

# SANDY SPRING FRIENDS SCHOOL



**UPPER SCHOOL CURRICULUM**  
FOR GRADES 9-12

# Table of Contents

1

## Upper School General Information

---

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Upper School Statement of Philosophy ..... | 1 |
| Academic Program Overview .....            | 2 |
| Graduation Credit Requirements .....       | 3 |
| College Counseling .....                   | 4 |
| Student Leadership Opportunities .....     | 5 |
| Intersession .....                         | 6 |
| Community Service .....                    | 7 |
| Student Support Services .....             | 8 |
| Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion .....       | 9 |

10

## Upper School Academic Overviews

---

|  |    |
|--|----|
| English Curriculum Overview .....                  | 10 |
| History Curriculum Overview .....                  | 12 |
| Mathematics Curriculum Overview .....              | 14 |
| Science Curriculum Overview .....                  | 16 |
| Global Language Curriculum Overview .....          | 18 |
| Arts Curriculum Overview .....                     | 20 |
| Physical Activities and Sports Overview .....      | 22 |
| Senior Passion Project & Internship Overview ..... | 24 |
| Electives Overview .....                           | 25 |





## UPPER SCHOOL STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

The Sandy Spring Friends Upper School is an independent, college-preparatory high school program under the guidance of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers). Our community is designed to support and engage learners from diverse cultures and backgrounds as they partake in challenging educational activities. Faculty and students lead and learn alongside each other in a setting of trust and respect in which all members act with integrity and responsibility. Together we represent a dynamic, interactive community focused on academic, artistic, athletic, social, and spiritual education.

The Upper School provides an academically rigorous, supportive, and accepting community characterized by close relationships among students and faculty. Within this environment, students are able to fully explore talents and interests. They become critical thinkers through a demanding academic curriculum, enriched arts program, inclusive athletics, service opportunities, clubs, and after school social gatherings. Student leadership and decision-making are encouraged and valued. Underlying all that we do in the Upper School is a commitment to the Quaker values of simplicity, equality, honesty, respect, peaceful resolution of conflict, and community involvement.

SSFS graduates understand their interdependence with communities, both local and global, as well as with the natural environment. They are open-minded, experimental, skilled, and curious. They have an understanding of practices in simplicity, tolerance, and civic engagement. From the foundation of a strong and caring community, challenging intellectual pursuits, and enriching life activities, Sandy Spring Friends School students become confident, responsible, and thoughtful leaders who understand the wider world and seek to make a difference in it.

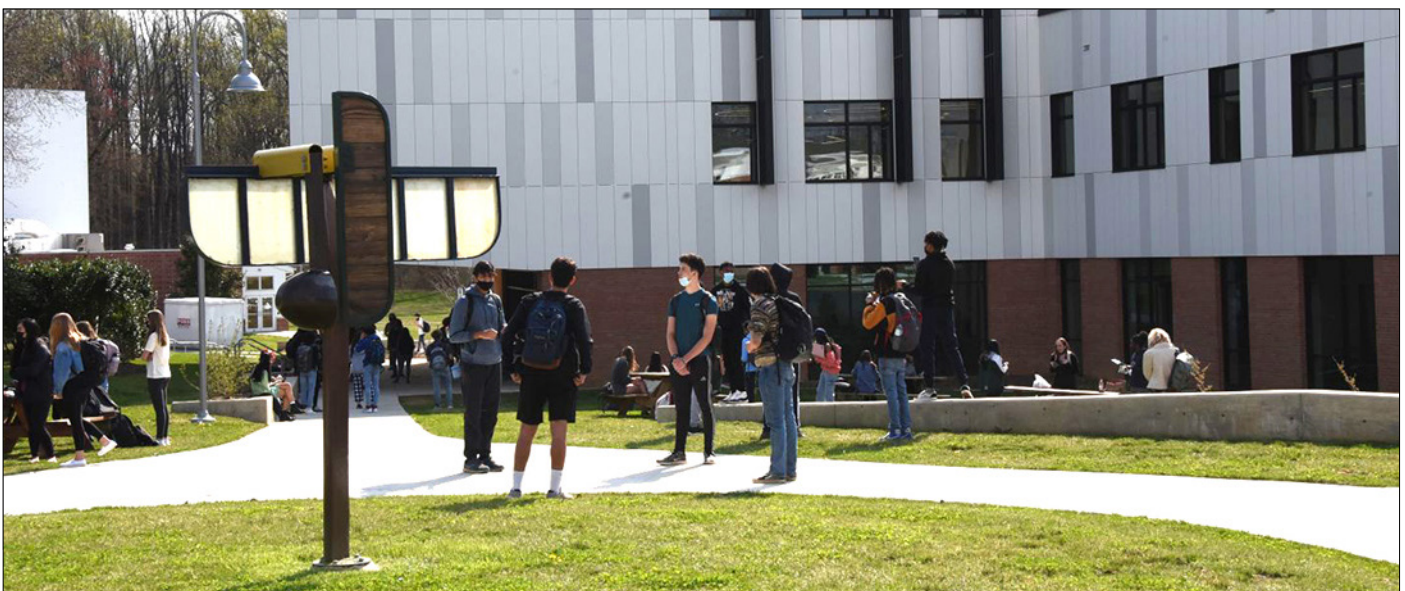
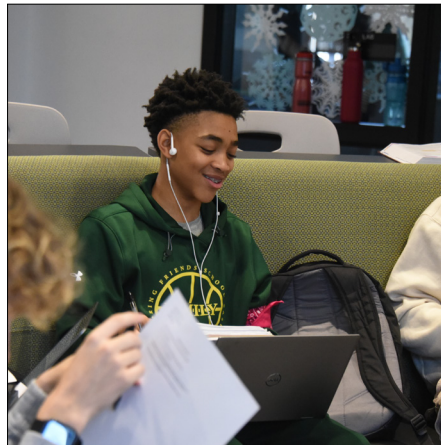


# General Information

## Academic Program Overview

The Sandy Spring Upper School develops confident, responsible, thoughtful people who understand the wider world and seek to make a difference in it. We supply our graduates with the intellectual and interpersonal skills that help them thrive in a rapidly changing, increasingly global community. Led by an extraordinary faculty, we are a dynamic, interactive community committed to expanding students' academic, artistic, athletic, social, and spiritual education.

Through academically rigorous courses, including APs in each discipline, we challenge every learner to achieve at the highest levels. Additionally, our strong arts and athletics programs nurture important habits of mind: risk-taking, problem-solving, cooperation, and perseverance. Combined with leadership opportunities—including student government and peer counseling—our students are able to gain the skills needed to be successful in college and beyond.





## Graduation Credit Requirements

To be eligible for graduation from Sandy Spring Friends School, a student must meet all of the following requirements in the Upper School. Students must complete a minimum of 21 credits to include the following:

- Successful completion of four (4) credits of **English**, with English taken each semester
  - 9th and 10th Grade English
  - 11th and 12th – Elective English Courses
- Successful completion of three (3) credits of **History**, including one year of U.S. History
  - World History I or equivalent
  - World History II or equivalent
  - 11th or 12th grade – U.S. History required
- Successful completion of three (3) credits of **Mathematics** in the Upper School, including Algebra II
  - Student placement is made by the Mathematics Department.
  - Students must complete the math progression through Algebra II at a minimum.
- Successful completion of three (3) credits of **Science**
  - One credit each of a biological lab science and a physical lab science
- Successful completion of three (3) credits of **Global Language** during high school
  - Student placement is made by the Global Languages Department.
  - The Global Language requirement is waived for international students for whom English is an additional language. These students must take either two semesters of Language, Culture and Identity or one year of Linguistics. International students are also welcome to elect from the Global Language department's course offerings.
- Successful completion of three (3) credits of **Arts**.
- Successful completion of at least one (1) **additional credit** in one of the academic subjects in addition to the minimum requirement.
- Successful completion of **Physical Education or Athletics** each year as follows:
  - 9th & 10th Grade: 2 physical activities
  - 11th & 12th Grade: 1 physical activity
- Successful completion of **Quakerism**, which is a part of the 9th Grade Program. Students entering SSFS in grades 10-12th must complete Quakerism or its equivalent.



# General Information

## College Counseling

The college counseling staff is committed to ensuring that every student and family receives the necessary support required to design and implement a successful plan for college. We want to enable our students to transition successfully from SSFS into higher education, and to achieve their personal and professional goals. The college staff works in collaboration with students, families, and faculty to facilitate the process.

We traditionally begin meeting and working with juniors in December, and support them throughout their senior year and beyond. Every student is given individualized attention through one-on-one counseling sessions, and each is encouraged to create their own path to college. We also meet with families and offer a series of college workshops, panel discussions, and information sessions throughout the school year.

The college counseling staff holds the belief that there is a school for every student, and one of our primary tasks is to help them to identify their needs and goals for college in order to help make the best possible choice.

### COLLEGE COUNSELING TIMELINE

Although the college counseling process impacts all students in the Upper School, the needs and timelines vary depending on their grade. The College Counseling Department provides a timeline for each grade to help students on their journey from SSFS to higher education.

|                |   |
|----------------|---|
| Freshman Year  | As a Freshman, it is important to immerse yourself in all aspects of student life! Focus on performing well in your classes, find a school or off-campus activity to join, and get to know your School community—including students, faculty, and staff.  |
| Sophomore Year | During your Sophomore year, you should continue to immerse yourself in all aspects of student life. As a Sophomore, you can also consider taking a practice test, although it is not required.  |
| Junior Year    | Junior year is the official start of the Upper School college counseling process. As a Junior, you will work with our College Counseling department one-on-one, as well as participate in our formalized programming that takes place during the school year.                                   |
| Senior Year    | The college counseling process continues to work with Seniors with a lens towards the practical. Our College Counseling Department will continue to support you as you work to complete applications, apply for financial aid, receive acceptance letters, and select the right school for you. |



## Student Leadership Opportunities

Student input is valued and encouraged in every aspect of the decision-making process for the Upper School. To that end, student opinion is solicited on a variety of issues through a number of venues. Individuals are selected for leadership positions in student government by consensus, thus ensuring the support and approval of students and faculty alike.

### TORCH

Torch is comprised of an executive committee consisting of a clerk, assistant clerk, six representatives to faculty committees, two international student representatives, a dorm representative, and two day and two boarding representatives to the Procedures & Discipline Committee. In addition, the executive committee is supported by two representatives from the 11th and 12th grades and three representatives from the 9th and 10th grades. Business items can be brought to Torch by any of the representatives at the request of an individual or the group they represent. Torch also sets the agenda for monthly town meetings, which include all students and staff, and sponsors school events throughout the year. The recording of meeting minutes is a shared duty distributed among Torch members.

### COMMITTEES

Student representatives are chosen for several major All-school and Upper School faculty committees as part of the continuing effort to develop leadership and encourage student voice in decision-making.

- Upper School Co-curricular Committee: Approves of Intersession trips and changes to Intersession policies
- Upper School Faculty: Monthly meeting of all Upper School teachers and administrators
- Spiritual Life Committee (All-School and Upper School): Strives to maintain an atmosphere that encourages the development of student character and Quaker values
- Traditions Committee (All-School): Raises school spirit and sense of unique school culture through community-building events





# General Information

## Interession

Students in the Upper School participate in an annual spring 1-to-2-week Interession experience, which is designed to provide a meaningful, longer, and memorable field trip. These trips and immersive activities become a focal point for each group of students. Though correlated to various aspects of the curriculum, the focus of the trips is not solely academic, but also serves to build the class and school community. These experiences have become a traditional and highly-anticipated part of each school year.

### SAMPLE INTERSESSION TRIPS



#### Service Trip: South Carolina

The South Carolina Interession trip focused on community service. Throughout the week, Upper School students volunteered over 30 hours with Habitat for Humanity in St. Johns Island. Additionally, students explored the area including trips to the South Carolina Aquarium and Sea Turtle Hospital, a visit to Sullivan Island, and participated on a dolphin sunset cruise.

#### Cultural Immersion Trip: Costa Rica

Accompanied by an experienced Global Works trip guide, students have opportunities to learn leadership skills, exercise self-reliance, and explore the Central Valley plateau, the San Carlos cantón, including La Fortuna (the gateway to the iconic Arenal Volcano), and Pacific Coast Regions' beaches and waterfalls. These activities are punctuated by local improvement projects, wildlife focused service initiatives, Spanish language learning and intercultural exchange activities with Costa Rican students.



#### Quaker Legacy of Social Justice: Philadelphia, PA and Washington, D.C.

This 5-day trip focused on Quaker history of engagement and activism in social justice causes, and on the evolution of those movements today. Students spent two days/one night in Philadelphia, devoting time to researching Quaker leadership in these movements (Social and Legal Equality, Criminal Justice Reform), and three days in Washington, D.C., learning how these efforts have, or have not, resulted in legal and institutional reforms.

#### Science Immersion Trip: Bermuda

This science-focused Interession trip took students to the Institute of Ocean Sciences (BIOS) Research Station in Bermuda. Students experienced working in BIOS labs and on active BIOS research vessels to explore the reefs, lagoons, and beaches of Bermuda. Students participated in ecologically based projects and service activities that involved hiking, snorkeling, boat rides, sample collection, habitat restoration, and plankton tows.



## Community Service

The purpose of the Community Service Program at Sandy Spring Friends School is to respond to the needs of others and to thereby enrich the school community and the lives of its members. Every Upper School student is expected to perform community service for the broader community as well as service to the School. Community service graduation requirement hours by year/semester of entry at SSFS are as follows:

|           | First Semester | Second Semester |
|-----------|----------------|-----------------|
| Freshman  | 100            | 89              |
| Sophomore | 82.5           | 70              |
| Junior    | 60             | 48              |
| Senior    | 45             | -               |





# General Information

## Student Support Services

The Upper School provides support services to students, faculty, and families to assist students in acquiring the academic, social, and emotional skills needed for success in the Upper School. As such, the Upper School seeks to assist students who require academic help, have health concerns, learning differences, and counseling needs.

### THE LEARNING RESOURCE COLLABORATIVE

SSFS recognizes that some students, even highly capable learners, may need additional academic supports, such as organizational assistance or learning/processing accommodations, to fully develop their natural talents. Through these supports, students create not only academic success but also develop self-awareness, self-advocacy, and independence. The Learning Resource Collaborative at SSFS is designed to help provide and monitor these supports.

The Learning Resource Collaborative provides the following core services to SSFS students and their families:

- Consultation with parents, students, teachers, and outside professionals about learning needs
- Assistance with the identification of learning differences
- Development of strategies with students to help them adapt to their learning styles
- Referrals to outside resources (tutors, speech and language therapists, psycho/educational testing services, etc.) as needed
- Support for teachers for implementing recommendations and accommodations
- Ongoing faculty/student workshops and training on how students learn and study
- Supporting students directly in our boarding program

### COUNSELORS

The Upper School Counselors work with students to support their social and emotional development. The counselors provide informal counseling support to help students with friendship skills, stress management, conflict resolution, or any other social/emotional issue that impacts their school day or as a part of our boarding program. Parents are contacted in cases when counselors feel a student needs to be referred to an outside professional. If a student requires ongoing therapeutic support, counselors work with families to find community providers. Counselors consult closely with the Upper School Learning Specialists to accommodate the needs of specific students. Counselors teach the social/emotional curriculum and lead workshops with day and boarding students.



## Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Sandy Spring Friends School is a diverse community committed to fostering equity and belonging for our students, faculty, staff, administrators, trustees, and families. As a community, we actively foster a culture of inclusivity that values multiple perspectives and is supported by transformational dialogue and civic engagement.

### STUDENT AFFINITY AND ALLIANCE GROUPS

SSFS builds a community of inclusion by offering our students affinity and alliance group opportunities. By participating in these groups, students are empowered to learn more about themselves and others. Upper School student affinity groups include:

- Black Student Affinity Group
- Hispanic/LatinX Student Affinity Group
- Chinese Student Affinity Group
- Multiethnic/Multi Racial Student Affinity Group
- LGBTQ Student Affinity Group
- Trans/Non-Binary Student Affinity Group
- Jewish Student Affinity Group
- Muslim Student Affinity Group
- API Student Affinity Group



### DIVERSITY IN THE UPPER SCHOOL CURRICULUM

- An Upper School diversity committee comprised of faculty/staff members addresses the ways diverse populations are recognized, included, and celebrated at SSFS;
- The 9th grade participates in the National Coalition Building training in the winter;
- A two-day NCBI training is conducted for upper grade student leaders before the 9th grade NCBI event;
- A group of Upper School students and faculty members attends the national People of Color conference held annually;
- Student-initiated clubs such as the Black Student Union (BSU), the Sexuality and Gender Alliance Club, and the World Wide Culture Club organize campus activities and events throughout the year;
- Diversity assemblies include an annual Martin Luther King observance, an international assembly, and others with varying cultural and international themes;
- Cultural competence and multicultural activities occur regularly in the advisory curriculum.



# Upper School Curriculum Overviews

## English Curriculum Overview

The English department employs writing, literature, and discussions to empower students to analyze and reflect upon the human experience. Ninth Grade English is required of all 9th grade students, and Tenth Grade English is required of all 10th grade students. With the exception of AP courses, courses for juniors and seniors are semester-length courses. English is required during each of the four years of Upper School. Students in all English courses engage in vocabulary study in order to develop their critical reading and language analysis skills.

### SUGGESTED SEQUENCE FOR ENGLISH CLASSES

#### 9TH GRADE

| Semester One | Semester Two |
|--------------|--------------|
| English 9    |              |

#### 10TH GRADE

| Semester One | Semester Two |
|--------------|--------------|
| English 10   |              |

#### 11TH GRADE AND 12TH GRADE

| Semester One                           | Semester Two            |
|--|-------------------------|
| Year-Long English Class Elective or AP |                         |
| Fall English Elective                  | Spring English Elective |

View all English Course Offerings via our [2024-2025 SSFS Upper School Course Catalog](#)

## SAMPLE ENGLISH COURSES



### English 9

The theme of English 9 is “unmasking identity.” Self-discovery through literature inspires students to ask questions of themselves as they read about characters searching for who they are and what they stand for. We explore this theme through the study of different literary genres (novels, short stories, essays, drama and poetry). Group discussions are an important component of this course. We focus on developing strong paragraphs and on the process of writing and revising the 5-paragraph essay, personal narratives, poetry, research papers, and play adaptations.

### Creative Writing: Poetry and Scriptwriting

This course is designed to help students explore the craft elements foundational to all works of creative writing. Since a writer’s primary tool is words, we begin the year with a deep dive into poetry. While reading and studying dozens of poems, primarily from contemporary poets, students will begin the process of thinking critically about the possibilities of language and form. In order to experiment, students will learn traditional forms such as sestina, ghazal, and villanelle, among others. In addition to their original creations, students will write and read craft responses and critical analysis essays. Students will also be guided through the process of offering and receiving feedback.



### AP English Literature & Composition: British Literature

In this course, 11th and 12th grade students will investigate major texts and themes of literature from Britain and societies affected by Britain. We will read challenging poetry, novels, and plays and engage in discussions and projects designed to spur critical thinking. Students will write in a variety of modes for a variety of purposes, developing concise, evidence-driven arguments and thinking critically about language, both their own language and that in the works we read. Students will also prepare for the Advanced Placement examination in English Literature in the spring. All students taking this course must take the AP Exam in May.

### Writing Across Borders I

From its inception, our nation has claimed to welcome immigrants; still, the question of who deserves citizenship, and how we should treat new Americans provokes bitter debates. The idea of America has signified refuge and opportunity for millions around the world, but what happens when immigrants arrive and begin to make a life here? How does one become American? What are the stories and memories that they carry from their home countries? Through a variety of genres, settings, and identity groups, this course will explore the literature that emerges from the experience of new Americans.



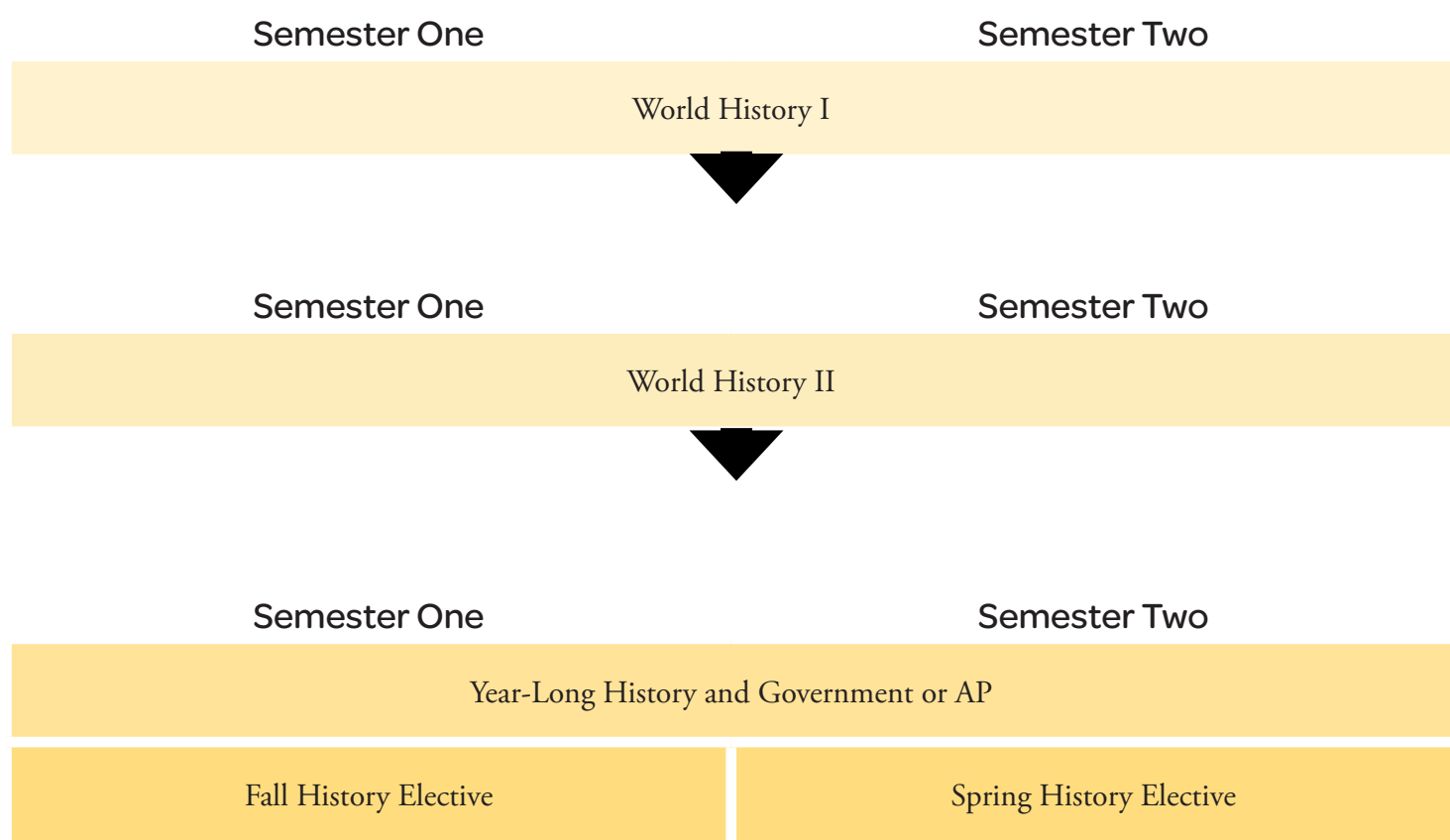


# Upper School Curriculum Overviews

## History Curriculum Overview

The History Department guides students to a deeper understanding of the present through critical investigation of the past, while creating reflective global citizens. Upper School students are required to take three credits of history, including World History I (or equivalent), World History II (or equivalent), and U.S. History in grades 11 or 12.

### SUGGESTED SEQUENCE FOR HISTORY CLASSES



View all History Course Offerings via our [2024-2025 SSFS Upper School Course Catalog](#)

## SAMPLE HISTORY COURSES



### World History I: Prehistory to 1450

This full-year course explores the history of our world from prehistory to 1450. It is designed to develop a greater understanding of the origins of human societies and how geography, cultural institutions, and beliefs shape their evolution. Focusing on Africa, Asia, the Americas, Europe, and the Middle East, students will work within the themes of politics, economics, religion, social structure, intellectual/artistic, geography, and patterns of interaction.

### AP United States History

AP U.S. History is designed to prepare students for the Advanced Placement examination given in May and fulfills the graduation requirement. It traces the history and government of the United States from pre-1492 Native American societies to the present and the development of the American Government system from its English origins to present-day governmental problems. Social, cultural and political history will be discussed in this course. While focused on the United States in particular, we will look at multiple points of view and a variety of sources to build the crucial skills of critical thinking, complexity, analysis, reading, writing, and more.



### Latin American Studies I

Latin America is a diverse region with a wide variety of cultures, governments, and economic systems. This semester course focuses on early Latin American History as it approaches the modern era. The class will focus on pre-Columbian civilizations, colonization, independence, and post-colonial progress. The survey course will look at personal narratives, primary sources, and current events to help understand this diverse region.

### Knowing Right from Wrong: Ethical Decision Making

What does it mean to behave in an ethical way? Is what is legal always the same as what is ethical? What ethical obligations do doctors, lawyers, journalists, therapists, and members of various other professions have? This semester-long course will delve into the core principles of ethics, and investigate philosophical, historical, moral, religious, and social aspects of decision making. The course will be heavily discussion-based, and students will develop their skills at analyzing complex dilemmas, considering various viewpoints, weighing options, and explaining their conclusions. The curriculum will pull from both real world and hypothetical scenarios and case studies.





# Upper School Curriculum Overviews

## Mathematics Curriculum Overview

The math department develops mathematically-literate, confident problem-solvers who are fluent, flexible thinkers with an appreciation for the beauty and challenge of mathematics.

Students are required to take three years of mathematics while in the Upper School. We strongly encourage, but do not require, a fourth year of mathematics. Students must successfully complete Algebra II (or Advanced Algebra II) to graduate. A student's math sequence will build on the courses taken prior to 9th grade (and as determined by placement testing and the recommendation of the middle school mathematics teacher), following the sequence of Algebra I, Integrated Geometry, and Algebra II (or Advanced Algebra II). After Algebra II, students may continue along the algebra-based sequence of courses or explore an elective path, which features finance, statistics, and computer science.

The Upper School Mathematics Department's goal is for students to be in a course that is challenging but also one in which they can be successful. The minimum grade prerequisite is not the only measure of a student's readiness for a course, and as such is not a guarantee of placement. In the case of higher-level and advanced mathematics courses, students should demonstrate a solid conceptual understanding, interest in problem solving, strong work ethic, and motivation.

### SAMPLE MATHEMATICS ELECTIVE COURSES



#### AP Statistics

This course is a non-calculus-based introductory course in statistics. Students will examine statistics in all content areas and class activities and projects focus on data collection, analysis and real world applications. The course focuses on four conceptual themes: exploring data, planning a study, anticipating patterns, and inference. Students will also be introduced to selected topics in discrete mathematics. Students are required to take the AP exam in May.

#### AP Computer Science A

Computer science embraces problem solving, hardware, algorithms and perspectives that help people utilize computers to solve real-world problems in everyday life. The AP Computer Science A course introduces students to computer science with fundamental topics that include problem solving, design strategies and methodologies, organization of data (data structures), approaches to processing data (algorithms), analysis of potential solutions, and the ethical and social implications of computing. The course emphasizes both object-oriented and imperative problem solving and design. These techniques represent proven approaches for development solutions that can scale up from small, simple problems to large, complex problems.



## SUGGESTED SEQUENCE OF MATHEMATICS CLASSES

Pathway 1 Pathway 2 Pathway 3

### 9TH GRADE

#### Semester One

#### Semester Two

|                                   |
|-----------------------------------|
| Algebra I                         |
| Integrated Geometry               |
| Algebra II or Advanced Algebra II |

### 10TH GRADE

#### Semester One

#### Semester Two

|                                   |
|-----------------------------------|
| Integrated Geometry               |
| Algebra II or Advanced Algebra II |

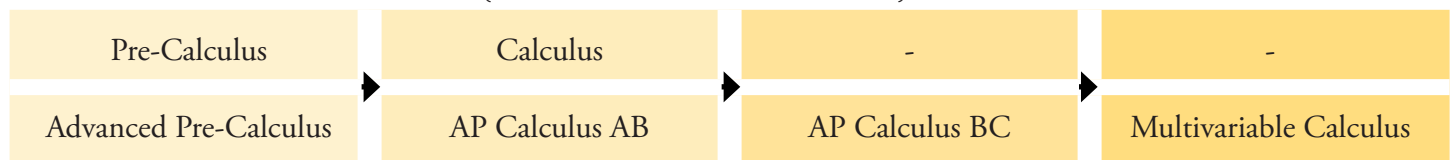
### 11TH GRADE

#### Semester One

#### Semester Two

|            |
|------------|
| Algebra II |
|------------|

### ALGEBRA-BASED SEQUENCE (AFTER COMPLETION OF ALGEBRA II)



### MATH ELECTIVE PATH (AFTER COMPLETION OF ALGEBRA II)

#### Semester One

#### Semester Two

|                                |                             |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Fall Mathematics Elective      | Spring Mathematics Elective |
| Full Year Mathematics Elective |                             |

View all Mathematics Course Offerings via our [2022-2023 SSFS Upper School Course Catalog](#)



# Upper School Curriculum Overviews

## Science Curriculum Overview

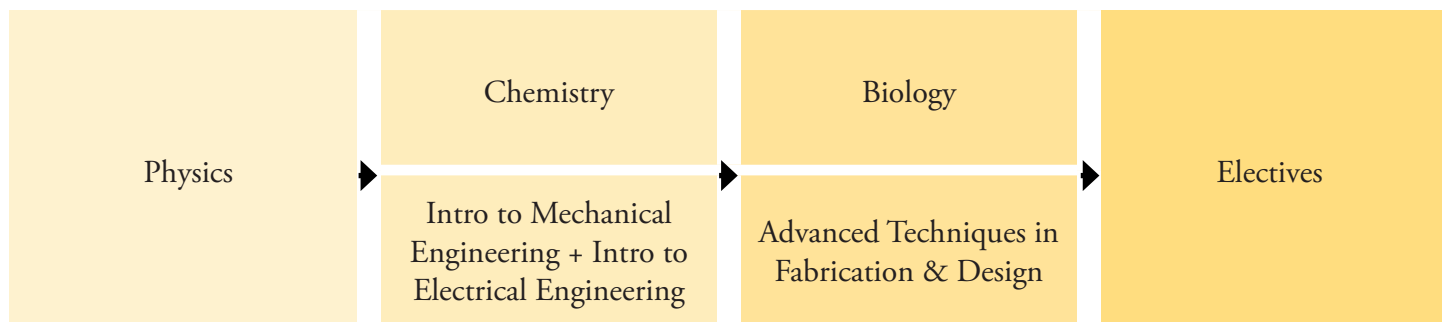
The Science Department prepares scholars to investigate their world by developing scientific reasoning and problem-solving skills through inquiry-based science immersion. All students are required to take physics their freshman year. After successfully completing this course, students are required to complete one year of physical science and one year of biological science to meet the graduation requirement. It is strongly recommended that students take Biology and either Chemistry or Physics. A fourth year of science is recommended, particularly for students considering selective colleges and/or a college major in science, engineering, medicine, or related fields. Many science courses have mathematics prerequisites, and some have science prerequisites as well.

### SUGGESTED SEQUENCE FOR SCIENCE CLASSES

#### LAB SCIENCE PATHWAY



#### ENGINEERING PATHWAY



View all Science Course Offerings via our [2024-2025 SSFS Upper School Course Catalog](#)

## SAMPLE SCIENCE COURSES



### Farm to Table: The Science of Growing our Food

This semester-long course explores the biology and science behind how food is grown and consumed. The class will cover basic nutrition; how different biogeochemical cycles are affected by and affect growing food; composting, soil chemistry, and the science behind developing sustainable soil; necessary resources that are consumed to grow, move, and eat food; different methods of farming; and cultural and societal issues around food dispersion and supply. Students will periodically use our on-campus sustainable organic farm as an extension of the classroom to perform hands-on learning in the field and reinforce our classroom topics on a relevant and practical level.

### Advanced Techniques in Fabrication & Design

This intermediate-level project-focused year-long course will build on the skills and knowledge developed in the introductory-level Engineering courses, as students learn new techniques for manipulating metal, wood, fabric, and plastics in maker projects. Students will learn fundamental skills for working with both metal and fabric, expand their knowledge of CAD and 3D printing, and learn the use and applications of a variety of hand and power tools to make projects more efficient. Students will complete a select number of major projects throughout the year, focusing on multi-material design and construction, soft-circuits, and gear mechanisms.



### AP Chemistry

This course is an advanced level Chemistry course with the purpose of preparing students for taking the AP Chemistry examination. As such, the course is fast-paced and challenging, covering material covered from the first year Chemistry course (but in greater depth, and with more mathematical sophistication), as well as material not covered in the first year.

### Bioethics

This semester-long course explores a wide range of topics related to current ethical issues in medical sciences, environmental sciences, and technology. Topics may include cloning, genetic screening, organ transplantation, new reproductive technologies, the Human Genome Project, gene therapy, fetal tissue transplantation, AIDS, euthanasia, health care and environmental issues. Students have input into which particular topics are considered, and are required to speak and share their opinions in class. Course curricula may include case studies, debates, panel discussions, writing position papers, public service announcements, role-play, journal writing and student-led seminars.





# Upper School Curriculum Overviews

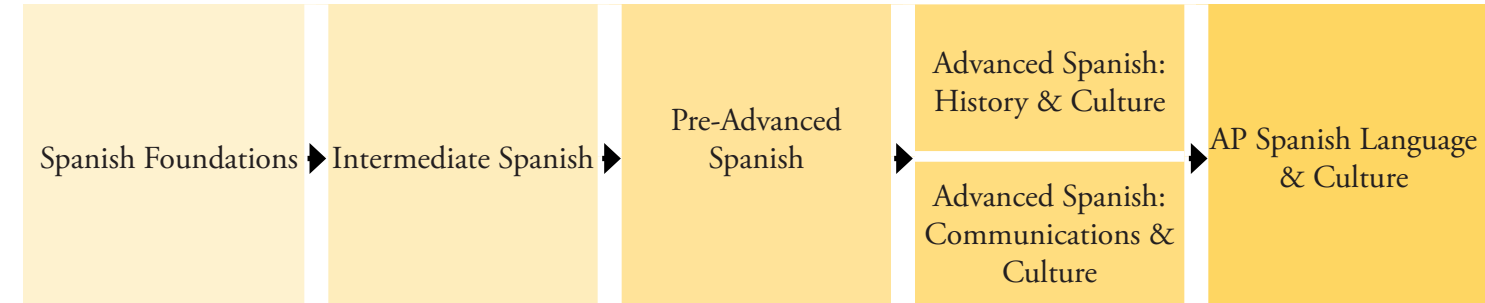
## Global Language Curriculum Overview

The Global Languages Department develops cross-culturally competent and empathetic global citizens, empowered to communicate interpretively, interpersonally, and presentationally. Students are required to take at least three credits (levels) of the same global language throughout high school for graduation. Where applicable, typically students enter the language sequence in 9th grade at the level indicated by middle school instruction, placement testing and interviews, as well as the recommendation of the middle school teacher. Students must demonstrate a minimum satisfactory proficiency (C- or better) in order to advance to the next level course. All global language courses are year-long courses.

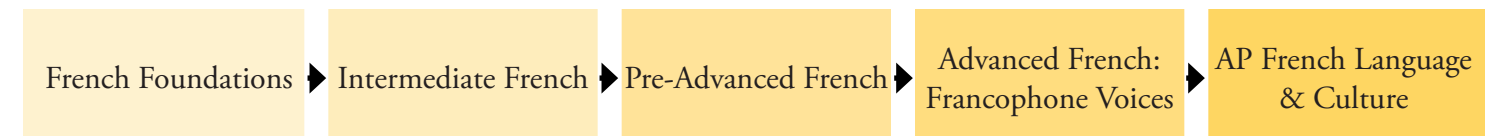
International students for whom English is an additional language, and who have received a waiver from the global language requirement, are required to take two semesters of Sociolinguistics OR one year of Linguistics. International students are also welcome to elect from the Global Language department’s course offerings.

### SUGGESTED SEQUENCE FOR GLOBAL LANGUAGE CLASSES

#### SPANISH

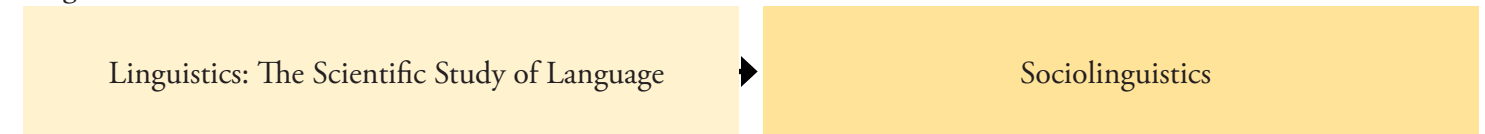


#### FRENCH



#### LINGUISTICS

*Linguistics courses can be taken along with language courses. Students enrolled in ESOL courses must take either the Linguistics course or two semester courses.*



## SAMPLE GLOBAL LANGUAGE COURSES

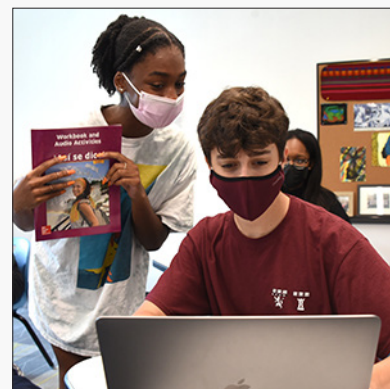


### Advanced French

This year-long course seeks to prepare students to communicate effectively in French for travel, study, work, and to demonstrate proficiency in reading, writing, speaking, and listening comprehension. Through the voices of francophone writers, filmmakers, and poets, students will learn about family, relationships, media and technology, travel, and the environment. They will also consolidate their vocabulary and grammar usage, through an introduction to compound tenses, such as the plus-que-parfait, past conditional, future anterior, and past subjunctive. As there is a strong emphasis on oral communication, students need to be prepared to speak in an unscripted, spontaneous manner in class and in assessments.

### AP Spanish Language & Culture

By way of six broad-based themes -- Families & Communities, Science & Technology, Beauty & Aesthetics, Contemporary Life, Global Challenges, and Personal & Public Identities -- the AP Spanish Language and Culture year-long course engages students in an exploration of culture in both contemporary and historical contexts ensuring the integration of the national standards: Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons and Communities. Using authentic source material from the Spanish-speaking world - print, short films, and audio - the AP course provides students with opportunities to develop and demonstrate their proficiency in each of the three modes in the Intermediate to Pre-Advanced range as described in the ACTFL Performance Guidelines for K–12 Learners.



### Sociolinguistics

Sociolinguistics is the scientific study of the interconnections between language and society. A subfield of Linguistics, it adds tools and perspectives from Sociology and Cultural Anthropology to examine how speech varies across social dimensions such as race, gender, socioeconomic status, and geographic region; how language relates to politics and social change; how languages around the world die out, or don't; and what makes some conversations smooth and comfortable while others are disjointed and super awkward. Sociolinguistics provides a systematic way to address questions such as: who code-switches and why? How is our style of talk related to our identity? How are power and solidarity in relationships established in our interactions? Are there human universals for how conversation actually works? Sociolinguistics also helps us to see that 'culture' is more than what we do; it is an operating system through which we make sense of social signals around us. Through this course, students will observe and analyze language usage on a local and global scale, and in the process, will strengthen their understanding of behavior, communication, and the complexities of sociocultural systems throughout the world.



# Upper School Curriculum Overviews

## Arts Curriculum Overview

The Sandy Spring Friends School Arts Department seeks to expose each student to many artistic disciplines. Through a sequential and cumulative curriculum, students are encouraged to develop a lifelong relationship with artistic expression. Our Arts Program provides study of many art forms for the historical and cultural contributions of their canons, for their relationship to society, and for their importance to an individual's spiritual and intellectual growth. With clearly defined content and learning objectives, our arts curriculum can enable students to examine both visual and performing arts as integral parts of daily life, creating a common language with which students communicate and interpret the world.

Students are required to take three credits of arts for graduation. Students are encouraged to take arts courses in both performing arts and studio arts. Students may take the same art course in multiple years to gain additional mastery. The graduation requirement for students entering the school in their junior or senior year shall be determined based on the arts credits that transfer from their previous school. Any junior entering the school with no transferable arts credit will be required to take a minimum of two arts credits.

### SAMPLE ARTS COURSES



#### Arts & Ideas

Through the exploration of art, dance, literature, music, and more this course places developments in the Humanities into historical context and illustrates the continuity of culture. Students will be introduced to outstanding works in the Arts, trends, and techniques from around the globe that continue to influence and inform us today. By exploring the way these subjects are related, students develop a deeper understanding and appreciation of the Arts, culture, and the individuals who influenced them. The first semester will explore the development of the arts from the fall of Rome to the late 18th century, and the second semester will explore the development of the arts from the Revolutionary period to today.

#### Weaving and Fiber Arts

This course will explore the use of the four or eight harness floor loom. Students will warp a loom and weave a sampler, which will expose them to the basic skills involved in the weaving process as well as a variety of weave structures. Students will learn how to design and weave projects of their choice throughout the semester. Working on their own levels, students will have the opportunity to develop their technical and creative skills as well as exploring weaving techniques, structures, color, design, texture, different fibers, weaving in other cultures and fiber artists. Students can weave as many projects as time will allow. Students will also have the opportunity to spin their own yarn on either a drop spindle or spinning wheel while exploring the properties of different fibers. Handspun yarn may be incorporated into a student's weaving project.



View all Arts Course Offerings via our [2024-2025 SSFS Upper School Course Catalog](#)



### Woodworking

This class is designed to help students develop basic woodworking skills by learning safe and proper use of tools, the nature of wood as a construction material, principles of sound design and construction, and some introduction to furniture styles, aesthetics, and history. Students will learn to identify and use both traditional hand tools and power tools. Once students have developed a base of knowledge, they can move on to designing and constructing individual projects.

### Advanced Contemporary Dance

This course offers students an opportunity to continue dance studies at the next level. Students with an established knowledge of technique and choreography will explore post-modern to present-day modern icons such as Pina Bausch, Bill T. Jones and Batsheva. Class material will also include studying the parallels of cultural/social dances and Modern Dance, dance as a tool for activism, and incorporation of multimedia. The class will aim to model a dance company and perform repertoire.



### Ceramics

In this studio based course, the students will be learning the fundamentals of clay by using various hand building techniques. This will include, but not be limited to pinch pots, coil building, and slabs. They will also implement best studio practices such as maintaining a clean and functional place to work. Mid semester, the students will have an introduction to wheel throwing.



### Acting

This course gives students the opportunity to develop acting, public speaking, and communication skills. The emphasis is on experiential learning and the artistic process. Students develop ensemble skills, and build confidence through improvisation and theater games. Students learn to analyze a script and use aesthetic language while collaborating with their peers in the production of scenes and monologues. The course explores a range of performance styles taken from theater history.



### Digital Music Production

This course functions as an introduction to the theory and practice of audio production. Students will learn the basic practices around creating, refining, and sharing work in the Music Media and Production Industry. Students will learn to mix, capture and create sound by working with a digital audio workstation, exploring the basic physics of sound, microphone placement, multitrack recording, and more. Students will also explore processing and editing samples, MIDI programming, and basic sound effect manipulation.





# Upper School Curriculum Overviews

## Physical Activities and Sports

Students in the 11th and 12th grades are required to complete at least one unit of physical activity per year. Students in the 9th and 10th grades are required to complete at least two units of physical activity. This requirement can be met through participation on an interscholastic sport team (both Junior Varsity (JV) and Varsity (V)), being a team manager (1 per year) taking an intramural elective after school, or by taking a Physical Education class offered during the school day or after school. Off campus sport or physical activity can also meet the requirement but needs to be approved each semester by the Physical Education Department Head. Interscholastic sports teams require after-school commitments, in addition to some evening and weekend commitments for games, tournaments, and/or practices. Physical activities will be listed on student transcripts with a pass or fail grade. Physical activities are non credit bearing courses and do not count towards a student's GPA.

### SAMPLE PHYSICAL EDUCATION COURSES



#### Yoga

Yoga is a system for achieving radiant health. Yoga practice promotes flexibility and strength and provides support for the serious athlete and dancer to help prevent injuries. Yoga postures reduce stress in the mind and body and can improve one's mental attitude. Yoga also provides a non-competitive outlet for physical activity.

#### Fundamentals of Rock Climbing

Fundamentals of Rock Climbing is a semester length rock climbing class that is offered during the school day. Students will learn knot tying, how to properly use a safety harness, and proper belay technique. Significant time will be spent practicing movement and developing sport specific strength. Students will learn proper spotting technique and how to boulder (un-rope climbing). The latter third of the course will be spent teaching advanced technical skill sets like anchor building, how to lead climb, and how to place traditional protection.



#### Farming for Fitness

This course is designed to teach the life-long skills of gardening and organic food production through structured physical activity. Students will work on the campus farm to master hand tools and harvest fresh produce for delivery to the cafeteria. The goal of the course is for students to find the intersection between personal and environmental health through work and food. Dirt and sweat are unavoidable elements on the farm and participants will need to dress and hydrate appropriately. Each class will be a combination of physical activities and theory explaining how the job relates to broader issues of sustainability. Some reading assignments will accompany outdoor work.

## ATHLETICS IN THE UPPER SCHOOL

With the athletic experience, student-athletes develop skills that complement the classroom experience. They learn how to set long-term goals and be dedicated to them, learn how to problem solve in the midst of pressure-filled situations, and learn to recognize the importance of honest effort, competition, contribution, and sportsmanship. The habits established through athletic competition; resilience, stamina, and perseverance, can last a lifetime.



## SPORTS OFFERINGS

### INTRAMURAL SPORTS

Intramural sports are offered three times a week as an after-school activity in which skills are emphasized through a tactical games approach method. Students are actively participating in specific sport game play to gain experience and an appreciation for that sport.

#### Fall

Kickball

#### Winter

Morley Games

#### Spring

Ultimate Frisbee

### INTERSCHOLASTIC SPORTS

Interscholastic teams practice daily, after school, with meets scheduled for weekdays and occasional weekends, sometimes including holiday weekends or vacation days. Team selections are made for varsity teams, and should a student not be selected for a varsity team, students will be responsible for finding an alternative PE offering.

#### Fall

Women's Soccer (V)  
Men's Soccer (JV, V)  
Women's Volleyball (JV, V)  
Women's Cross-Country Running  
Men's Cross Country Running

#### Winter

Women's Basketball (V)  
Men's Basketball (JV, V)  
Rock Climbing  
Ice Hockey (Club)

#### Spring

Women's Track and Field (V)  
Men's Track and Field (V)  
Women's Lacrosse (V)  
Men's Baseball (JV, V)  
Women's Softball  
Coed Golf (V)



# Upper School Curriculum Overviews

## Senior Passion Projects Overview

Grounded in experiential and project-based learning, and with inquiry, reflection, and action at the core of its mission, Senior Passion Projects is a selective, elective, independent, learner-centered and self-directed program that affords qualified and approved participants the opportunity to let their lives speak beyond the traditional high school environment by sampling a potential career, serving the community, or exploring a deep personal interest that culminates in a formal and reflective presentation to a panel of faculty, staff, alumni and Trustees on the expectations, challenges, lessons and rewards of said experience.



*Learn more about the SSFS Senior Passion Projects on our website!*

## Internship Program Overview

An internship is a non-credit, career-focused experience in research, business, industry, education, government, medicine, or social service that allows the student the opportunity to explore and clarify career choices in a particular field of interest while working with a mentor at a worksite for a defined period of time. Learning on the job can be uniquely beneficial. It requires the intern to use verbal, critical thinking, questioning and writing skills as well as meeting general workplace expectations. A complete Internship includes a minimum of 60 hours career-related experience plus a reflection paper and oral presentation. Although students may begin their Internship during any term, interns might want to remain with the mentor for several terms yielding combinations of academic year and summer work time. These arrangements can be made on an individual basis if the mentor and the student agree to continue the internship beyond the semester.





## Electives Overview

Electives are options students can take to enrich their academic course load. Because these courses are non-credit bearing and ungraded, they do not show up on the student's transcript. Students who opt to register for these courses should have a passion for that offering and/or look to enhance a specific skill. Below are two examples of electives. Additional electives include Quizbowl and the SSFS Speech Team.



### Model U.N.

The course focuses on preparation for participation in a Model United Nations conference. The conference includes a simulation of the United Nations and related organizations. Students prepare for the conference by researching issues and countries, writing and editing position papers, and practicing speeches and debates. This is a two semester course. Students must sign up for both semesters. Mandatory Model U.N. meetings will take place weekly. Full attendance at the conference and completion of a position paper is mandatory for all those who participate in this elective.

### Newspaper I/II: The Wildezine

This elective is open to students either experienced or interested in journalism. Participants new to this course will learn the fundamentals of journalism and contemporary media. Returning students will continue the development of their writing technique and may take on editorial, leadership positions. According to student preferences, the staff will work on articles and literary pieces (essays, narratives, and poetry), take photographs, and design pages for the student online journal, *The Wildezine*. This publication is a student forum, and students interested in telling the stories of their community and making a difference at Sandy Spring Friends School are encouraged to join.

