



Georgetown Day School is a Washington, DC PreK–12 independent school with an enrollment of **1,075** students, a city campus, and a comprehensive, innovative curriculum. Founded in 1945 as the first integrated school in Washington, DC, GDS maintains a diverse student body, **48%** of whom identify as students of color, as well as a diverse faculty and Board. The High School is college preparatory, sending **99%** of its graduates to colleges and universities throughout the world. The financial aid budget for the 2025–26 school year totals \$9.6 million, shared among **24%** of the student body.



GDS Class of 2025



100+
Activities

150+
Courses



524
High School Enrollment

137
Senior Class Size



2025-26
Academic
Year

Fall Semester Ends:
January 23, 2026

Spring Semester Ends:
June 5, 2026

Graduation:
June 7, 2026



Head of School
Russell H. Shaw
Interim High School Principal
Chris Levy



Georgetown Day School does not rank students or compute a grade point average. Letter grades in the High School are issued twice a year within a semester system.

OFFICE OF COLLEGE COUNSELING

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THE CURRICULUM

A GDS education engages students with real-world problems, places them at the center of their learning, teaches them to collaborate across difference, empowers them to connect with resources, challenges them to think critically and creatively, and prepares them to be active citizens of the world. GDS supports students in exploring programs of study that develop a deep appreciation of the arts, humanities, and sciences as equally valuable disciplines that offer various perspectives on the world.

- All seniors write a 10–15 page critical essay on an author or topic of their choice as the culmination of their study in literature and writing.
- The high school math curriculum is one of the most advanced

programs among independent schools in the area, including coursework beyond college-level calculus to linear algebra, number theory, multivariable calculus, and discrete mathematics.

- Typically starting no earlier than junior year, students may choose from a wide array of advanced courses, including Upper Level (UL) offerings.
- GDS does not offer any Advanced Placement courses. UL courses represent the most challenging level of coursework offered at GDS, where students examine the material at the highest levels with sustained intellectual independence.



CURRICULAR HIGHLIGHTS

MINIMESTER

Since 2018, GDS has offered Minimester, a three-day intensive program in which students have an opportunity for an immersive, experiential learning experience without the confines of traditional schooling. Selected courses include: Exploring Reproductive Justice, Prisoners and Their World, Sabermetrics, Unplugged in the Wilderness, and The Neuroscience of Implicit Bias.

YOUTH PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH

GDS supports a cohort of students each year who participate and design social science research studies to address an issue that they identify in their community. Two previous topics students have studied were 1) the politics of space and 2) socioeconomic status and sports.

INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY

The department offers courses that prioritize and prize project based learning, inquiry-based instruction, expanded technology integration, and interdisciplinary teaching.

9TH GRADE SEMINAR

The 9th Grade Seminar is a flagship social justice course that serves as a launching point for a GDS High School education. The goal of the course is to gain greater insight into our complex and layered identities while creating a space to ask and learn about the identities and perspectives of others. The class consists mostly of interactive activities and student-led conversations which help us begin to examine the various components of our individual and shared identities.

SENIOR QUEST

All seniors participate in a month-long Quest, or investigation, in which they apply their curiosity, talents, interests, skills, and knowledge to a question, task, creation, or issue of relevance to the student in particular as well as to a significant constituency outside of the GDS community. Quests call for teamwork, a multi-disciplinary approach, community involvement, demonstrable social value, and presentation and communication skills.

CO-CURRICULAR OPPORTUNITIES

DEI

GDS encourages respect for identity and cultivates awareness of the multiple perspectives, beliefs, experiences, and backgrounds reflected in our diverse community. The High School offers affinity groups, curriculum, programming, and a social justice teach-in day as opportunities for students to engage in principles of practice grounded in equity, inclusion, and social justice.

VOLUNTEER

Continually aware of the reasons for its founding, GDS inculcates in its students a concern for the world around them. Although many GDS students volunteer far more extensively, all students must complete at least 60 hours of direct community service.

GDS POLICY AND ADVOCACY

This summer opportunity for students to learn about pressing social justice issues by working with advocates, engaging in direct conversation with policymakers, traveling to “ground zero” cities where the focus issue is most prevalent, and building relationships with individuals at the heart of the issue. Policy Institute tracks have included: AI in a Human World, Bodily Autonomy and Consent, and Waging Life: The Immigrant Experience.

INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

GDS High School students experience meaningful educational experiences in real-world work settings during the summer before their senior year. Through the Internship Program, passionate students stimulate their career ambitions while supporting the day-to-day work of a host organization in a field of interest.

Among the more than 100 activities offered, major pursuits include:

ACADEMIC TEAMS

Debate, Harvard Model Congress, It's Academic, Math Team, Model UN, Robotics, Quiz Bowl, History Bowl, Robotics, History Speakers Series

AFFINITY GROUPS

Asian American Affinity (Triple A), Adoptee, Asian Male Affinity, Black Men United (BMU), Black Student Union, Body Image, Crowns, First Gen, Female Asian Meetinghouse (FAM), FMG, Fusion, Gradient, HOLA, Infinity, Indigenous Student Alliance, Jewish Student Coalition (JSC), Middle Eastern/Arab Affinity, Muslim Student Association, Reimagined Families, South Asian Affinity Group, SPECTRUM, Young Men of Color, Young Women of Color

ATHLETICS

Baseball, Basketball, Crew, Cross Country, Golf, Lacrosse, Rock Climbing (club), Soccer, Softball, Swimming, Tennis, Track, Volleyball, and Wrestling

PUBLICATIONS

Grasslands (Literary), Augur Bit (Student Newspaper), Yearbook

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Buddy Program, English Mentoring, Math Mentoring, Friendship Terrace Volunteers, Community Leadership Corps, Peer Health Mentor

STUDENT STAFF COUNCIL

MUSIC & DANCE

A Capella, Chorus, Chamber Choir, Fata Morgana (Dance Troupe), Jazz Band

THEATER

Fall Play, Winter One-Acts, Spring Musical, Cabaret, Theater Lab



COLLEGE APPLICATION POLICY

GDS students are permitted to apply to no more than 10 to 12 colleges and universities. On average, students apply to seven institutions. This policy ensures that our students make thoughtful choices; it also communicates to colleges and universities that every application they receive from a GDS student is serious.

DISCIPLINARY REPORTING STATEMENT

Our students will respond honestly to any application questions regarding disciplinary status. Any change of status that occurs after an application has been submitted will be reported as required by the student.

COLLEGE ATTENDANCE – THE CLASSES OF 2022, 2023, 2024, AND 2025 ATTEND THE FOLLOWING INSTITUTIONS:

Agnes Scott College	Harvard University	Rochester Institute of Technology	University of Maryland, Baltimore County
Alfred University	Harvey Mudd College	San Diego State University	University of Maryland, College Park
American University	Haverford College	Santa Clara University	University of Maryland Eastern Shore
Amherst College	Hofstra University	Savannah College of Art and Design	University of Miami
Barnard College	Howard University	Scripps College	University of Michigan
Bates College	Indiana University, Bloomington	Skidmore College	University of Missouri, Columbia
Bennington College	Ithaca College	Smith College	University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Boston College	James Madison University	Spelman College	University of Oregon
Boston University	John Cabot University	St. Mary's College of Maryland	University of Oxford
Bowdoin College	Johns Hopkins University	St. John's College, Annapolis	University of Pennsylvania
Bowie State University	Juniata College	St. John's College, Santa Fe	University of Pittsburgh
Brandeis University	Kenyon College	St. John's University	University of Richmond
Brown University	Lafayette College	Stanford University	University of Rochester
Bryn Mawr College	Louisiana State University	Swarthmore College	University of Rochester
Bucknell University	Macalester College	Syracuse University	University of Southern California
Carleton College	Marquette University	The Ohio State University	University of St. Andrews
Carnegie Mellon University	Massachusetts Institute of Technology	The University of Alabama	University of the Arts London
Case Western Reserve University	McGill University	The University of Texas at Austin	University of Toronto
Chapman University	Middlebury College	Trinity College	University of Vermont
Clark Atlanta University	Morehouse College	Tufts University	University of Virginia
Colby College	Morgan State University	Tulane University of Louisiana	University of Washington
Colgate University	Muhlenberg College	University of Arizona	University of Wisconsin, Madison
Colorado College	New York University	University of California, Berkeley	Vanderbilt University
Columbia University	North Carolina A & T State University	University of California, Davis	Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
Connecticut College	Northwestern University	University of California, Los Angeles	Wake Forest University
Cornell University	Oberlin College	University of California, Riverside	Washington and Lee University
Dartmouth College	Occidental College	University of California, San Diego	Washington University in St. Louis
Davidson College	Oxford College of Emory University	University of California, Santa Barbara	Wellesley College
Denison University	Penn State University, Harrisburg	University of California, Santa Cruz	Wesleyan University
Duke University	Penn State University, University Park	University of Cambridge	Wheaton College (MA)
Elon University	Pomona College	University of Chicago	William & Mary
Emory University	Princeton University	University of Colorado Boulder	Williams College
Fayetteville State University	Purdue University	University of Connecticut	Worcester Polytechnic Institute
Fordham University	Rhode Island School of Design	University of Denver	Yale University
George Washington University	Rice University	University of Florida	
Georgetown University	Ringling College of Art and Design	University of Glasgow	
Grinnell College		University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign	
Hamilton College			

*The GDS Class of 2025 attends 67 different colleges and universities.

CURRICULAR OFFERINGS

While we list the minimum requirements for graduation below, most students go beyond these requirements to engage deeply with courses offered and to explore their academic interests.

Upper Level (UL) courses represent the most challenging level of coursework offered at GDS. Typically, beginning in junior year, students may select UL coursework to further challenge themselves in areas of strong interest.

A student enrolled in three UL courses in any given year is taking the most demanding curriculum available based on scheduling and sequencing of courses.

Math levels: Geometry is divided into two levels, and Algebra II, Precalculus, and Calculus into three levels.

The Extended and Honors levels are accelerated,

include minimal amounts of review, and move steadily through the topics. While all sections include significant problem-solving, Extended sections often approach new topics through applications and projects, while Honors sections delve more deeply into the theoretical underpinnings of topics and proof and are more abstract. Demonstrated mastery of previous course material, greater time commitment for homework and reflection, and increased independent thinking are all essential.

INDEPENDENT STUDY

If a junior or senior has a particular interest in a subject that is not covered in our curriculum, they may apply to complete an Independent Study (IS). An IS course is the equivalent of a regular academic course with the same level of rigor expected

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

- 4 years of grade-level English
- 3 years of History and Social Sciences
- 2 successive years of World Languages
- 3 successive years of Math
- 3 years of Science
- 1 year of Performing Arts
- 1 year of Studio Arts
- 2 years of Physical Education/Health
- Ninth Grade Seminar

ENGLISH

English 9
English 10
English 11
English 12

Junior and Senior Literature electives
(offered as one semester or full year):

UL Contemporary Literature and Art in Conversation

UL Creative Writing

UL Philosophy and Literature

HISTORY & SOCIAL SCIENCES

Ninth Grade:

History 9: Communities and Change

Tenth grade:

African, Asian, European, Latin American, or World History
- May also be taken as an elective course

Eleventh Grade:

U.S. History; U.S. Gender History; U.S. Immigration History; U.S. Political History; or **UL U.S. History**

History Electives:

Contemporary Issues

Cultural Anthropology

From Freedom Rides to Floyd: Civil Rights in America

Introduction to Economics

The Middle East

The Middle East Since World War II

World War II

UL 21st Century Power:

Today's Geopolitical Conflicts

UL African-American Studies

UL American Government

UL Europe Between the Wars

UL Global Human Rights

UL Global Peace and Conflict

UL Historical Research Seminar:

Race, Place, and Real Estate

UL International Relations

UL Law and Constitutional Rights

UL Topics in Contemporary Psychology

WORLD LANGUAGES

Foundations I in Chinese

Foundations II in Chinese

Chinese Language and Culture

Chinese Language and Culture II

Advanced Topics in Chinese Studies

UL Advanced Topics in Chinese Studies II

Foundations I in French

Foundations II in French

French Language and Culture

Introduction to French Literature

Advanced French Language and Culture

UL Francophone Literature and Culture

Foundations I in Latin

Foundations II in Latin

Latin Language and Culture
Introduction to Latin Literature

Foundations in Spanish

Integrations in Spanish

Applications in Spanish

Spanish Language and Culture

Introduction to Art and Activism in Spanish

Introduction to Literature and Film in Spanish

Advanced Topics of the Spanish-Speaking World

UL Literature and Culture in the Spanish-Speaking World

MATHEMATICS

Algebra I

Geometry

Geometry Extended

Algebra II

Algebra II Extended

Algebra II Honors

Precalculus

Precalculus Extended

Precalculus Honors

Calculus

Statistical Analysis and Applications

UL Advanced Statistics I:

The Mathematics of Statistics

UL Advanced Statistics II:

Applications of Data Analysis

UL Calculus Extended

UL Calculus Honors

UL Differential Equations

UL Linear Algebra I

UL Mathematics Seminar

UL Multivariable Calculus

UL Statistical Analysis and Applications

UL The Mathematics of Statistics

SCIENCE

Anatomy, Health, and Social Justice

Astronomy & Astrophysics

Biology 9

Chemistry I

Chemistry I Extended

Chemistry II

Environmental Science: Applied Research

Environmental Science—Climate Science

Environmental Science—Field Ecology

Forensic Science

Game Theory

Genetics and Evolutionary Biology

Neuroscience

Physics

Physics Extended/Mechanics+

Physics I Extended

UL Cellular and Molecular Biology+

UL Chemistry II+

UL Electricity and Magnetism

UL Environmental Science:

Analysis of Science and Policy+

UL Modern Physics & Quantum Mechanics

UL Physics I+

UL Physics Mechanics+

UL Research in Biology+

UL Waves and Optics

ARTS, PERFORMING

Acting I: An Introduction to Acting

Acting II: Advanced Introduction to Acting

Chamber Choir

Contemporary Modern Dance I, II

Jazz and Creative Music Chamber Ensemble (II-IV)

Jazz Improvisation and Creative Music Lab
(Intro Level)

Jazz Large Ensemble (II-IV)

Theater Production

TOLV (Select 12-person ensemble)

Vocal Technique

UL Jazz I, II

UL Music Theory and Composition

UL TOLV: Advanced Choral Ensemble

ARTS, STUDIO

Foundations in Ceramics and Sculpture

Foundations in Digital Film and Animation

Foundations in Digital Media and Graphic Design

Foundations in Digital Photography

Foundations in Drawing and Painting

Foundations in 3-D Modeling and Design

Advanced Ceramics and Sculpture

Advanced Drawing and Painting

Advanced Digital Photography

UL Ceramics and Sculpture Workshop

UL Master Studio:

Interdisciplinary Workshop (I-II)

COMPUTER SCIENCE, INNOVATION & TECHNOLOGY

Foundations in Creative Engineering

Foundations in Entrepreneurship

Foundations in Programming

Foundations in Programming:

Video Games Concentration

Music Production and Audio Engineering

Advanced Coding for Artificial Intelligence

Advanced Coding for Video Games

Advanced Data Structures and Algorithms

Advanced Programming for Robotics

UL Coding for Social Impact

UL Data Structures and Algorithms

UL Youth Participatory Action Research

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Physical Education I/Health

Physical Education II/Health

DIVERSITY & EQUITY

Ninth Grade Seminar

INDEPENDENT STUDY

+ denotes double period class