURSES

- Blair Academy Singers
- Blair Academy Jazz Ensemble
- Blair Academy Symphony Orchestra
- Digital Music 1 & 2
- Theatre 1, 2 & 3
- Advanced Seminar: Music Performance
- Advanced Seminar: Music, Theory & Composition

BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

- Three theatrical productions a year, including at least one musical
- Student-run A Cappella group
- At least five concerts on campus each year
- Solo recital each spring
- Annual Bartow Series performances featuring internationally renowned performers
- Student composers/arrangers featured at Blair music concerts
- Private lessons
- Spring break performance tours across the United States, United Kingdom, Italy, France & Austria
- Master classes with visiting professional musicians & actors as part of endowed Bartow Series
- Trips into New York City to attend concerts & Broadway shows
- Blair Academy Dancers & Dance Company



SELF & SOCIETY

“Studying self and society challenges students to deepen their sense of self and their commitment to the well-being of others in the world through a variety of options meant to meet students where they are in their particular personal and intellectual journey.”

CENCY MIDDLETON • SELF & SOCIETY DEPARTMENT CHAIR

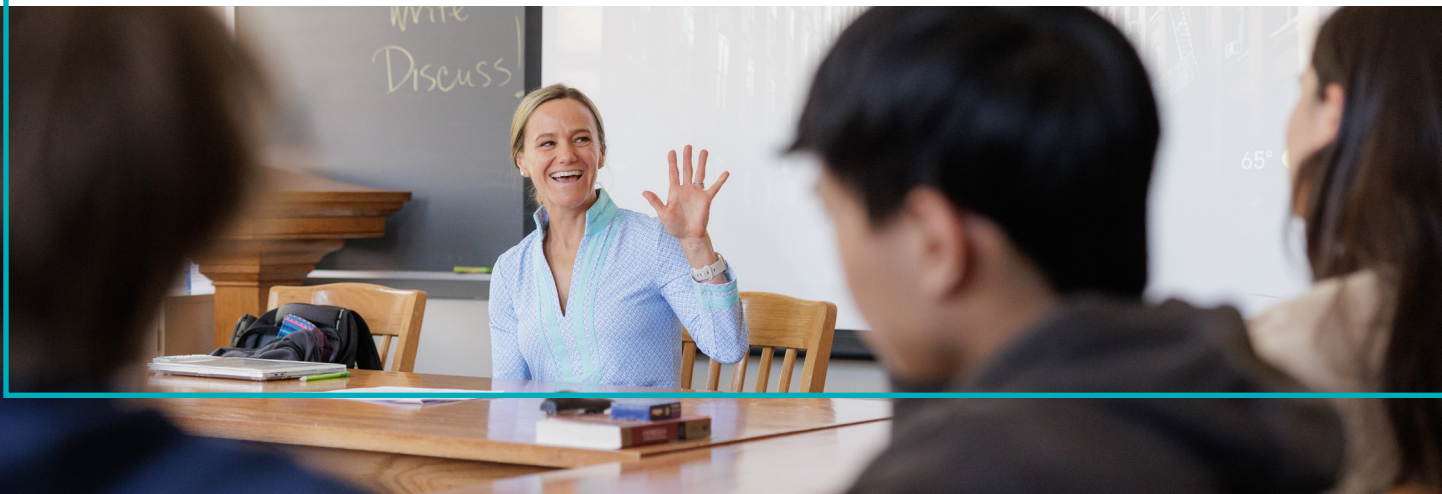
Blair’s self and society courses are designed to educate the whole student—mind, body and spirit. To this end, Blair offers required health and well-being courses to 9th and 10th grade students, as well as peer-education classes taught by members of the Be Well @ Blair student leader group. By addressing topics such as nutrition, mental health and physical fitness, we ensure that our students are prepared to lead healthy and balanced lives.

In addition, Blair students select from a variety of religion/philosophy courses that span a wide range of unique academic topics. These courses encourage students to explore diverse perspectives and engage in critical thinking, fostering empathy, ethical reasoning and a sense of global citizenship, as they prepare to join an increasingly interconnected world. With the exception of postgraduates, all students are required to take one of these courses.

While academically rigorous, Self and Society

courses involve assessments that cover a breadth of styles, allowing students to reflect personally on significant life issues and choices. The curriculum presumes no creedal commitments and endorses no particular religious or philosophical stance. Rather, course offerings are designed to present provocative and challenging material in an encouraging and supportive environment, enabling students to engage with the many significant and influential voices in these disciplines.

Finding ways to express our individual understanding of the world to invite conversation rather than foster antagonism is a singular goal of the department, as is promoting healthful practices of mind, body and spirit. By engaging in these courses, students learn to nurture themselves and others, becoming more well-rounded individuals who are thoughtful, ethical and prepared to make meaningful contributions to society.





COURSES

- Art for Social Change
- Human Rights
- Mindful Living
- Science of Happiness
- Intro to Ethics & World Religions
- Philosophy and Literature
 - Meaning of Life
 - Finding God
 - Nuns, Guns and Roses
- Foundations of Well-Being I and II

BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

- Wednesday Chapel
- Jewish Student Union
- Healthy Relationships Committee
- Christmas Vespers & Winter Gathering

In addition to the opportunities offered through the organizations listed above, all students receive preventive health and well-being education through the student-led program, Be Well @ Blair. Student leaders bring topical issues to the table such as how to build healthy habits, how to give and gain consent, and how to help a friend struggling with mental health. These student-leaders then help to craft a meaningful lesson as a group and deliver this to their peers.



PROGRAMS OF DISTINCTION

Blair is a midsize school of 470 students, giving us a small-school feel, while at the same time offering big-school academic, athletic and arts programs. Learning extends far beyond the classroom on our hilltop campus as our signature programs broaden students' horizons, introducing them to new ideas and teaching critical leadership and communications skills that will give them a competitive advantage in college and in life.

"Blair students are not only prepared for college, they are ready to navigate the challenges they will inevitably face in our ever-changing, 24/7 world."

PETER G. CURRAN P'27 '27 • HEAD OF SCHOOL

Dual-Advisor System

The dual-advisor system is a foundational element of relationship-based learning at Blair. Students are known and supported by two faculty mentors: an assigned academic monitor and a faculty member of their own choosing, who serves as their advisor. The advisor-advisee relationship is often the most influential one a student develops at Blair, and monitors play an essential role in Blair's feedback loop about students' accomplishments and challenges. Should the need for academic support arise, advisors and monitors work together to guide students to one of Blair's many resources, including our director of academic support, school counselors and peer tutors.



Integrated Science Research

Blair's Integrated Science Research (ISR) program offers scientifically motivated students an opportunity to closely examine and contribute to the resolution of real-world challenges. As part of this curricular program, students delve into scientific writing, explore current industry research, learn how to connect with mentors, and design and execute research experiments, all under the guidance of Blair science faculty members who are experienced researchers. The enlarged and fully renovated Bogle Science Center includes dedicated laboratory space for independent research, giving students a fully equipped platform from which to engage in meaningful, long-term projects.



Society of Skeptics

Students and faculty debate important global issues in this unique forum that has grown to become a premier high-school lecture series. Speakers of myriad backgrounds come to campus to share their unique perspectives with students, who are encouraged to engage with presenters, ask questions and debate points of view. Tuesday-evening presentations often extend into Wednesday as students and teachers continue to debate salient issues in classrooms and dormitories. By participating regularly in the program, students demonstrate that they can direct their own learning, engage with the world beyond Blair and place what they are learning in the classroom into a larger global context.

Ninth-Grade Program

Every ninth grader takes a yearlong seminar designed to build connections and baseline skills that will help them succeed throughout their Blair careers. The seminar is specially crafted for first-year students and includes two half-year modules: health and wellness and design-and-maker-space training.

An important part of the first module is the Neuroteach Global Student Learning program, which emphasizes neuroscience-backed strategies for key aspects of learning, such as note-taking, study skills and reading retention. All ninth-grade students have access to the program and complete it independently over the course of their first year at Blair. Overseen by the fine arts and computer science departments, the design-and-prototyping module takes place in Blair's cutting-edge Chiang-Elghanayan Center for Innovation and Collaboration. Teaching students to understand the process of digital design and fabrication, this portion of the program encourages students to apply that knowledge across their classes and in every aspect of their Blair experience.

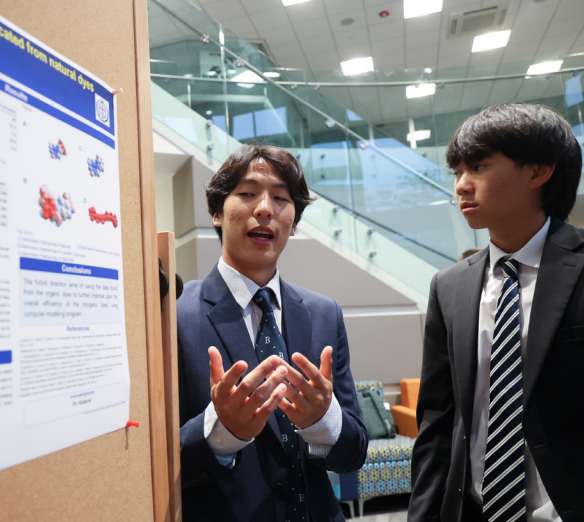
Community Health & Well-Being

Supporting students' physical, mental, spiritual and emotional health remains a top priority at Blair, and students acquire well-being skills through a wide range of offerings. In addition to providing healthful dining options and robust counseling and support resources, Blair builds a solid base for students with two years of health-and-wellness education. During the ninth-grade program, students practice essential skills such as conflict resolution, delivering and accepting apologies, and decoding hidden media messages. These discussion-based classes also delve into topics such as sleep, stress, mental and sexual health, and substance use. Tenth-grade Foundations of Well-Being classes build on the curriculum, encouraging critical thinking about themes of identity, development, values, leadership and more. Peer-led presentations hosted by our "Be Well @ Blair" student organization ensure that defined topics like mindfulness and spiritual health continue to be a community focus. With the support of the School's Health Center team, chaplain, Dean of Equity, Inclusion and Belonging, consulting nutritionists and three full-time counselors—who will soon be housed in a state-of-the-art new facility—Blair students learn to prioritize health and well-being.



Public Service

Through partnerships with area nonprofits, Blair students have become leaders and change agents in our local community. Our annual Day of Service, which puts hundreds of Blair volunteers to work for local causes, is our most visible effort, yet service at Blair often takes many forms. Campus clubs such as Earthshine, La Conexión and Anonymous Hope lead service efforts throughout the year. Notably, students and teachers invest the time to research an organization's needs and brainstorm effective service work before diving in, helping students see that even small actions can make a big difference.



Effective Communication

At Blair, teaching the art of effective communication is among our highest priorities. Our cross-curricular communication initiative and myriad public speaking opportunities prepare students to express their ideas, advocate for themselves, and engage with others in ways that build vital relationships and lead to success in life. As they collaborate in small or large groups, our students learn the value of teamwork, problem solving, and articulating their beliefs and passions. Building strong relationships requires effective communication, and mastering these skills before entering college puts our students a step ahead of their peers when they enter the worlds of higher education and professional life.

Experiential & Intercultural Learning

At Blair, historically, we have created travel programs with the help of faculty connections in places such as Kenya, France, Cuba, Canada, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, China and Haiti. As we emerge from pandemic-related travel restrictions and lean into the recent development of virtual connections with people in remote places, we are poised to expand the ways in which our students experience the world from new perspectives. Our intensive Intersession program, which includes associated travel in some courses, our triennial orchestra trip and our senior spring project opportunities open the door for students to develop crucial intercultural learning skills both on and off campus, in classrooms as well as in a variety of locations that range from right around the corner to as far flung as South America, Europe and Africa.



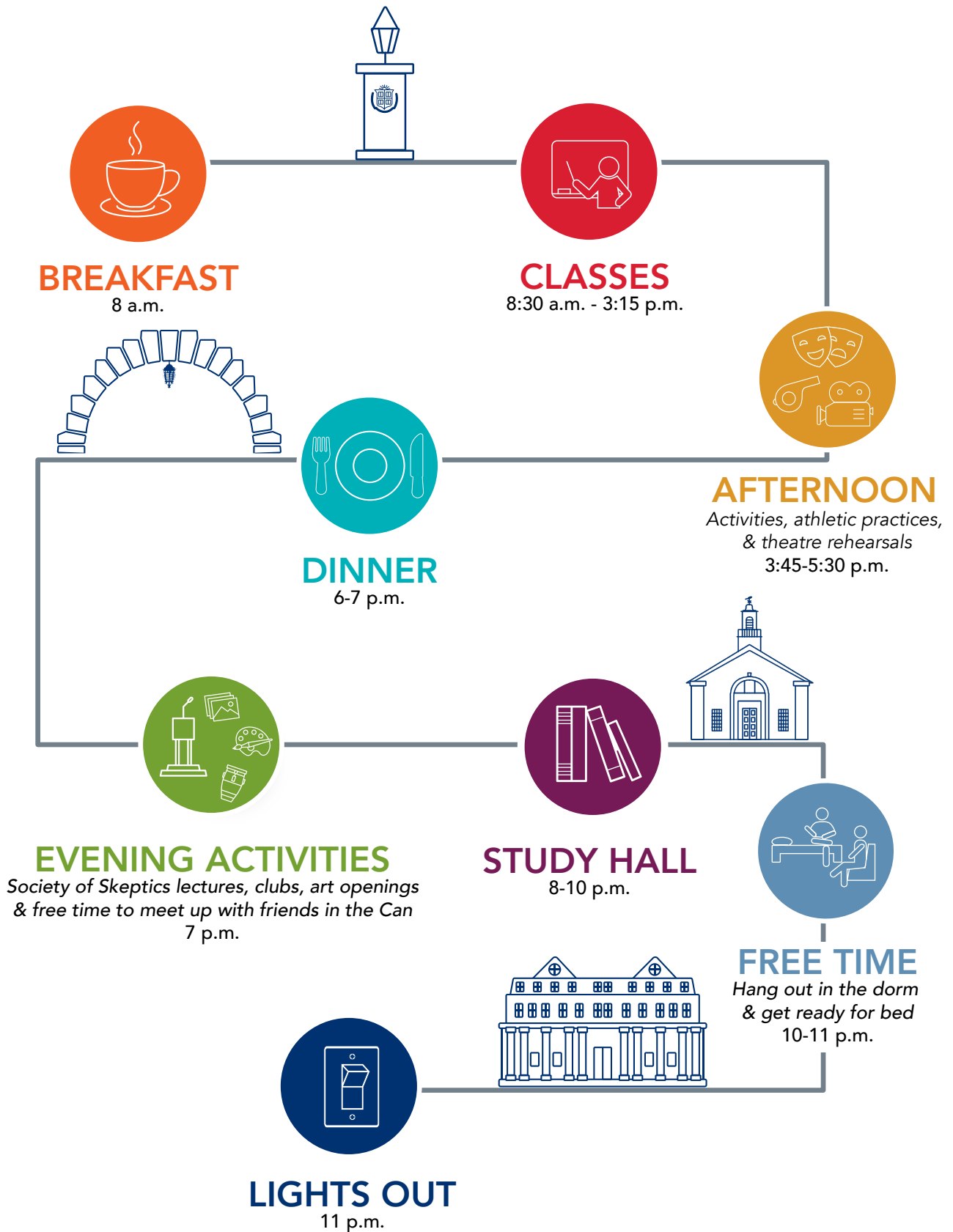
Intersession

Taking place during two weeks each March, Intersession is an intensive course that Blair students complete annually in a condensed period of time.

Courses during Intersession (previously called J-term) are usually team taught, offering topics intended to spark students' intellectual curiosity and not otherwise covered in the standard curriculum, and they are graded on a pass/fail basis. Outside experts, some of whom are Blair alumni, contribute to the experiences that our students and faculty enjoy. Many Intersession courses include day trips, others travel overnight,

and in the case of Blair in Kenya, 15 students and three faculty members journeyed to the Blair Educational Center in Kisumu, Kenya. At the end of eight intensive days of exploration, reflection and creation, students share their learning with the entire community through presentations, movie showings, musical performances and gallery walks. On an annual basis, Blair faculty review the Intersession offerings to update and design courses to meet the program's goals. When designing courses, Blair's teachers seek to generate high engagement by providing student choice and emphasizing problems that are relevant to students in the real world. Course experiences often include spirited class discussion and hands-on projects, and collaborative problem-solving occurs across grade levels. The theme of each course is the starting point for students to explore the topic and complete work that reflects all that they have learned during the experience.

WHAT WILL MY DAY LOOK LIKE?



COLLEGE COUNSELING

“It’s about finding the home where you will be happiest, where you will be comfortable challenging yourself to grow as you expand your horizons.”

NIKI APPLEBAUM '01 • DEAN OF COLLEGE COUNSELING

In today’s rapidly changing college landscape, Blair’s college counseling team is focused on one goal: guiding our students to be strategic and authentic in crafting competitive and compelling applications to a balanced list of best-fit schools.

Through many individual conversations and meetings, Blair’s college counseling office seeks to learn and understand each student’s narrative as fully as possible. They ask students to share where they’ve come from,

who they are now and where they are going. Our counselors learn students’ stories, both those that help us get to know them and those that might be used in applications to help admissions officers get to know them, too. After all, stories make applications stand out among competitive institutions; students’ narratives and experiences about their life and academic journeys are more interesting, meaningful and compelling than simple numbers like GPAs or test scores.





College Counseling

OUTCOMES

Above all, Blair's college counseling team shares a "fit-first" philosophy, meaning the most important piece of the college search is finding the best-matched list of colleges for each student's passions, personality and talents.

RESOURCES & SUPPORT

To support Blair's college counseling mission, we offer each student robust resources and programming that includes:

- An annual kickoff event in which the deans of prominent colleges and universities visit Blair to share their advice with students and families on tackling the admission process.
- Weekly virtual coffee chats for parents and families, covering topics such as making the most of college visits, understanding athletic recruitment and paying for college.
- A college counseling class for juniors, with each section co-taught by two college counselors.
- Support to ensure students are well-prepared throughout the testing process, including providing diagnostic testing, on-campus ACT and SAT sittings, and timeline guidance.
- Workshops for students and families with prominent experts on topics such as financial aid, arts supplements, standardized testing and more.
- Unlimited one-on-one sessions to review students' applications and essays and receive tailored advice on all steps in the college process.
- On-campus college visits and fairs throughout the year that welcome representatives from more than 100 institutions and offer the opportunity to meet face-to-face with students.
- Planned trips to area colleges and universities. At each, students take a tour, meet an admission representative and, often, spend time with a Blair alum currently at the school—giving them a comprehensive look at what their lives may look like in the future.
- The Blair Bridges advisory board brings together college professionals from a wide array of prestigious, post-secondary schools—state flagship universities, single-gender colleges, historically black colleges and universities, urban private research institutions, highly selective schools and less selective schools—to have conversations about their universities' practices to guide our programs at Blair. In addition to an annual summit on our campus, the Bridges board meets regularly, helping Blair keep its finger on the pulse of what's happening in higher education.

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