

VI. Activities

Learning takes place in many ways. The Activities Program endeavors to build skills in the following ways:

- the building of relationships;
- the development of leisure time skills and interests;
- the enhancing of cultural and ethnic awareness;
- the opportunity to share talents.

In order to accomplish these goals, Woodlands strives to offer a balanced program of student leadership, organizations, clubs, and class- and school-sponsored events. Community time is scheduled during the school day and is used for liturgies, speakers, performances, student body meetings, assemblies, class meetings, and advisory groups.

GOVERNING ORGANIZATIONS

Leadership Policy

Major school leadership is comprised of WACOR (Woodlands Academy Council of Representatives) officers and representatives, RCC members (Resident Community Council), and House officers. Membership is open to any student not on Academic or Disciplinary Probation. A formal application with the signatures of three staff members is required to run for office.

In order to encourage as many students as possible to assume leadership positions within the school, it is the policy of Woodlands Academy that a student may hold only one major elected position during the school year. Major officers are: WACOR officers, RCC officers, House officers, and Community Service officers.

The conduct of any appointed or elected leader, during or outside of school, is a reflection of her leadership abilities. It is the expectation of Woodlands Academy that a leader's behavior in word or action is an example to the student body and reflects positively on the good name of the school. Any misconduct could lead to removal from office.

WACOR

WACOR, Woodlands Academy Council of Representatives, is a self-governing student/faculty organization, which encourages a spirit of harmony and cooperation among the students, the faculty, and the administration. This organization promotes further involvement in school as well as community-related activities, facilitates communication among students and faculty, aids in matters regarding discipline, represents the student body in matters of concern, and helps to plan the general activities of the student body. The members of WACOR are three officers elected by the school community, a representative elected from each of the advisory groups, and a representative from RCC.

RCC

The purpose of RCC, the Resident Community Council, is to create an atmosphere of care and concern in Woodlands Residence Life Program. RCC plans activities for boarding students and promotes cooperation among students and staff.

House Program

The entire Woodlands Academy community is divided into 4 houses: Barat, Duchesne, Hardey, and Stuart. These houses are named after key historical figures in the Society of the Sacred Heart and are aligned with one of the 5 Goals of Sacred Heart Education. House Barat aligns with Goal 1- A personal and active faith in God, House Stuart aligns with Goal 2- A deep respect for intellectual values, House Duchesne aligns with Goal 3- A social awareness which impels to action, and House Hardey aligns with Goal 5- Personal growth in an atmosphere of wise freedom. Each house has class representatives and officers to form a house council. These student leaders work with their Head of House to set agendas, develop plans, and coordinate between the other houses to complete projects.

Community Service

The Service Club provides the student body with support and resources to identify and engage in opportunities for service. A service representative is elected in advisory and acts as a liaison with the Service Club. The representative is responsible for helping organize and support quarterly service projects for the school.

Clubs/Organizations

Clubs are formed according to student interest. Membership is open to all students. Each club should have on file with the Activity a written statement of purpose, which includes the officers and their duties, the membership, plans and activities, and expenditures. Clubs are accountable to WACOR (Woodlands Academy Council of Representatives), the Dean of Students, and their moderators for all of their plans.

A complete list of the clubs and organizations is located on the Woodlands Academy website.

Fundraising

Fundraising by classes and organizations in the school is limited to raising money for charitable causes.

School Publications

Poets & Playwrights magazine and *L'Esprit*, the yearbook, are publications whose staff membership is open to all students who wish to develop their literary talents.

Theatre

The Theatre Department produces two all-school productions a year. All students are encouraged to audition for these productions.

Music

Several vocal opportunities are available to the students: Performing Arts Chorus, JV-Kaleidoscope (Sophie's Singers), Kaleidoscope, and Microscope. Our symphonic orchestra meets before school and is a curriculum class. Performance in special events and competitions such as IHSA Solo and Ensemble and IMEA Districts is encouraged for all music students through the Fine Arts Department.

Sports

In addition to the wide selection of sports available through the offerings of the Physical Education Department, students are encouraged to participate in varsity and junior varsity team sports. The school sponsors IHSA teams in tennis, volleyball, bowling, basketball, soccer, and softball. These teams compete in the Independent School League.

Students may not participate in interscholastic sports or practice until they have filed a sports physical with the school. This physical is acceptable for one year from the date of the examination. No student will be allowed to practice without a physical.

School Traditions

The purpose of tradition is to help us remember, celebrate, relive, and revitalize who we are in relation to our past--some aspect of our history, our heritage, our memory--and in remembering, to explore more deeply the meaning of our lives and to reflect upon our hopes, ideals, and future. Many of the traditions at Woodlands are shared by all Sacred Heart schools.

Special Religious Traditions

MASS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT - liturgy and flag ceremony celebrated at the opening of school to ask God's blessing on the school year and to celebrate our internationality.

FEAST OF THE MATER ADMIRABILIS - the patronal feast of Woodlands and one of the titles of Mary, the Mother of Jesus. The statue of Mater depicts Mary as a young girl. Mater's feast is October 20th on which day sophomores receive special Mater medals.

FEAST OF ST. MADELEINE SOPHIE BARAT - the foundress of the Society of the Sacred Heart. Her feast is May 25th.

MAY CROWNING - a traditional way within the Catholic Church to honor Mary, the Mother of Jesus, by crowning her statue with a wreath of flowers. The students and faculty vote for seniors to crown the statue, carry the crown, read a prayer, carry a banner, and each class votes for their representatives to walk in the Guard of Honor.

SACRED HEART AWARDS - a peer award given each quarter to two members of each class and to one faculty/staff member who strive to actively live out the *Goals and Criteria* of Sacred Heart education.

FEAST OF SAINT ROSE PHILIPPINE DUCHESNE - the first religious of the Sacred Heart to come to America. Her feast is November 18th.

Other Traditional Celebrations

PRIZE DAY/ HONORS ASSEMBLY- the major school awards are given.

CONGÉ - a special half day held at school during which classes do not meet. This also refers to the annual benefit party at Woodlands Academy.

GOÛTER - a snack served to the students on special occasions, especially on Sacred Heart feast days.

SPIRIT WEEK - special out-of-uniform days to promote certain activities and school spirit.

LAMBS AT THE CRIB - symbolize specific projects or practices at Christmas time.

RING CEREMONY - the juniors receive their rings from the seniors.

WOODLANDS ACADEMY ALUMNAE ASSOCIATION INDUCTION CEREMONY/SENIOR BREAKFAST - given by the Woodlands Academy Alumnae Association for the seniors in gratitude for the seniors' contribution to the school and the seniors' acceptance into the Alumnae Association.

FATHER/DAUGHTER ACTIVITIES - the Fathers Club plans a weekend activity each semester for all fathers and daughters in the school.

WILDCAT OF THE WEEK AWARD - a spirit award given by WACOR each week to recognize special service to the school.

SPECIAL SCHOOL PROGRAMS

Advisory, Student Development Curriculum, and Student Support Team

In light of Goal V, “to educate to a personal growth in an atmosphere of wise freedom,” adults in the Woodlands community are committed to providing encouragement, guidance, and support for each student. Woodlands Academy offers student support services in the following areas: academic advising, college and career counseling, student development programming, and personal counseling.

The Advisory Program

The Advisory Program plays a vital role in each student’s development and quality of life at Woodlands Academy of the Sacred Heart. Upon her enrollment at Woodlands, each student is assigned an advisor and becomes a member of a warm and inclusive advisory group of approximately 9-12 members. The advisory system is intended to give each student an experience of personal growth within the framework of a stable, small peer group to which she remains a member through her four years. Advisory groups meet for 15 minutes four times weekly in their homerooms for daily reflection, reviewing upcoming school activities and announcements, distributing/collecting administrative paperwork, and engaging in team building. In addition, components of the student development curriculum are offered through the advisory programs. Students and advisors also meet at the end of each school day for check-out and at other scheduled times for specific activities, such as class meetings, service opportunities, etc. Advisors schedule individual conferences with each advisee every semester to review progress and discuss individual goals. The advisor serves as the communication link between home and school and is a point of contact for parents and guardians.

Student Development Curriculum

The intention of Sacred Heart education is to foster the development of the whole person by teaching each student the skills necessary to become a healthy, productive member of the community as outlined in the *Goals*

and Criteria of a Sacred Heart Education and in the Woodlands Student Development Curriculum. Social and emotional skills are addressed in a variety of classes, programs, and service opportunities including health classes, advisory, college skills classes, student retreats, and weekly seminars during Community Hour. In addition, Woodlands has partnered with community organizations that provide teen programs on campus such as peer training through CROYA (Committee Representing Our Young Adults), healthy choices through LEAD (Linking Efforts Against Drugs), and depression and suicide awareness through Erika's Lighthouse. These programs provide further opportunities to participate in school and community wellness and prevention activities.

Seminar Series Community Hour

The Seminar Series offered at Woodlands Academy provides a forum for students to gain social and emotional learning competencies with their peers in a variety of identified areas. Seminars are included in the health classes and have been developed to align with best practice guidelines provided by ISBE's Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) standards core learning areas identified by CASEL (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning).

Seminars are taught by faculty, alumnae, community leaders, and experts in the field. Topics include:

- Healthy relationships and friendship skills
- Self-advocacy and effective communication skills
- Executive functioning and study skills
- Suicide prevention, depression awareness, and Mental Health First Aid
- Mindfulness, distress tolerance, growth mindset, and resilience
- Emotional intelligence and self-regulation
- Sexual abuse prevention
- Self-compassion.
- Digital citizenship and healthy media usage

Student Support Team

For students demonstrating the need for additional support in the areas of academics, health, or social-emotional wellness, the Student Support Team (SST) of Woodlands is committed to effectively supporting their adjustment. The team meets regularly to review student progress, to create plans for support, and to share best practices. Team members collaborate with faculty, parents, and private providers who are involved in students' care. SST members also are responsible for helping students and families navigate transitions to and from alternative settings or following an extended absence. Standing members of the SST include the Principal, the Dean of Students, and School Psychologist. Advisors and faculty members also participate as needed.

Personal Counseling

Personal counseling is an additional support service offered at Woodlands Academy. Students may meet with the School Counselor/Psychologist to address concerns related to personal adjustment. Students may self-refer or may be referred by parents or teachers. Confidentiality guidelines and ethical standards set forth by the American Psychological Association and ASCA are followed. Consent for counseling services through

student and parent may be sought, or a referral for private services may be recommended if deemed necessary. Any questions regarding school-based counseling services should be addressed to the School Psychologist.

Retreats

In keeping with the Sacred Heart goal to foster faith development, each student is required to make an annual retreat. The retreats are required for graduation and are designed to allow the student the opportunity to experience God, explore and deepen her spirituality, and build community with her classmates.

A student may request to make a Kairos retreat outside of school. If she follows the procedure for an excused absence, this will be excused once each year. This is in addition to, **not in place of**, the class retreat.

Community Service Program Requirements

Goal III guides our efforts to identify opportunities for service. The criteria for this goal are the reference points from which all aspects of the program originate. Service requirements are in place to raise each student's critical consciousness about the values of society and inspire her to act for justice.

Within each service year (May 1st to May 1st of the following year) certain requirements apply. Freshmen are required to do **10 hours** of service during the first year. Sophomores, juniors, and seniors are required to do **20 hours** of service per year. The service form, which is located online, must be turned into the service coordinator within **30 days** of the completion of service. Confirmation from the service site of the hours served is necessary for the hours to count. Hours completed over the summer must be turned in by **September 1st**. **All hours must be submitted in the academic year they are served.** Excess hours of service may be carried over to the following year, but students are expected to engage in service and participate in Service Day every year.

To fulfill the **graduation requirement, students will be required to complete 20 hours of service in an area of concentration.** The Senior Capstone Service Project will be completed in this area of concentration. Seniors who do not fulfill their requirements will not receive a diploma. There are many ways to serve; however, not all work done without payment qualifies as service. Members of the Service Committee can help students determine whether proposed activities are appropriate. It is our hope that with this as a foundation, every graduate will integrate this value into her life.

Global Odyssey Program

Global Odyssey provides every Woodlands Academy student with an international experience, either abroad or locally, in order to spark her global curiosity and develop her global competence. Global Odyssey provides students with a unique opportunity to relate to and experience the world, fostering in them an ability to understand and act on issues of global significance.

Annually a student may select a global experience suited to their preferences and interests: a group trip or a class. The Global Odyssey experience creates in students an openness to new ways of thinking, a new self-awareness about their own identity and culture, and sensitivity and respect for differences. This is a required

program and it goes on a student's transcript as either Pass or Fail. Students who take a class during Global Odyssey must attend a minimum of 70% of the Global Odyssey days to receive a passing grade.

The Exchange Program

Woodlands Academy of the Sacred Heart is part of a worldwide network of schools operated by the Religious of the Sacred Heart. There are 25 Sacred Heart schools in the United States and more than 140 worldwide. At the start of the second semester, current freshmen and sophomores are invited to apply to the exchange program to spend from two to four weeks attending another Sacred Heart school in the United States or abroad. Woodlands has exchange agreements with many international Sacred Heart schools, and students may apply to study in Vienna, Madrid, Barcelona, Pamplona, Santiago, Tokyo, Melbourne, Brisbane, Sydney, Amiens (France) Nantes (France), Bondues (France), Tours (France), Rome, and Halifax.

Going on exchange during the school year is open to sophomores and first-semester juniors only. With most domestic and international exchanges, students would live with a host family, and the student's family would be asked to reciprocate and host an exchange student who visits Woodlands. There is no additional tuition charge to participate in an exchange, but the student and her family are responsible for travel and personal expenses while on exchange. Students who board at a boarding program must pay boarding fees.

PROCESS FOR EXCHANGE:

Any student who is interested in a domestic or international exchange should first contact the Exchange Coordinator to discuss possible exchange locations and dates and to get the application materials. Once the student submits the completed application and essay, faculty are surveyed to evaluate the student based on the below criteria. The Exchange Coordinator, the Principal, and Dean of Students review the application and the faculty evaluations to make a final decision. Once a student has been accepted into the exchange program, the Exchange Coordinator works closely with the exchange school to locate a host family. Please note to host an exchange student in a Woodlands family home, all family members 18 years or older must register and complete a background check.

CRITERIA FOR CONSIDERATION FOR EXCHANGE OR AN OVERNIGHT TRIP:

Each student will be evaluated on the following criteria to determine if she is ready to go on exchange. She should be:

- A good student
- Self-motivated
- Involved at Woodlands
- Able to act independently and responsibly
- Cooperative, willing, and helpful
- Flexible and pleasant
- Able to meet academic expectations of Woodlands while away
- Able to relate positively to another family

Going on a school-sponsored trip or exchange is a privilege and not a right. Woodlands reserves the right to deny the privilege to students with academic, attendance, or disciplinary issues, or if Woodlands determines in its sole discretion that the student's participation in the trip or exchange is not in the best interest of the student or Woodlands. Teachers and administrators of Woodlands Academy have the right and responsibility to question any student's participation in a trip if her academics or behavior (in school and online) indicate that she is not prepared to represent the school in a positive and productive manner.

Students taking **any** daily medications on a long-term basis and/or participating in psychological therapy must produce a written note from a licensed physician or therapist indicating that her condition is stable and has been for a minimum of six months. Trip chaperones and/or host families must be made aware of any medications the student is taking, as well as any side-effects that could arise from improper dosing.

The school reserves the right to remove a student from a trip roster or exchange for serious disciplinary or academic issues. In this case, refunds will be at the discretion of the travel company and Woodlands Academy. In the event of any serious misconduct during a trip, a student may be returned home immediately, accompanied by a trip chaperone, at the parents' expense. The decision to send a student home for a disciplinary issue will be made by the school administration in consultation with the trip chaperones.

Network Activities

In addition to the exchange program, other Network activities provide opportunities for students to share their Sacred Heart richness. Woodlands participates in Network leadership conferences and service programs.