

# SHATTUCK-ST. MARY'S ACADEMIC HANDBOOK



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# ACADEMIC HANDBOOK

(ver. 25.1)

## ACADEMIC PROGRAM

The Shattuck-St. Mary's program provides students with solid preparation for college work in the major disciplines: English, Mathematics, Science, History, World Languages, Religion, and Performing and Visual Arts. Students also participate in ScholarShift, which includes a series of educational experiences comprising blended classes, weCreate engagement, a curriculum of exploratory modules, and self-designed educational experience. Teachers take their academic responsibilities seriously and expect their students to do likewise. All students, regardless of their previous preparation or innate ability, are expected to put forth their best efforts.

## FERPA (FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT)

FERPA Disclosure Policy: 20 U.S.C. & 1232g. At Shattuck-St. Mary's School, the administration, teachers, coaches, and advisors have a legitimate educational interest in each student; therefore, through the Advisory System, Centers of Excellence, and other co-curricular activities, student's educational records are reviewed or inspected to keep track of each student's academic achievement. This is a partnership between parents, students, and the school.

## DIPLOMA REQUIREMENTS

In order to receive a Shattuck-St. Mary's diploma, a student must earn a minimum of 20.5 credits during the regular academic program in the 9–12th grade, complete the ScholarShift, and senior speech requirements, and meet minimum senior year performance requirements. The 20.5 credits must satisfy the specific departmental requirements described below:

- **English:** four (4) credits; students must be enrolled in English each term.
- **Performing and Visual Arts:** two (2) credits; students must take a minimum 0.5 credit during each academic year at SSM.
- **History:** three (3) credits including one (1) credit in U.S. History
- **Science:** three (3) credits including one (1) credit in Biology and either one (1) credit in Chemistry or one (1) credit in Physics
- **Religious Studies:** one-half (0.5) credit to be fulfilled by taking World Religions, Introduction to the Bible, or Ethics. Most students will fulfill this requirement during their junior year.
- **World Language:** three (3) credits in the same language for three consecutive years during grades 9-12
- **Mathematics:** a minimum of three (3) credits including a minimum of one (1) credit each in Algebra I, Algebra II, and Geometry or courses advanced beyond these levels; students must be enrolled in a Mathematics class each semester.
- **Electives:** two (2) additional credits (four semesters) from any department

## Senior Year Requirements

To receive an SSM diploma, each senior must:

- Have passing final grades and passing spring semester grades in all year-long courses taken during the senior year and must have a passing grade in each of their one-semester courses taken during the senior year. Seniors with an "F" on their final 12th grade transcript will not be able to receive an

SSM diploma until the credit has been fulfilled.

- Complete senior year on-campus, enrolled each semester.
- Write and deliver a senior speech to the faculty and student body. The senior speech is 4-6 minutes in length on a topic that is meaningful to all and delivered in a manner conscious of the legacy each student leaves.
- Have all accounts in good standing.

### **Participation in Graduation**

A senior forfeits the privilege of being on campus during graduation weekend if she/he commits a rule violation that results in a Judiciary Committee meeting in the last 30 calendar days before graduation.

### **College Notification**

The School maintains and benefits from a relationship with colleges and universities based on openness and trust. It is expected that students will complete all applications truthfully. At any point in the application process, the School reserves the right to report issues to colleges that could compromise the trust relationship between a college and the School.

### **ENROLLMENT AT SSM**

Students progressing towards an SSM diploma are expected to be enrolled at SSM every semester.

Middle School students in grades 6-7 will be placed in five (5) core courses each semester and a year-long Performing and Visual Arts (PAVA) rotation. Middle School students in grades 8-9 will be placed in five (5) core courses each semester. Students must take a minimum of one (1) semester of PAVA classes each year. Students in grade 9 will take one semester of Health & Wellness.

Upper School students in grades 10 - 12 must be enrolled in a minimum of five (5) core courses each semester (History, English/ESL, World Language, Math, Science, and PAVA). Students must take a minimum of one (1) semester of PAVA classes each year. Any exception to this policy must be approved by the Director of Studies.

### **Transfer Students**

All transfer students will submit their transcript of previous work to the Office of the Registrar to determine the number of credits the student can apply toward SSM graduation requirements. In no case will SSM credit equivalency be awarded for grades below a D- earned at any other school.

### **Course Credit**

Students at SSM earn credits toward graduation at SSM only for grades of D- or higher. One semester courses receive one (0.5) credit. Year-long courses receive one (1) credit. Final course grades below a D- will earn no credit in either one semester or yearlong courses. In addition, students who fail one (1) semester of a yearlong course but manage to pass for the year may receive one (1) credit toward graduation.

### **ScholarShift**

- Juniors will complete a series of three modules, one per semester, through weCreate. Part of the

program consists of required modules designed to support students through ScholarShift; for the others, students choose from a catalog of exploratory modules, many of which have been proposed by the students themselves. Modules are designed to introduce students to new skills and new areas of study.

- After completing the foundational year, seniors will have the option to design and complete an Initiative Project, spending their final year at SSM engaged in internships, developing research projects, or designing other experiences that explore their passions and expand their skills and talents.
- Academic classes for most 11th and 12th graders are offered in a blended class model. Sophomores enroll in a minimum of one blended class. This model opens up the weekly schedule so that students can engage in the opportunities ScholarShift provides alongside their traditional, classroom-based academic program and develop independence, initiative, and time management strategies as they prepare for college.
- To meet our academic graduation requirements, our students complete their academic coursework plus ScholarShift experiences. Completion of ScholarShift requirements will be reflected on student transcripts along with their academic course record.

### **Postgraduate Student Academic Schedules**

Each postgraduate student's schedule must include at least five academic courses per semester and must include English and Mathematics. Any exceptions must be approved by the Director of Studies. In addition, Postgraduate students must present a senior speech, unless they presented a senior speech during their senior year at SSM.

### **International Students**

The diploma requirements listed previously apply to international students with the following provisions. An international student whose first language is not English may qualify for a Shattuck-St. Mary's diploma by passing ESL or English during each year of attendance and exiting ESL prior to senior year. All international students are expected to complete at least one year of mainstream English instruction and exit from ESL is a prerequisite for these courses.

Initial ESL placement is determined by past academic records and assessments taken prior to the start of the school year, including incoming TOEFL/Duolingo scores and an interview. Placement for subsequent years is evaluated each spring. ESL exit is determined by the student's ability to speak, write, read, and listen to English. These skills will be evaluated by the ESL Department through an examination of grades, written work, and standardized tests.

The Director of Studies and the ESL Department Chair will review the academic performance of students who are not making sufficient progress in their ESL program and will make a recommendation to the Head of School regarding the student's potential to satisfy graduation requirements. Depending on the severity of the situation, recommendations may include mandatory additional Shattuck-St. Mary's ESL instruction during the school year and/or summer, repeating a grade year, or dismissal.

ESL students in grades 6–12 are exempted from the Shattuck-St. Mary's School World Language requirement; however, further language study is recommended for students who exit ESL.

## EVALUATION OF ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

### Letter Grades

During the first week of a course, teachers will share how letter grades are calculated, including weighting (percentage) and how the semester grade is calculated. Students are officially assigned letter grades at the end of the semester. Teacher comments are published at the midsemester. Parents have access to grades via PowerSchool at all times during the academic year. Based on a 100 percent scale, letter grades are determined as follows:

A	94-100%
A-	90-93%
B+	87-89%
B	83-86%
B-	80-82%
C+	77-79%
C	73-76%
C-	70-72%
D+	67-69%
D	63-66%
D-	60-62%
F	59% and below

Grades may be withheld for students whose school accounts are not in good standing. Students who withdraw from school prior to the end of the school year will not receive full credit or final grades for the courses in progress at the time of withdrawal from the school.

### Effort Grades

All report cards include effort grades for each class. The effort grade is an “in-house” rating and is not used to determine class rank nor is it recorded on the student’s permanent transcript. Effort grades are reported each marking period and may be used in determining free nights and Daytime Supervised Study Hall. Teachers determine effort marks using this rating scale as a guideline; however, teachers will adapt it to their classes and their specific expectations.

**5 - Outstanding:** Student is always prepared for class, engaged during class, often seeks help or enrichment outside of the classroom, and has no unexcused tardiness or absences. Assignments are always completed on time and in a thoughtful, thorough way. Student sets a high standard of behavior or contribution during class. An effort grade of 5 is reserved for the most engaged, conscientious students.

**4 - Above Average:** Student is always prepared for class, engaged during class, and has no unexcused tardiness or absences. Assignments are completed on time and in a thoughtful, thorough way. Student occasionally seek help or enrichment outside of class and sets a high standard of behavior or contribution during class.

**3 - Satisfactory:** Student meets the expectations of the teacher in a satisfactory way. Student is generally on time for class, with very few or no unexcused tardiness or absences. Student occasionally seeks help or enrichment

outside of class and contributes to the class when asked.

**2 - Unsatisfactory:** Student exhibits some of the following behaviors to the point that the teacher finds the student's effort unsatisfactory. Student misses class repeatedly or is often tardy; and/or Assignments are often late, incomplete, or of poor quality; and/or Student rarely seeks help or enrichment outside of class; and/or Student is occasionally disruptive; and/or Student resists contributing during class.

**1 - Poor:** Student exhibits some of the behaviors described in the Effort 2 - Unsatisfactory section above and /or is disengaged from the participation, homework, and class work required for success in the course.

### **Teacher Comments**

All students may receive comments for each class on mid-semester report cards as determined necessary by the School. Students will receive comments if their mid-semester or end-of-semester grade is a C- or lower, their effort grade is a 2 or lower, or if the teacher feels the student is underperforming in the class. Teachers may post comments on individual assignments, especially in cases where the comments on that assignment may guide parents in helping students do their best.

### **Grade-Point Average (GPA)**

A student's GPA is an average of the grade points earned in final grades for semester and year-long courses and is calculated at the end of each year. Letter grades earn grade points as follows:

A	=	4.000
A-	=	3.667
B+	=	3.333
B	=	3.000
B-	=	2.667
C+	=	2.333
C	=	2.000
C-	=	1.667
D+	=	1.333
D	=	1.000
D-	=	0.667
F	=	0.000

Mid-semester grades are not reported on student transcripts. Due to the rigor, grade points earned in Advanced Placement classes will be multiplied by 1.1.

### **Free Nights**

A free night is a night in which a student does not have to be in his/her dorm room for Evening Dorm Study Hall or has not been restricted to the dorm for another reason. After the first few weeks from the start of school (students are notified of the exact date each year), students must request free nights from the dorm parent on duty while checking in between 6:30-7:30 pm. Dorm parents may deny a student's request for a free night if there are other matters that need attention (such as a messy room) or the student has not been following proper protocols to obtain a free night. If a student requests to leave campus during a free night, the request needs to be initiated through Reach, all rules must be followed for that purpose, and the student must return to campus by 8:00pm.

## **Loss of Free Nights**

1. Not properly checking in with dorm parents as noted above will cost a student to lose the free night that night (i.e. if the dorm parent must track the student down after 7:30 pm).
2. A student's grades fall low enough to be assigned to EDSH, such as a grade below a C- (may be assigned in 1-week increments).
3. As a result of a disciplinary matter.
4. Failure to keep a dorm room clean or follow other dorm policies may result in loss of free nights to correct the problem.
5. Missing classes and excessive tardiness.
6. Parent and SSM administrators may revoke a student's free nights for other reasons not described here.

## **Evening Dorm Study Hall**

Evening Dorm Study Hall is held each night at a location suitable for each residence hall, age of the students, and number of students assigned. Students are assigned to EDSH based on one of the following criteria:

- Required by the Director of Studies, Guidance Committee, advisor, teacher, or other SSM administrator. Such placements are assigned weekly, thus any student assigned to EDSH is assigned for the entire week but may be canceled at the start of a study hall if the student can demonstrate that the grade has sufficiently improved.
- At the request of a student's parent after consultation with the student's advisor, Class Dean, Director of Studies, CAA teacher, or another SSM administrator.
- A student may elect to join EDSH at any time if they prefer that study environment, providing there is space, and they are not disruptive.

While in EDSH, students are not allowed to use their personal phones, or other technology unless needed to complete their homework. Students found in violation of this requirement (for example, playing games on their laptop) will face other disciplinary consequences, including the loss of free nights even after no longer being assigned to EDSH.

At the start of Fall semester, all students in grades 6-9 are assigned to EDSH for the first week of the school year. This is to aid the student in developing effective workload, homework and study habits. At midsemester, each Middle School student will be individually evaluated to determine what level of supervision is suitable for continued academic success, possibly releasing the need for EDSH.

## **Evening Supervised Study Hall (ESSH)**

A student may be assigned to ESSH if it is determined that their study needs require closer supervision and support than can be offered in the dorm. Held in an US classroom, ESSH is supervised by a faculty member to maintain an optimal setting for study and offer basic homework assistance. Students are placed in ESSH by the

Class Dean.

### **Incomplete Courses**

A grade of Incomplete (I) may be given at the end of a mid-semester or semester marking period in the case of extended illness or extraordinary circumstance. Extensions for incompletes beyond two weeks after the end of the marking period require approval of the Director of Studies.

### **Semester Examinations**

At the end of each academic semester, students take semester examinations which are worth a maximum of 20 percent of the semester grade. These exams are one to two hours in length and must be taken during the scheduled exam period the last week of each semester. Students may not take semester-end exams early. Since the exam schedule is published in advance of the beginning of school each year, there will be no excused absences from exams except in the case of verifiable legal or medical emergencies. NOTE: Absences for travel purposes will not be excused.

### **Senior Final Examination Policy**

Seniors in year-long classes may be exempt from their final exam with the instructor's permission if they have a 90 percent average for the year and at least a 90 percent for the Spring semester. Semester electives are excluded, except in the case of students who successfully complete the two-term sequence offered in the English electives, History electives, Anatomy, or Ecology.

### **Summer Course Work**

Students are welcome to take summer coursework in addition to their SSM course load. No core courses may be taken for credit outside of Shattuck-St. Mary's School, except with the explicit permission of the Director of Studies. Summer courses will not be added to the SSM transcript or GPA.

### **Independent Study**

Independent Study is available at SSM. Students should see the Director of Studies for guidelines and to begin writing their course proposal. An independent study must be the sixth academic course and may not be used to satisfy a departmental graduation requirement, except for students taking an Independent Study to continue their sequence beyond SSM offerings.

### **Accelerated Graduation – Policy and Process**

As a matter of course, Shattuck-St. Mary's School does not endorse or encourage early graduation (i.e., completing 9-12 grade curriculum in less than four years). The school does recognize, however, that there may be circumstances which cause a student to elect to accelerate their program and graduate in three years. The school also recognizes that there may be students who will benefit from completing high school in this fashion. It is important to note that such students are required to complete all established graduation requirements to qualify for a Shattuck-St. Mary's diploma. Students considering applying for acceleration must meet with the Director of Studies to design a plan to meet the Shattuck-St. Mary's School graduation requirements. They must submit an application that includes a letter of intent from the student and their parents and two letters of recommendation from current Shattuck-St. Mary's faculty members. This application should be completed by August 1st of the

start of their sophomore year.

## **COURSE REGISTRATION**

Course registration for the following academic year is conducted for current students during Spring semester. Students will work with their advisors, parents, teachers, and Department Chairs to develop course requests that are challenging, realistic, and balanced. The Registrar develops yearlong schedules based on the requests made the prior Spring semester. Individual schedules will be given out in August when students arrive on campus.

Changes between semesters should be the exception and made under the circumstances described below.

### **Schedule Changes**

Every effort is made to accommodate the courses requested by students. Because classes must be carefully scheduled to accommodate all students and then are carefully balanced for size, course changes occur only in special circumstances:

- The change is academically necessary as determined by the Director of Studies.
- The student made first and second choices for electives and received neither choice.
- A conflict in the schedule has prevented scheduling core academic courses.
- The schedule does not meet the minimum requirement or does not contain courses needed for satisfactory progress toward graduation.

The following situations do not justify schedule changes:

- The student wishes to change teachers or course periods.
- The student has changed his or her mind regarding a course choice after the drop/add period.
- The student did not receive a first choice but did not make alternate choices where indicated.
- The student has a low grade in a course.
- The student wishes to adjust their schedule to accommodate additional time for a Center of Excellence practice/training time.

### **Drop/Add Procedures**

Student schedules are developed for the entire year; therefore, changes after the year starts or between semesters will be made under only exceptional circumstances. To drop or add a course, the student must request the change by completing a drop/add form within the first week of the semester.

### **Dropping Courses due to Personal Circumstances**

In extreme situations, students may drop courses after the deadlines above at the discretion of and in consultation with the Director of Studies. Parents and students must understand that should such a drop be initiated and approved, credit and grades accumulated to that point in a yearlong course will be lost. In addition, a withdrawal failing (WF) or withdrawal passing (WP) will be entered on the student's permanent transcript.

## **ACADEMIC HONORS AND ADVANCED COURSES**

### **Academic Honors**

Because Shattuck-St. Mary's highly values scholastic achievement, students are honored for being successful in their academic work by being placed on the Honor and High Honor Rolls. Students who obtain a GPA of exactly

3.85 or higher for a semester, with no grades below a B- for that semester., will be placed on the High Honor Roll for that semester. Students who obtain a GPA of exactly 3.25 or higher for a semester, with no grades below a B- for that semester will be placed on the Honor Roll for the semester.

SSM places a high value on honor, integrity, and academic honesty. Therefore, any student involved in any form of academic dishonesty will be ineligible for any Honor Roll distinction during that semester.

### **Advanced and Advanced Placement (AP) Courses**

Students may take advanced and AP courses as available and with recommendation from faculty. These courses are designed to provide a greater challenge, to strengthen a student's academic background, and to improve college admission opportunities. Students who choose to take an AP course do so with the understanding that graded year cumulative assessments will be given during the spring semester. It is also understood that all 10th- and 11th-grade students in an AP course will write the respective AP exams in May. Seniors, in counsel with their teachers and the College Counselors, may choose to opt out of the AP exam with parental permission.

### **Academic Centers of Excellence**

Students enrolled in the BioScience Center of Excellence, the Engineering Center of Excellence, the Pre-Conservatory Center of Excellence, and The Major Center of Excellence are eligible to receive a diploma noting distinction in their area of concentration. At graduation, students participating in these programs who successfully complete all the program requirements, including a capstone presentation, will receive a "Diploma with Distinction."

## **ACADEMIC RULES & REGULATIONS**

### **Academic Standards Policy:**

1. The first time a student earns a GPA below 2.0, two or more grades below a C-, or any failing grade at the end-of-semester, she/he will receive a formal letter of academic warning from the Director of Studies. The School will work with the student, his/her advisor, and the Class Dean to develop an Academic Improvement Plan (AIP), which may include mandatory extra-help sessions, tutoring, Daytime Supervised Study, and/or Evening Dorm Study Hall. Other intervention strategies recommended by the Guidance Committee, which meets regularly to discuss strategies to aid and support struggling students in our school community, will be added to maximize the positive impact on a student's academic performance.
2. A second end-of-semester GPA below 2.0, marking period with two or more grades below a C-, or any failing grade will result in restrictions on travel which requires missing class. Exception: If a student earns a GPA of at least 1.8 but less than 2.0 and all effort grades are 3 or higher or maintains all grades above a C-, travel may be permitted with some constraints, as determined by the Director of Studies in consultation with the Director of the related co-curricular program.
3. A second end-of-semester below standards without all effort grades at 3 or higher, is likely to result in dismissal from Shattuck-St. Mary's School.

### **Academic Integrity**

Academic honesty is the basis of scholarship and is integral to learning. All SSM students must understand that truthfulness and honesty should always govern their work. Cheating and plagiarism, as well as other forms of academic dishonesty, are considered major violations of school rules. All students are expected to present their own work and to cite references and sources whenever appropriate. Teachers will inform students at the beginning of each course about their expectations regarding collaboration and group work, use of resources – both electronic and printed – and other issues related to academic honesty. At all times, students must be aware that it is their responsibility to work honestly and truthfully. When doubt exists, the burden is on the student to clarify issues with their teacher before work is submitted for evaluation.

- **Cheating**: Doing work for another student, soliciting other students to do your work, providing answers or accepting answers from other students, or bringing answers to a test setting are all considered violations of Academic Integrity and defined as cheating.
- **Plagiarism**: Using words, media, or ideas not your own without proper citation is plagiarism.

The following are examples of academic integrity violations:

- Premeditated cheating (bringing “cheat sheets” to a test or quiz, accessing websites during online assessments, etc.)
- Bringing in unauthorized materials to a test or quizzing situation, even if materials were not used by the student, or if a faculty member found the materials before the student could use them
- Using cell phones or any handheld devices during tests or quizzes
- Spontaneous cheating such as looking at another student’s test or quiz
- Unauthorized use of artificial intelligence (AI)
- Unauthorized use of work previously submitted in another class
- Sharing information regarding the content of a test, quiz, or exam in advance
- Having prior unauthorized knowledge of the content of a quiz or test
- Passing around notes, tests, or answers during the proctoring of the assignment
- Turning in a paper that was written by somebody else
- Allowing another student to copy one’s own work
- Submitting the same academic work as another student
- Putting the name of a student on a group project who did not participate in the project
- Buying or copying any or all of a paper from the internet or any other source and presenting it as one’s own
- Photographing copies of tests, quizzes, or exams

These examples are not meant to be a complete list. They merely give guidelines regarding inappropriate and dishonest academic behavior. Any level of cheating or plagiarism or helping others to cheat or plagiarize will not be tolerated.

### **Process and Consequences for Violations of Academic Integrity Policy**

Teachers will report all incidents of academic dishonesty to the appropriate Department Chair and the Director of Studies. The Director of Studies will notify the student’s advisor, appropriate administrators, COE Director, and contact the student’s parents/guardians.

Consequences:

- The first offense during a student's career at the School will at minimum result in a red card, detention, the satisfactory completion of a reflection essay, and a letter home. First offenses of an extreme nature may go before the Judiciary Committee and may result in suspension or dismissal.
- The second offense during a student's career at the School will most likely go before the Judiciary Committee and may result in suspension or dismissal.
- The third offense during a student's career at the School will go before the Judiciary Committee and will most likely result in dismissal.

In all cases, the student will earn a grade of "zero" on the assignment and will not be eligible for any Honor Roll distinction for the semester in which the violation occurred.

Modifications of the above policy will be made for students in Grades 6-9 at the discretion of the Middle School Director and/or the Assistant Middle School Director.

### **Late Work**

A major assessment handed in after the due date is marked down 10 percent for every school day that it is late (unless the missed date was due to SSM team or school-sponsored travel). For example, a paper that is due by 3:30 p.m. on Thursday, and turned in by 3:30 p.m. on Monday would be marked down by a maximum of 20 percent. Requests for extensions or exceptions may be discussed with the teacher. Individual teachers will set late work policies for assignments such as daily homework.

### **Credit Policy for Students Separated from School**

If a student is expelled or withdraws from school pending disciplinary charges, no Shattuck-St. Mary's School credit is granted for the incomplete courses or for the remainder of the school year.

## **ATTENDANCE**

Students who attend Shattuck-St. Mary's agree to assume responsibility for and meet their obligations (e.g., class, study hall, chapel, required lunches, assemblies, advisory, music lessons, and meetings) every day. This is fundamental to being a member of this and any community.

Chronic unexcused or excused absences may lead to a hold on issuance of a re-enrollment contract for the following academic year. The administration and student's family will work together to develop a plan for improvement.

### **Unexcused Absence**

In the event that a student misses an obligation for reasons other than verifiable medical, excused absences, or school-sponsored activities, the absence will be considered unexcused.

### **Consequences for Unexcused Absences**

- A first unexcused absence in the course of a semester results in an unexcused absence card.
- A second unexcused absence in the course of a semester will result in an assignment to the Evening Work Squad for two days or more.
- A third unexcused absence in the course of a semester will result in Work Squad, further

restrictions, and the creation of an improvement plan.

- A fourth unexcused absence in the course of a year may go before a Judicial Committee.
- If a student is unable to consistently abide by the Attendance Policy, they may be dismissed from the School.

The Director of Community Life and the Division Directors have some discretion in the case where one event or decision results in multiple missed obligations.

### **Tardy Policy**

If a student has three (3) tardies in one class, they will be issued a white card by the teacher of the class.

### **Excused Absences (school-driven)**

- Performing arts performances, academic field trips, and athletic competitions: For short-term absences (1 or 2 days), students are expected to complete all missed work (homework, quizzes, tests) by the end of the first school day following the absence. For longer-term absences (3-5 days) students must keep up with and turn in daily work on the same schedule as the class via Schoology and email. Quizzes, tests, and projects must be turned in within five school days of returning to school.
- Disciplinary suspensions: Students must keep up with and turn in daily work on the same schedule as the class via Schoology and email. Quizzes, tests, and projects must be turned in within five school days of returning to school.

### **Excused Absences (not school-driven)**

There are three types of excused school/class absences that are not school-driven. Students will be allowed to make up all academic work missed due to these absences. All missed work must be completed within five school days after returning to the School. All exceptions must be pre-approved by the School. Some examples of each of the three types are listed below:

- Exceptional Invitation-Only Programs/Competitions such as regional, national, and international programs/competitions, and official college visits: For boarding students, the student or parent must initiate the Leave Request through Reach at least five days prior to this absence and receive approval from the Division Director. For day students, parents should email the SSM attendance email ([attendance@s-sm.org](mailto:attendance@s-sm.org)) and work directly with the Administrative Assistants and Division Directors at the Middle or Upper School. The student must meet with the Division Director to determine whether an event fits this category and can choose to not approve this absence.
- Approved family events, unofficial college visits, athletic select tryouts, and hometown club competitions: For boarding students, the student or parent must initiate the Leave Request through Reach at least five days prior to this absence and receive approval from the Division Director. For day students, parents should email the SSM attendance email ([attendance@s-sm.org](mailto:attendance@s-sm.org)) and work directly with the Administrative Assistants and Division Directors at the Middle or Upper School. The Division Director determines whether an event fits this category and can choose not to approve this absence.
- Medical sick days and extended medical leaves: Special arrangements will be made as necessary based on specific medical circumstances. A medical leave may be granted (or required of) a student when physical,

emotional, or psychological issues significantly impair a student's well-being and his/her ability to function successfully or safely at SSM. All medical leaves will be granted by the Director of Health Services or the Director of Counseling in consultation with the Division Directors. Lengths of time for leaves may vary but need to be long enough to allow the student time to deal with and receive proper treatment for the circumstances that led to the need for leave. The Director of Health Services or Director of Counseling will consult with school officials and determine the conditions that must be met for a student to return to school. The Director of Studies will also consult on the academic plan for the student during their absence. If a leave requires a student to miss more than four weeks of academic instruction, the Director of Studies and Division Director will determine if the student will be able to receive credit for the current semester's classes or if an alternate plan for making up credits missed is necessary.

### **Absences - not approved**

If a student's absence request is not approved and the student chooses to miss school, the student will be assigned a grade of 60% of the actual grade for any made-up homework or assessments (e.g., a grade of 100% would earn 60%, 50% would earn 30%). If homework and/or assessments are not made up within three days, zero credit will be offered.

### **Reporting an Absence**

If ill, boarding students must report to the Health Center. When a day student is unable to attend school for any reason, parents should contact the Upper or Middle School office before the start of the class day (see contact info at the end of this handbook). Unreported absences will be considered unexcused. Students who miss class for excused absences are expected to be responsible for making up any missed work and for being properly prepared on their return to school.

If a student has been in the Health Center for more than two obligations, the student will return to the dormitory after school and will not participate in sports or co-curricular activities for the day. This same policy applies to day students that were reported "ill at home."

### **Loss of Work Credit for Extended or Repeated Absences**

A combination of excused and unexcused absences in a course that exceeds 10 days or the equivalent of 2 weeks for the semester will result in a review of student progress in the course and may involve disenrollment from the course and loss of credit.

### **Consequences for Skipping Class**

If a student misses class without approval, any assignments missed must be made up within three days or zero credit will be awarded. Work submitted within the allotted time frame will receive a grade equal to 60% of their actual grade on the assessment (e.g., 90% becomes 54%, 80% becomes 48%, etc.).

## **ACADEMIC SUPPORT**

Shattuck-St. Mary's School is a rigorous college preparatory school. Students are expected to manage their time

well, seek out extra help when they need it, and meet their academic requirements to the best of their ability. The School provides opportunities for varying levels of support within our academic program.

### **Extra Help**

Every teacher is available for extra help sessions. This is the first place students should seek academic support.

### **Supervised Study Hall**

- New students in all grades may be assigned to Daytime Supervised Study Hall until fall midsemester grades have been posted.
- All Middle School students are placed in a Daytime Supervised Study Hall for the entire school year, periods 1-8, if they do not have a scheduled class.

### **Classroom Accommodation Plans for Students with Learning Differences**

The Center for Academic Achievement (CAA) writes and maintains accommodation plans for students with qualifying learning disabilities or other health impairments that affect their academic performance. Shattuck-St. Mary's School is a private school which does not receive federal funding; as a result, we are not obligated to honor accommodations from 504 plans or Individualized Education Plans (IEP) from a student's previous school. Instead, students who require classroom or testing accommodations for a diagnosed learning disability and/or ADHD should contact the Center for Academic Achievement to request an accommodation plan. In order to be eligible for an individualized accommodation plan, families must provide written documentation of the learning difference. This can be any of the following:

- Neuropsychological exam
- Educational evaluation
- IEP evaluation report
- Formal letter/report from qualified physician

The documentation should be current (within the last three years) and conducted by a qualified physician or psychologist. Documentation must include a diagnosis and explain the nature of the disability, the results of the testing, and the necessary accommodations. For students with a psychiatric disorder that affects their learning, documentation must be from within the last 12 months in order to be eligible for classroom accommodations. Families are responsible for providing updated documentation when necessary in order for their student to remain eligible for an SSM Academic Accommodation Plan.

### **Standardized Testing Accommodations**

Most students take the PSAT, SAT, ACT, and/or AP tests at some point in their high school career. The College Board and ACT have their own criteria for students to be eligible for testing accommodations. These criteria may differ from SSM requirements for accommodation plans. Please contact the Director of the Center for Academic Achievement with questions regarding eligibility for accommodation on standardized tests.

### **Center for Academic Achievement**

In addition to writing and maintaining student accommodation plans, the CAA provides intensive and ongoing tutoring support for students diagnosed with learning disabilities, ADHD, and/or other relevant conditions that

impact learning. Families pay an additional tuition fee for these services. Students meet each class day (an option for partial enrollment is also available) in small group tutorials with the learning specialists and receive instruction tailored to their particular learning needs.

The Learning Specialist maintains close communication with families, teachers, and advisors and facilitates classroom and testing accommodations for students who qualify. Depending on available spots, students who are struggling in school but do not have a diagnosed learning difference are sometimes eligible to enroll in the CAA for a short time; however, all students enrolled in the CAA are expected to have recent documentation of a learning difference to remain eligible for CAA support. Instruction is tailored to the students' current academic needs, and their progress is monitored by their assigned learning specialist. Students are referred to the CAA if school officials or parents are concerned about their overall progress and success.

The CAA supports student achievement in academic classes, but it is not a course-specific tutorial program (e.g., a Chemistry tutorial). Instruction instead focuses on improving specific skills that hinder a student's progress such as study skills, expository writing skills, and reading comprehension.

### **Chronic Academic Concerns**

If these opportunities are not sufficient to support a struggling student, the school has a Guidance Committee and process designed to identify the causes of a student's academic difficulties and lead to appropriate, additional interventions such as Academic Improvement Plans, referrals for psycho-educational evaluations, and classroom accommodation plans. Sometimes students continue to experience significant academic difficulty despite their individual efforts and the School's intervention efforts. In congruence with the Academic Standards Policy, the School may determine that the core nature of our program would have to be significantly altered in order to accommodate the needs of a particular student; at this point, alternative school placement will be discussed, recommended, or possibly required.

## **LEARNING DIFFERENCES POLICY**

For students with learning disabilities, Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, or other relevant conditions, Shattuck-St. Mary's School provides reasonable accommodations (e.g., small group testing, extended time, audiobook access) depending on the students' needs and learning profile. Shattuck-St. Mary's does not reduce the rigor of in-class assignments, assessments, or graduation requirements, but instead fosters academic success by providing students with the academic skills and learning strategies that will help them become independent students.

### **Identification Process**

We aim to teach, support, and reasonably accommodate students with learning disabilities, Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, or other relevant conditions. We are, however, primarily dependent upon students and families to identify a student's special needs. Disclosure upon enrollment by students and families is critical for the School to assess its ability to meet the needs of students accurately. The school cannot provide full and appropriate support or reasonable accommodation of a student's special needs if the need is not disclosed in a timely fashion. For families new to the evaluation process, the Learning Specialists in the Center for

Academic Achievement will help facilitate that process. This process includes deciding if an evaluation is appropriate, scheduling and completing the evaluation, reviewing the results, and planning the appropriate level and type of support.

### **Communication and Cooperation**

Open and honest communication and participation by all parties is essential to this process. Psychological and educational evaluations should be obtained in a timely manner and shared with appropriate school professionals. Remediation and reasonable accommodation may be delayed if families delay completing this process. Direct student support services are only available through the fee-based Center for Academic Achievement; however, enrollment in the CAA is not required for classroom accommodation plans.

Once a student receives a diagnosis of a learning disability, Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, or other relevant condition, an accommodation plan will be developed based on the evaluation. All parties are expected to follow through with their part in the recommended course of action as outlined in the accommodation plan. Students will be expected to comply with the course of action, including consistent homework completion, class participation, and seeking extra help from teachers. The progress of all students diagnosed with learning disabilities, Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, or other relevant conditions will be monitored by the learning specialist, advisor, and/or school counselor.

If a student does not receive a diagnosis of a learning disability, Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, or other relevant condition or the family chooses not to seek a recommended psycho-educational evaluation; they will be held to the Academic Standards Policy and have access to the same academic support opportunities as the general student population. Students will work with advisors and Class Deans to develop intervention plans; when possible, those plans will reflect the evaluation results.

### **Levels of Academic Support**

It must be understood that, without proper documentation of a learning disability, Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, or other relevant condition, Shattuck-St. Mary's School only offers the following levels of support:

1. Extra help sessions with classroom teachers and advisors
2. Supervised study halls
3. Academic intervention plans monitored by advisors and Class Deans

With proper documentation of a learning disability, Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, or other relevant condition, Shattuck-St. Mary's School offers the following supports in addition to those listed above:

1. Shattuck-St. Mary's Academic Accommodation Plans
2. Fee-based CAA tutoring
3. Monitoring of progress by a learning specialist and/or school counselor

As a general rule, Shattuck-St. Mary's School does not modify curriculum or graduation requirements; any exceptions to this general rule must be approved by the Director of Studies. All Shattuck-St. Mary's students are expected to meet our core academic requirements and will be held to the same academic policies as outlined in this

Handbook.

### **Alternative Placement**

If the Learning Specialist or the school administration determines that the core nature of our program would have to be significantly altered in order to accommodate the needs of a particular student, alternative school placement will be discussed, recommended, or possibly required. All students must meet the minimum academic performance standards and graduation expectations outlined in the Student-Family Handbook.

## **COLLEGE COUNSELING AND TESTING**

The focus of the college counseling program is to guide students and their families through the college admissions process. This is a multi-year process which accelerates during the junior and senior years. The College Counselors work with students individually and in groups concerning academic planning and the college admissions process. This approach moves from the general to the specific and is directed toward planning an appropriate sequence of secondary school coursework as well as planning for an appropriate range of possible college choices. Advice and counsel are provided to students and their families throughout the application process. The College Counselors are available for conferences during family weekends and at other individually arranged times in person and over Zoom.

In addition to the direct assistance provided by the College Counselors, students have access to the College Library, which includes materials from many institutions as well as numerous college reference books, SAT/ACT study materials, and financial aid information.

**Middle School:** In preparation for high school academic work, we offer annual PSAT testing in October for our 8th and 9th grade students. For students in 6th and 7th grade, we conduct annual academic skills testing. College counselors are available, upon request, to provide advice on course selection and planning.

**10th Grade Students:** Students are introduced to the available college counseling resources. Students take the PSAT in October. Attention is given to the importance of the entire secondary school record and to careful academic planning.

**11th Grade Students:** The college admissions process will be discussed in both individual and group meetings. Students are assigned to an individual counselor early in the spring semester. Students and families are encouraged to attend the annual Twin Cities Partnership College Fair where over 100 college admissions counselors from across the country will be in attendance eager to speak with students and parents about their institutions. College admissions representatives also visit SSM in the fall, and students are encouraged to attend these meetings. Students and families are also encouraged to visit college campuses during school breaks. A preliminary list of colleges is created for each student by the end of the academic year.

Students will retake the PSAT in October. They will also take the SAT and the ACT during spring term. During the latter part of spring semester, most students will be strongly encouraged to retake the SAT and/or the ACT. For the convenience of our students, Shattuck-St. Mary's School is a test center for most administrations of the

SAT and the ACT which occur while school is in session. Students for whom English is an additional language are expected to take either the Duolingo or TOEFL at least once before the end of the junior year.

**12th Grade Students:** During senior year, the initial emphasis is placed on narrowing a student's list of college choices in preparation for the application process itself. Each student's College Counselor assists with the application process in an effort to ensure that all necessary materials are prepared and forwarded to colleges at the appropriate times. This is often a time-consuming endeavor for both the student and the College Counselor and one which may require numerous appointments. Students are encouraged to share their college essays with their counselor for review before submission.

During fall semester, students are again encouraged to meet with college admissions representatives who visit the school and to retake (as necessary) the SAT, ACT, and TOEFL/Duolingo.

The college application and admissions processes are clearly a focal point for students and families in a college preparatory school. The College Counselors, therefore, are committed to helping students successfully navigate this process. It is most important that students and families be objective and realistic when deciding on college choices and that they understand the importance of completing and submitting the necessary materials on time.

## ACADEMIC DAILY SCHEDULE

8:00-8:45 a.m. Period 1

8:50-9:20 a.m. Community Period

9:25-10:10 a.m. Period 2

10:15-11:00 a.m. Period 3

11:05-11:50 a.m. Period 4 (Lunch)

11:55-12:40 p.m. Period 5 (Lunch)

12:45-1:30 p.m. Period 6

1:35-2:20 p.m. Period 7

2:30-3:15 p.m. Period 8

3:20-4:05 p.m. Period 9

### Absence Lines ([attendance@s-sm.org](mailto:attendance@s-sm.org))

- **Upper School:** 507/333-1679
- **Middle School:** 507/333-1649

### Useful Contacts:

- **Stephanie Vagle**, Associate Head of School: 507/333-1505
- **Dan Ray**, Director of Studies: 507/333-1536
- **Patrick Schaefer**, Upper School Director: 507/333-1574
- **John Blackmer**, Middle School Director: 507/333-1718

- **Kelly Garlinski**, Middle School Faculty Dean: 507/333-1531
- **Marissa Wentz**, Center for Academic Achievement Director: 507/333-1553
- **Shawn Reid**, Director of College Counseling: 507/333-1626
- **Matthew Dilworth**, Associate Director of College Counseling: 507/333-1619