



EMMA WILLARD
S C H O O L

Jestermester Course Catalog 2024-2025

Students, please enjoy this year's Jestermester Course Catalog! Read through it carefully: many of last year's Jestermesters are running again, but there could be slight variations in the course descriptions. There are also a number of **brand new** Jestermesters running for the first time this year! On Friday, you will have an opportunity to learn more about these courses at our Jestermester Fair, where you can ask more specific questions of the teachers leading each experience. Then, you will have an opportunity to register for your top ten Jestermesters in a process that will be much like the one we use for regular course registration.

If a course has prerequisites or an associated cost, those will be listed immediately below the description in italics. If you see nothing there, assume the course is for everyone and free of charge! For those courses that involve overnight travel and therefore do incur a cost, financial aid is available. Tentative itineraries for each Jestermester will be listed on MyEmma on the dedicated "Resources" tile.

Ms. Boyajian, Mr. Calos, and Ms. Carton are available to answer any initial questions that you may have about Jestermester. Please don't hesitate to reach out!

Courses:

American Sign Language and Deafness

American Deaf communities have their own unique cultures, norms, and histories. In this Jestermester, students will experience the basics of cross-cultural communication using American Sign Language (ASL) and will begin to explore Deaf history and what it means to be d/Deaf. No ASL experience necessary, we will start from the beginning! Experienced signers are very welcome too.

Students will travel by train to Washington, DC for 2 nights to visit Gallaudet University, the first/only college in the US exclusively focused on d/Deaf/Hard of Hearing students and students studying to become ASL interpreters. Students will investigate topics like basic ASL, disability, linguistic minority, identity, accessible design, and accessibility technologies. Through readings, movies, art, speakers, and experiences in DC, students will get a taste of d/Deaf culture within the US. The facilitators are Ms. Bennett and Ms. Evans.

Prerequisites: Students will need to walk around areas of Washington, DC throughout our trip, several miles each day. They will also need to carry/roll their own luggage as we transfer from the train to the metro and walk from the metro station to our hotel (0.75 miles).

Estimated Cost: \$800 per student

Are the Winter Olympics Melting?

Winter sports are already feeling the effects of climate change. Warmer winter seasons and less natural snow have had a substantial impact on sporting events like the Winter Olympics. For this Jestersemester, students will travel to Lake Placid, the host city of the 1932 and 1980 Winter Olympic Games, to explore the history of the games, learn about and experience various winter sports, and delve into how climate change is affecting the winter sports season. The facilitators are Ms. Labbate and Ms. Loffredo-Dempsey.

Prerequisites: This Jestersemester includes a significant amount of physical activity and exposure to winter weather. While students are not required to know how to ski and skate or have their own sporting equipment, they must be willing to learn how to do these sports. Students must also be willing to be outside in the cold for hours at a time.

Estimated Cost: \$1000 per student. Cost does not include winter-appropriate attire.

Art From Art

In this art-focused Jestersemester, students will visit a variety of local museums and parks to find inspiration in the art that they see. They will learn how to engage with different types of visual art and explore the ways in which they can connect with art on a personal level. Most importantly, students will work to develop their own artistic practice through creating a sketchbook, where they will journal and experiment with their own creativity, inspired by experiences that resonate with them.

Through this Jestersemester, we hope to inspire artistic habits that last beyond the first week of March. We also hope that anyone can consider themselves creative in whichever capacity most speaks to them. Note that some experiences during this Jestersemester will take place outdoors in March! We will have to do some walking! The facilitators are Ms. Curtin and Ms. Norton.

Autobiography in Motion

Can physically embodying our personal history through dance offer us an opportunity to re-experience it? This is an opportunity for students to dig into their own personal history; going through an initial artifact collection phase, choosing one of three modalities: video footage, a conversation with a family member, or a written/drawn memory from childhood. The artifact will be used in conjunction with experiences that will guide students towards creating a set piece of choreography that will be honed and eventually recorded for the Jestermester Fair. Students will have the opportunity to travel to NYC to take two classes on one of the days during the week.

Students should have a desire to investigate their own history and turn it into movement, and should be comfortable as an intermediate/advanced dancer. Students should be prepared to co-create a supportive, collaborative community within this Jestermester. The facilitators are Ms. Del Brocco and Mr. Magee.

Choose Your Own Adventure: Dice & Decisions

In this *Dungeons & Dragons* inspired Jestermester game, the players through role play will form an adventuring party who work together to explore the fantasy world of Mount Ida as they embark on an epic Quest to extricate the land from a terrible and looming darkness. At its heart, Dice & Decisions is an interactive experience that will encourage you to engage in the “magic” of problem solving through storytelling. The collective creativity in your game allows everything to be the player’s decision. From their backstory to their personality, the possibilities are endless! The facilitators are Mr. Atkins and Mx. Lawson.

Create Stuff in the Makerspace

In this hands-on Jestermester, students will design and create things in the Makerspace using a number of tools including the laser cutter, 3D printers, sewing machines, and basic woodworking tools. Students will learn how to create their own laser cutting designs in Adobe Illustrator and how to use the CAD (computer aided design) app Onshape to make objects to 3D print. In the final two days, students will create projects of their own choosing, including making jewelry, light-up signs, keychains, beanbags, string art, puzzles, games, toys, and other projects of their own invention. The facilitators are Mr. Bardos, Ms. Shah, and Dr. Shilo.

A Different Land: Journey to Refugee Justice

Maybe you’ve heard on the news about ongoing global crises of the displacement of vulnerable communities. However, it is incredibly difficult to imagine what that life-altering experience is like if you’ve never lived it. You may also hear on the news about the important work being done by a multitude of non-profit organizations globally and locally that support those who are displaced and resettled, and wondered “How can I help?”

In this Community Engagement focused Jestermester, students will hear the voices of refugees and immigrants in the Capital Region. they will visit and work

with the organizations that support their journey and resettlement in this new and different land. Through food, film, guest speakers, and children's storybooks, participants will dive deep into the vast array of stories and experiences of those who are forcibly displaced. At the end, they will have the knowledge and skills to amplify the voices of refugees and immigrants and support the newly resettled members of the community. The facilitators are Ms. Halfi and Ms. Mroccka.

Discovering the Hudson

The Hudson is one of the world's great rivers—geologically, ecologically, historically, industrially, artistically, culturally—and it flows right at our feet. Travel backward and forward in time: students will get their hands “wet” working on the modern incarnation of an 18th-century style sailboat, explore the river's wildlife, learn how music changed the river's fate, learn the stories of Americans—both indigenous and later arrivals—who used the river and whose lives were shaped and inspired by it. That's only a small sampler of the hands-on work, outdoor adventure, and beauty participants in this Jestermeister will experience. Whether you like physical science, life science, history, art, literature, music, or mathematics, there's something for everyone! We will be “on the river” in a variety of locations all or part of most days, including a one-night overnight stay (in hotel accommodations) in the mid-Hudson region. The facilitators are Dr. Riley and Ms. Schmidt.

Estimated cost: \$100 per student. Plan to dress for a combination of indoor and outdoor activity.

The Eternal City: Latin and Art History Exploration of Rome

Students in this Jestermeister will travel to Rome for a first-hand encounter with dazzling works of art and architecture. There will be on-site excursions every day to places such as the Colosseum, the Roman Forum, the Borghese Gallery, the Vatican, plus more! Students will connect their “classroom” knowledge of Latin and Art History through first-hand experiences like reading Latin texts in the actual parts of the ancient city where the events took place, reconstructing Roman temple precincts from their ruins, and understanding Renaissance painting in new ways by standing in the Sistine Chapel and looking up at Michelangelo's frescoes. The facilitators are Dr. Grimm, Dr. Matera, and Ms. Snyder.

Estimated cost: \$4,700 per student

Prerequisites: Priority will be given to students who have taken or who are currently enrolled in Latin or Art History at Emma Willard. This Jestermeister will include a lot of walking on a daily basis. Students will need to have appropriate shoes and be able to walk long distances and stand for long periods of time.

Experimental Printmaking Workshop: Pushing the Boundaries of Color, Shape and Texture

In this creative Jestermeister, students will learn and experiment with various printmaking techniques, such as monotype/monoprint, drypoint and collagraph

processes. Students will explore making and remaking as part of the process of printmaking, focusing on using color, shapes, textures and your creative mind! We will be spending one day going off campus to tour a real printmaking studio and view works of art to help give more background and inspiration! No prior experience or artistic ability is required. The facilitators are Ms. Hao and Ms. Kralovic.

Fitness Flurry

In this fun and challenging Jestersemester course, students will experience a variety of fitness, wellness, and athletic-related activities that will help to propel their personal journey as student athletes. Fitness Flurry will encourage students to examine and actively work on improving their physical and mental athleticism through developing a holistic approach to reaching their athletic goals.

Students in this Jestersemester will engage in daily activities that are aimed at providing them with a wide variety of fitness and wellness offerings. Fitness flurry participants will also learn and engage with multiple guest speakers from the sports medicine and nutrition fields. Daily activities are targeted to improve students' strength, agility, endurance, flexibility, and balance, as well as providing them with information and thought exercises. Providing a toolbox that can help students develop an intentional approach to their health as they exercise their body and mind, inside and outside their sports. Examples of activities are Zumba on land and in water, Yoga, Boxing, Pilates, and Barre; Reflexology, HIIT exercises, nutrition and mental performance information sessions, learning about foot health, and more. No prior experience in sports or athletics is required, but students in this course should be excited to engage in joyful movement each day. A highlight of the program will be the Adult CPR, AED, & First Aid course all participants complete with certification. The facilitators are Ms. Parry and Ms. Shields.

Food for a Happier Planet: How Farming, Social Justice, Sustainability and Food Are All Interconnected

Ever wondered where our food comes from and how farmers conscientiously work on the responsibility of feeding our planet? Are you curious what working on a farm feels like? If so, come and join us for exciting hands-on farming experiences! We will be visiting and helping local farmers, hear what inspires them and how they see their work in connection to Social Justice and Sustainability. We will be staying (2 nights) and working on Essex Farm (near the Canadian border and Lake Champlain) with her farmers & famed author. There, we will make our own maple syrup, help on the farm, and cook our own meals with food exclusively grown on the farm. Lastly, we will meet with owners of SunHee's (and savor their delicious food!) to hear their stories of Social Justice and food... for a happier planet! The facilitators are Mme. Sabatiér and Ms. Lovenduski.

Estimated cost: \$350 per student. You will need clothes and appropriate shoes for the farms (we can help you find what you need).

Game Masters: Exploring Creativity and Strategy Through Games

Students in this Jestersemester will help to select and play a variety of games throughout the week as they consider how games can reflect the values of a culture and what skills are developed through game play. Over the course of the week, students will reflect on their personal strengths and weaknesses and consider how the skills learned through gaming are used in society. Students may draw connections to politics, leadership, economics, marketing, design, human behavior or other areas of interest. In addition, students will work in groups to develop and create their own board games!

This Jestersemester will take place primarily on campus but does include two field trips. On Tuesday evening, we will visit the Bard & Baker Board Game Cafe in downtown Troy. On Friday, we will spend a full day at Troy's Tech Valley Center of Gravity Makerspace building our games. The facilitators are Mr. Lorino, Dr. O'Brien, and Ms. Robbins.

Ghana: Roots and Reclamation

Students in this Jestersemester will experience Ghana's unique culture and natural environment, taking a canopy walk in the lush Kakum National Park and visiting Kumasi, the heart of the Ashanti Kingdom. Students will trace connections within the African Diaspora linking people of African descent with the African continent. We will tour the slave castles that symbolize African oppression by foreign powers. Then we will learn about how modern Ghanaian entrepreneurs are flipping the script, creating businesses and initiatives aimed at economic growth, environmental stewardship, and social consciousness. We will meet the founder of Nulla Waste, a Ghanaian plastic recycling company, and spend a day with a Ghanaian woman-led organization working on beach cleanup. The facilitators are Dr. Bennett, Mr. Botchway, Mr. LaFave, and Ms. Towne.

Estimated cost: \$4,600 per student

Prerequisites: Open to all students. Depending on the level of demonstrated interest, priority may be given to students who identify as being a part of the African diaspora.

Vaccine requirements: Ghana requires all visitors to have received the yellow fever vaccine. Emma Willard will also be requiring all participants to take anti-malarial medications throughout the trip in order to minimize the likelihood of illness. In consultation with their physician, students may also want to consider getting the typhoid B vaccine and/or a fifth dose of the polio vaccine. The cost listed above includes the cost of both the yellow fever vaccine and anti-malarial medication.

The school will provide a vaccine clinic in early November and will also work with the school physician to obtain anti-malaria medication prescriptions for all participants. Participants who have already received the yellow fever vaccine should provide proof of vaccination before November 1st, and if they do so, a \$500 credit will be refunded to their school account. Please note that the yellow fever vaccine is a live vaccine, so immunocompromised individuals should consult with their physician before signing up for this trip.

Girls on Film

This year, Girls on Film asks the question, “How hard can it be? Boys do it.” In a male-dominated industry, there are female writers, directors, sound designers, composers, costume designers, editors—and on and on—who are outstanding in their field and often receive significantly less attention, celebration, and recognition than their male counterparts. This year, we’re giving them their moment! Join us for an exploration of incredible work from groundbreaking women in the film industry. Possible films may include Ava DuVernay’s *Selma* (the first Best Picture nominee directed by a black woman), Kathryn Bigelow’s *The Hurt Locker* (the first woman to win Best Director), Greta Gerwig’s *Barbie* (the highest grossing movie directed by a woman), and Chloé Zhao’s *Nomadland* (the first Asian woman to win Best Director). Most of our JesterMester week will be spent viewing, analyzing, and discussing films. In addition to the films we watch in class, each student will choose a film from the additional viewing list and create an “Anatomy of a Scene” project to share with the class at the end of the week. The facilitators are Ms. Knauss and Ms. Price.

Great Emma Bakeoff

Welcome to the Great Emma Bake Off! During this JesterMester students will learn fundamental elements of baking, work in teams to create dazzling desserts, and visit local professional bakeries in the capital district. There will be four days of baking, each day will feature a type of baked good; possibly including bread, cakes, cookies, and pastry. Students will be guided through a demonstration of a technical recipe in the morning that will help them develop different essential baking skills. In the afternoon, students will work in groups to create a signature/showstopper bakes that encourage students to use their creativity and build on the foundational skills from the morning lesson. Guest judges will taste bakes and awards will be given. On your marks, get set, bake! The facilitators are Ms. Ross, Ms. Buinicky, and Ms. Toomer

The Intersection of Biodiversity and Culture in Puerto Rico

This is predominantly an experiential learning trip, exposing students to things they normally only get to discuss in a classroom. We will engage in a variety of biodiversity related physical activities such as kayaking through bioluminescent bays, snorkeling, and both day and night hiking trips to the cloud forest (the only tropical rainforest that is technically a part of the US National Forest system). We will pay close attention to exploring authentic Puerto Rican culture and cuisine, acting as mindful guests in this unique destination. Each day will be a different experience that students can reflect on in the evenings, especially considering our role in preserving biodiversity in regions as rich as this. The facilitators are

Ms. Brouker, Dr. Dettmar, and Dr. Matthews.

Estimated Cost: \$3,400 per student

Prerequisites: Priority will go to students who have taken or who are concurrently enrolled in Biology, AS Biology, or Marine Biology at EWS. All participants must have passed the swim test by October 15. There are weight restrictions for certain activities (horseback riding and kayaking have a max of 235 lbs.). Please also note that we are going to pursue as many authentic, local cuisines as possible. Please reach out with any dietary restrictions you are concerned may be challenging with this in mind.

Memory Remix: Cyanotype Workshop for Reinventing the Past

In this art-focused Jestersemester, students will reflect on personal experiences and memories, using photography as a medium for self-expression. Over the course of our week together, they will engage in iterative cycles of learning about alternative photographic techniques. We will begin with an experiential lesson on the history of photography, which includes viewing a camera obscura, and physical examples of tintypes, ambrotypes and cyanotypes. Then, we will learn how to use the cyanotype process and experiment with various methods of applying and manipulating the medium. Through hands-on experience, students in this Jestersemester will acquire proficiency in these techniques and utilize them to create their own narratives centered around the theme of memory. The facilitators are Ms. Duglin and Ms. Valites.

The Music Biz

In this Jestersemester, students will explore the many facets of the music industry and assume different roles throughout the week. Students will have a chance to ponder possibilities and plan creative decisions as songwriter, producer, recording artist, engineer, manager and performer. Work may be done individually or through collaborations to record and produce an original demo, complete with cover art. The week will have opportunities for varying levels of participation ranging from behind-the-scenes sound tech to the star on the stage! If you have a song in you, this is your chance to bring it out! The facilitators are Mr. Calabria and Ms. Graham.

Our Stories, Our Voices

Children are natural storytellers. When we're little, we imagine, create and dream up worlds and characters. When we grow up, we start to want to know our own stories. "Our Story, Our Voices" is a collective practice of unearthing our own stories and receiving the story of others. In our week together we will investigate the purpose of storytelling and its cultural significance, with a special focus on oral stories. How does sharing our story aloud impact us and our audience? Beginning with an intention to build trust and space for vulnerability, we will get messy and be risk takers in how we share and hear stories. The facilitators are Ms. Delgado and Ms. McNamara.

Pura Vida, Costa Rica

Embark on an unforgettable journey to Costa Rica, where travelers will leave their phones behind and fully immerse themselves in the country's natural beauty and vibrant culture. Explore stunning waterfalls, soak in hot springs, trek through lush rainforests, walk along pristine beaches, visit a local school, and experience the thrill of white water rafting. This is more than just a trip—it's an opportunity to practice mindfulness and live fully in the moment.

In Costa Rica, students will embrace the spirit of Pura Vida, celebrating simplicity, joy, and connection. Without technology's distractions, students engage in sensory training and language immersion, enhancing their Spanish through authentic interactions with locals. This adventure will help reduce stress, improve well-being, and foster personal growth, leaving you with a deep connection to nature and a richer appreciation for the world around us. Join us in Costa Rica to experience Pura Vida, find inner peace, and return home transformed. The facilitators are Ms. Anderson, Ms. Egan, and Dr. LeBel.

Estimated cost: \$3,200 per student

Prerequisites: All participants must be currently enrolled in a Spanish class at Emma or have taken Spanish at Emma in a prior year. Priority will be given to students with Spanish III competency or higher, but students in Spanish II are encouraged to apply as well. All participants must have passed the swim test by October 15.

Sewing 101: Sewing and Sustainability

Sewing and Sustainability 101 will offer students opportunities to investigate the cycle of textile from fabrication to garment, including a look at the second-hand and ethical fabric industries in our local vicinity. They will learn about how 'fast fashion' contributes to harm in our world and the impact of personal choice in building a wardrobe alongside learning the basics of hand and machine sewing to create felt dinosaurs, tote bags, and mending existing garments. The facilitators are Ms. Resler and Ms. Utterback.

Unleashing the Senses: An Experiential Journey into the World of Visual Arts and Music

This Jestersemester is an experiential class that will dive deep into the realms of visual arts and music and will take students on a journey of creativity, imagination, and self-discovery! Whether they consider themselves artists or not, this course will help students tap into their innate creativity and artistic potential and unleash the hidden talents they never knew they had! Through experiential field trips and hands-on activities, students will gain an in-depth understanding of how our senses and emotions inform our art and vice versa. Get ready to embark on a journey where the arts will ignite your senses, inspire your soul, and fuel your imagination. "Unleashing the Senses" is not just a class; it's an adventure of self-discovery and creativity. Let's make this an

extraordinary Jestermester filled with colors, melodies, and boundless creativity! The facilitators are Ms. Slaughter and Dr. Spiro-Allen.

Unleash Your Inner YouTuber: A Week of Creative Exploration

Students in this Jestermester get to be a YouTuber for 3 days and create their own Youtube channel. The idea behind this Jestermester is for students to reflect on the place of Youtube/YouTubers in their daily life and the impact they can have.

If you thrive on teamwork and love a good challenge, then our Jestermester is tailor-made for you! It is all about each participant and their unique vision. Students will collaborate with like-minded peers, develop their channel identity and discover their hidden talents. They will also dive into the world of filming, editing, and online publishing. It's all about learning by doing! Eventually, they will reflect on their assumptions about the whole process and what it takes to be a successful YouTuber. The facilitators are Mme. Bererd and Ms. Petulla.

The Writer's Retreat

This Jestermester will give students the opportunity to step away from their regular Emma lives and enter the world of words and imagination. Over the course of the week, students will write in community and on their own, sharing responses to prompts and drafts of whatever they are working on in a supportive community of fellow writers. They can write in any genre or in multiple genres. They will craft and revise a single piece or work or several short pieces over the course of the week. We will also take a bookstore & coffee shop field trip and visit with a local writer. The facilitators are Mr. Druckenmiller and Ms. McClellan.

Yoga and Meditation Retreat

Do you need to slow down and take a step back from your everyday stresses? Are you interested in yoga and meditation? In this Jestermester, we will take the time to foster a calm and contemplative atmosphere as we explore common yoga asanas (poses), the fundamentals of yoga philosophy, and basic practices and frameworks of mindfulness meditation. Students can expect to spend time in a technology-free setting moving and meditating, reflecting in creative ways, discussing their experiences with peers, and building community through games and other fun activities. We hope that students will be able to use this week to experiment with lots of different ideas and techniques so that they can incorporate the ones that resonate into their everyday lives. This course is for all body types and abilities, and for people with any level of experience with yoga and meditation. It is especially geared toward people who are new to these practices. The facilitators are Ms. Bendall and Ms. Mariah.